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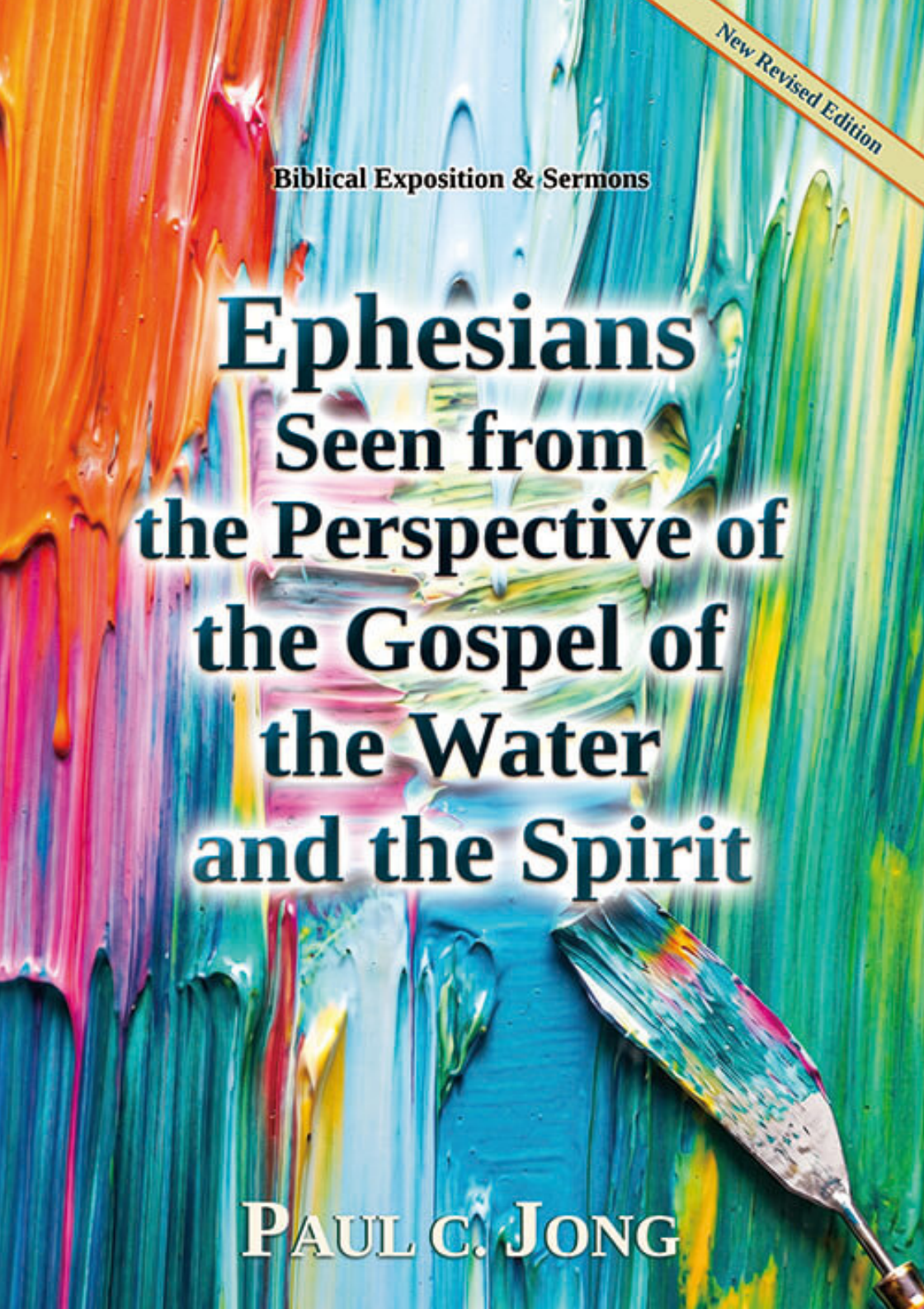
Biblical Exposition & Sermons

# Ephesians Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit



PAUL C. JONG

Ephesians Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit | Biblical Exposition & Sermons

Hephzibah

# “One Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Ephesians 4:5)

**We were originally those who were dead in trespasses and sins. To us who lived following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, and were by nature children of wrath, God bestowed immeasurable mercy and great love. This epistle, which Apostle Paul delivered to the saints of the Ephesian church, proclaims that the mystery of that salvation was solely by the grace given freely ‘in Jesus Christ.’**

**This book illuminates Ephesians from the consistent perspective of the ‘gospel of the water and the Spirit.’ It presents the truth that Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, paid the wages of those sins by shedding His blood on the Cross, and justified us by rising again on the third day. When we believe in this perfect work of redemption, we are moved from darkness to light and become God’s holy children.**

**Salvation is not something obtained by our deeds or religious efforts. It is the sovereign gift of God, who chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. This book clearly presents how the saints, who have become children of light by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, should live worthy of their calling, how to unite within the spiritual order, and how to take up the whole armor of God in order to stand against the wiles of the devil.**

**I hope that this book will become a guide for true peace and spiritual growth to all saints who earnestly desire to deeply realize God’s abundant grace and stand firmly on the rock of faith.**

***This is a book that everyone must seek out***

***and read now,***

***before the Antichrist appears,***

***as this world is heading toward destruction.***

***<u>You must believe now.</u>***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# Ephesians
## Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

PAUL C. JONG

**Hephzibah Publishing House**
**A Ministry of THE NEW LIFE MISSION**
**SEOUL, KOREA**

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***Ephesians seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit***

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First Edition: 2007
New Revised Edition: 2026
Published: July 2026

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Scripture quotations used in this book are from the *'New King James Version (NKJV)', 'American Standard Version (ASV)'.*

ISBN 978-89-282-6273-1
Illustration: Young-ae Kim
Reviewed: Elizabeth
Translator: Elizabeth
Printed in South Korea

**Hephzibah Publishing House**
A Ministry of THE NEW LIFE MISSION
Seoul, Korea

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We offer a prayer of thanks to the Lord for giving us the Word of salvation and blessing us with the gospel of being born again by water and the Spirit.

I would also like to thank God's servants and brothers and sisters for their invaluable service in publishing this book. We all worked hard to write this book.

I hope and pray that this book will help many souls be born again, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again to everyone who worked hard with me.

I sincerely hope that the Lord will allow the gospel of being born again by water and the Spirit to be spread throughout the world through those who believe in Jesus.

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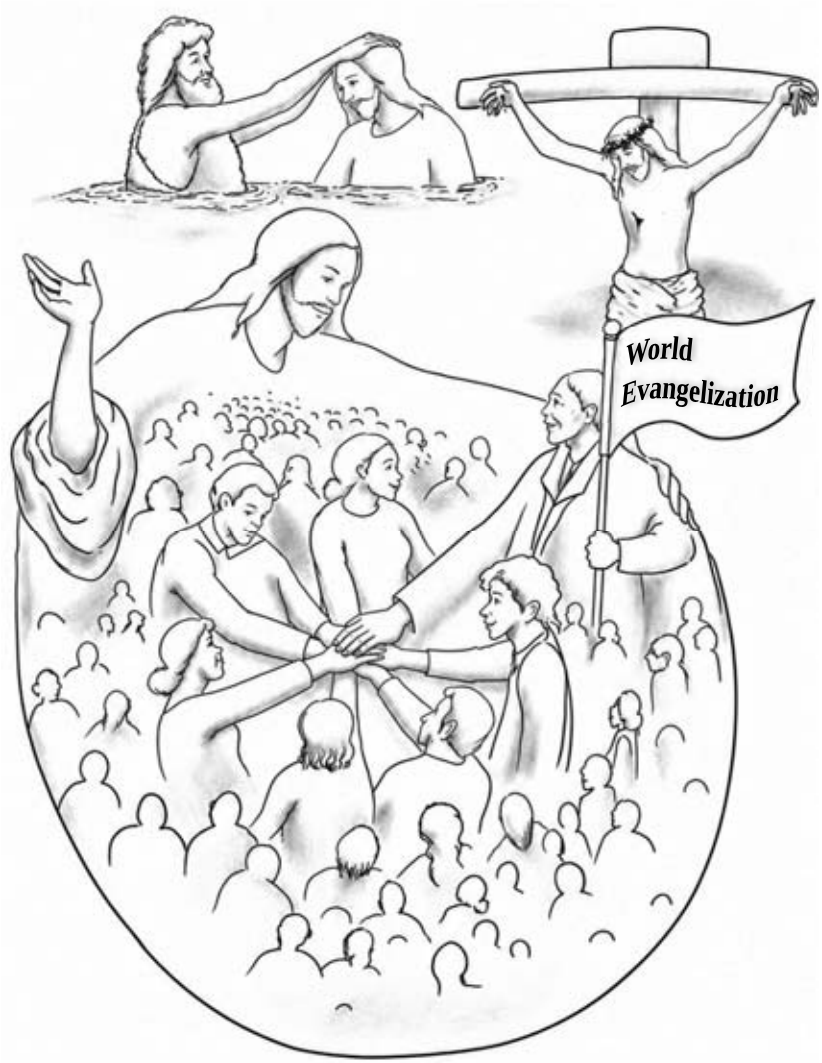


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# Introduction to Ephesians

## 1. Who is the author of this epistle?

The author of this epistle is the Apostle Paul. Beginning the letter, Paul clearly reveals that he is the writer of this letter by saying, *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1:1).* Also, in chapter 3 verse 1, he directly reveals his name once again, saying, *"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—"*

At the time Paul recorded this letter, he was not a free man but in the status of a prisoner confined for the sake of the gospel. He calls himself a *"prisoner"* several times within Ephesians (Ephesians 3:1, 4:1, 6:20), and for this reason, Ephesians is called one of the so-called prison epistles recorded by Paul in prison, along with Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. The place where Paul recorded this letter seems to have been Rome, and it is generally viewed that the time was around AD 60 to 62 when he was under house arrest in Rome.

Paul did not carry this letter directly with his own hands, but sent it to the Ephesian church placed in the hands of a person named Tychicus. He reveals that Tychicus was entrusted with the task of delivering this letter and at the same time informing the Ephesian saints of Paul's own situation, saying in chapter 6 verses 21-22, *"But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts."*

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The fact that Paul is the author of Ephesians has been consistently accepted as Paul's letter since the time of the early church. Ephesians is already quoted in the writings of various church fathers in the late 1st century and the 2nd century, and in the Muratorian canon list made in the late 2nd century, Ephesians is clearly established as Paul's epistle.
Paul, who recorded Ephesians in this way, was once a persecutor of the gospel, but met the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus and was called as the apostle to the Gentiles. He was a person who realized more clearly than anyone else the gospel that Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again. For that very reason, even in the body of a prisoner, he was able to unravel and preach most deeply and richly to the Ephesian saints the gospel of grace that *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).*

## 2. Where is the destination of this epistle?

The receiving place of this epistle was Ephesus, a large city in Asia Minor, exactly as its title and text reveal. Paul reveals that the receiving place of this letter is Ephesus by saying in chapter 1 verse 1, "To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus." However, regarding the destination of Ephesians, an interesting discussion rarely seen in any other Pauline epistles follows along, so examining this honestly is of great help in correctly understanding this epistle.

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## The city of Ephesus

Ephesus was the premier city of the Roman province of Asia, situated on the western coast of Asia Minor. Having a port, commerce flourished greatly, and it was a strategic point of transportation connecting the East and the West. At the same time, Ephesus was also the center of idolatry and magic where the massive temple of the goddess Artemis was located (Acts 19:24-28, 19:19).

Paul had a very deep connection with this Ephesus. During his third missionary journey, he stayed in Ephesus for about three years and preached the gospel, which was the longest period among the times he stayed in one city. Paul later says while bidding farewell to the Ephesian elders, *"remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31)*. In this way, Ephesus was a place where there was a church that Paul knew better than anyone else and loved deeply.

## The manuscript issue of chapter 1 verse 1 of the text

However, there is one point that must be pointed out when examining the destination of Ephesians. It is the fact that the expression *"in Ephesus"* of chapter 1 verse 1 is missing in some of the oldest and most authoritative manuscripts.

Including the Papyrus manuscript (P46), which is the earliest manuscript, the original records of the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus manuscripts do not contain the place name *"in Ephesus"* (en Ephesō, ἐν Ἐφέσῳ) In these manuscripts, verse 1 simply reads *"To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus."* Also, early church fathers such as Origen of the 3rd century and Basil of the 4th century once mentioned that this place name was not in the manuscripts they saw.

This is by no means an issue that shakes the authority or authenticity of this epistle. It merely becomes a clue that makes us rethink whether this letter was originally written only for the one church in Ephesus, or whether it was written toward a broader scope.

### The possibility of being a circular letter

Along with these manuscript characteristics, several notable points are discovered within the text as well. Even though Paul spent three years together in Ephesus, personal greetings or names of specific people commonly seen in other epistles hardly appear in this letter. Also, by saying in chapter 1 verse 15, *"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,"* and in chapter 3 verse 2, *"if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you" (Ephesians 3:2)*, he is using expressions as if speaking toward those he does not know directly.

Because of these points, many scholars raise the possibility that Ephesians was originally a circular letter sent to be read around not only by the one church in Ephesus but by various churches in the region of Asia Minor. That is, Tychicus took this letter and visited several churches in turn to have them read it, and because the most central church among them was Ephesus, it came to be established under the name "Ephesians" in later generations. Paul saying in Colossians 4:16, *"and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea"* can be said to be an example showing this custom of circulation.

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**In summary**

Putting all these points together, the destination of Ephesians was definitely the saints in the region of Asia Minor centered around Ephesus. The most direct and premier receiving place was the Ephesian church, but originally its vision seems to have embraced several churches in that region together beyond that one city. For that very reason, rather than contents dealing with the situation of one specific church, the deep and universal truth of the gospel that all churches must hold onto together came to be contained most richly in Ephesians.

Therefore, the broad vision that Ephesians is heading toward shows that this gospel is a gospel not confined to one city or one nation. The gospel that Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, accomplished salvation with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave eternal life by rising again, was God's gift that came without discrimination to the saints of Ephesus or the saints of Laodicea, to Jews or Gentiles. The very fact that Ephesians crossed the wall of one church and was read while thoroughly soaking several churches clearly testifies that this gospel is a gospel of grace that has been wide open toward the whole world from the beginning.

## 3. Regarding the place and date of recording of this epistle

Ephesians is a letter recorded by the Apostle Paul in the body of a prisoner confined for the sake of the gospel. Therefore, examining its recording place and date becomes a very important

clue in figuring out under what circumstances Paul wrote and sent this letter.

### A letter recorded in prison

First, the clear fact is that Paul did not write this letter with a free body, but recorded it in the status of a confined person. Paul calls himself a *"the prisoner"* several times within Ephesians. In chapter 3 verse 1 he says, *"I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles";* in chapter 4 verse 1, *"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you…";* and in chapter 6 verse 20 he reveals his situation, saying, *"for which I am an ambassador in chains."*

For this reason, Ephesians is classified as one of the so-called prison epistles recorded by Paul in prison, along with Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

### Recording place — Rome

Viewing that the place where Paul recorded this letter was Rome is the traditional and also most widely accepted view.

Looking at Acts 28:30-31, it is recorded that Paul arrived in Rome and *"dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him."* Although Paul was confined, because he was in a state of house arrest, he was in a situation where he could meet people and write to some extent. It seems that he recorded several prison epistles including Ephesians right around this time.

In particular, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon have a high possibility of having been recorded together at the same time, judging from their contents and the circumstances of being sent.

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The fact that the person who delivered all three of these letters was Tychicus becomes one basis for this. Paul is saying in Ephesians 6:21, *"Tychicus… will make all things known to you,"* and in Colossians 4:7 he is saying exactly the same, *"will tell you all the news about me."* This allows us to guess that Tychicus carried these letters all at once and visited several churches in the region of Asia Minor in turn.

However, some among the scholars raise the possibility that this letter was recorded there, citing the events of Paul being confined in Caesarea or Ephesus previously. But when putting together the various circumstances appearing in the text and the consistent tradition since the early church, viewing Rome as the recording place is the most reasonable.

**Recording date — Around AD 60-62**

The recording date is also directly in contact with that period when Paul was confined in Rome. The time when Paul was under house arrest for two years in Rome is generally viewed as between AD 60 and 62.

This period corresponds to after Paul was arrested in Jerusalem, confined in Caesarea for two years, and finally escorted to Rome after appealing to Caesar. Therefore, Ephesians is a letter belonging to a relatively later period in Paul's life, and it can be said to be an epistle recorded at the point when the truth of the gospel he had realized and preached all his life had ripened most maturely.

**The meaning of the recording period**

The meaning this period holds is by no means light. Paul recorded this letter not at a time when he was going around freely preaching the gospel, but in the status of a confined person

whose hands and feet were bound in chains. To human eyes, it was a time when it seemed the apostle's ministry had stopped and his path ahead had been blocked.

However, right in that confined place, Paul unraveled the highest and deepest truth concerning the church, Christ, and God's eternal dispensation of salvation. Even while calling himself a *"prisoner,"* he confessed that it was being confined in the Lord and being confined for you Gentiles for the work of Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:1, 3:1). That is, he was accepting even his own binding as a glorious binding for the gospel.

In this way, the fact that Ephesians was recorded in prison shows a picture of the gospel in itself. The gospel that Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again, was a gospel that could never be bound by any chains. Paul's body was confined in a Roman prison, but the gospel of grace he preached instead overflowed beyond those prison doors to Ephesus, to Asia Minor, and even to us today.

## 4. Regarding the view that Ephesians was used as a circular letter

When examining Ephesians, there is one view that not a few scholars have paid attention to. That is, the view that this letter was originally written not only for the one church in Ephesus, but was a circular letter sent so that various churches in the region of Asia Minor could read it while passing it around. This view was raised based on various characteristics appearing within the text and manuscript evidence, and it gives deep help

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in correctly understanding the nature of Ephesians.

**What is a circular letter?**

A circular letter refers to a letter sent so that not only one church but several churches could receive and read it together in turn. If one person carried that letter and delivered it while going around several churches, it was a method where each church received and read that letter and then passed it on to the next church again. Paul saying in Colossians 4:16, *"Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea"* is exactly an example clearly showing this custom of circulation. The churches at that time were sharing the teaching of an apostle together by passing letters around and reading them like this.

**Grounds supporting the circular letter theory**

As grounds supporting this view, three main things can be cited.

**1.** The manuscript issue of chapter 1 verse 1 — The most important ground is the manuscript characteristic of chapter 1 verse 1. Some of the oldest and most authoritative manuscripts, namely the original records of the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus manuscripts including the Papyrus manuscript (P46) of the earliest period, do not contain the place name *"in Ephesus"* ((en Ephesō, ἐν Ἐφέσῳ)). In these manuscripts, verse 1 simply reads *"To the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus."* Early church fathers such as Origen of the 3rd century and Basil of the 4th century also once mentioned that this place name was not in the manuscripts they saw. Scholars explain that originally Paul sent the letter leaving this spot blank, and Tychicus would have read

it putting in the name of that church every time he visited each church. Then, in later generations, as this letter settled together with the name of the Ephesian church which was the most central, it solidified with the title "Ephesians."

**2.** The absence of personal greetings — The second ground is the point that personal greetings or names of specific people hardly appear in this letter. Paul is a person who spent as many as three years together in Ephesus and shared deep affection with the saints there enough to *"not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31)*. Nevertheless, warm personal greetings are not seen in this letter. If this letter was directed only toward the one church in Ephesus, this appearance is not easy to explain. However, if it was a letter for several churches to read together, filling it with words widely applicable to all churches rather than calling the names of specific people would have been a natural thing.

**3.** A tone as if far away — The third ground is the point that Paul is using expressions as if speaking toward those he does not know directly. Paul says in chapter 1 verse 15, *"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,"* and also in chapter 3 verse 2, *"if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you."* To the Ephesian saints with whom he spent three years together, more intimate and direct words would have been fitting rather than the expression "heard." Instead, these expressions allow us to guess that Paul was keeping in mind together even the saints of several churches belonging to the same region whom he had not yet met directly.

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### The meaning the circular letter theory holds

Just because this view is correct does not mean the authority or authenticity of Ephesians is shaken even a little bit. Rather, this view explains well why Ephesians is so full of deep and universal truth.

If it were a letter written to deal with a specific problem of one church, the circumstances and situations unique to that church would have been thickly permeated in that letter. Actually, 1 Corinthians deals with disputes and various problems within the Corinthian church, and Galatians was written to correct false teachings that entered the Galatian church. However, rather than dealing with such specific problems, Ephesians places its focus on unraveling the deep and eternal truth of the gospel that all churches must hold onto together. The eternal dispensation of God who chose us before the foundation of the world, the grace of salvation accomplished in Christ, the mystery of the church built up by Jews and Gentiles forming one body, and the holy life that the church ought to live out are orderly contained within this one letter.

That is, the very fact that Ephesians was read while circulating widely through several churches clearly testifies that the gospel this letter contains is a universal gospel not confined to the walls of one church.

### In summary

Putting all this together, it is highly likely that Ephesians was a circular letter that took Ephesus as its premier center but whose vision embraced several churches in the region of Asia Minor together. The most direct receiving place was the Ephesian church, but from the beginning it was a letter open toward a broader place beyond that one city.

And this fact shows a picture of the gospel in itself. The gospel that Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again, was from the beginning a gospel that could not be confined to one city or one nation. That gospel was God's gift that came without discrimination to the saints of Ephesus or the saints of Laodicea, to Jews or Gentiles. The fact that Ephesians crossed the doors of one church and was widely circulated and read throughout several churches shows us most vividly that this gospel of grace is a gospel that has been wide open toward the whole world from the beginning.

## 5. What kind of place is Ephesus, the destination of this epistle?

Ephesus is the city where the target to whom the Apostle Paul wrote and sent this letter was located, and it was the premier city of the Roman province of Asia, situated on the western coast of Asia Minor. Examining what kind of place this city was is of great help in figuring out how Ephesians came to contain such deep truth of the gospel.

### Origin and history of the city

People had already been living in the region where Ephesus was located since very ancient times. In the Bronze Age, it seems there was a city called Apasa here, and this is known to have been the center of Arzawa, which was a kingdom in Asia Minor at that time.

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After that, the Ionian people of Greece moved here and built a city, and according to tradition, it is passed down that Androclus, the son of the king of Athens, led the Ionian people and built Ephesus. That period is generally estimated to be around the 11th to 10th century BC, which is also a part that is estimated somewhat differently according to old traditions and archaeological studies. However, what is clear is the fact that Ephesus was a very old city that had already been established for over a thousand years before the New Testament era.
After that, Ephesus went through the rule of Lydia, fell into the hands of Persia, and after being conquered again by Alexander the Great, was deeply influenced by Hellenistic culture, and finally entered under the dominion of the Roman Empire, and at the time of Paul, it was greatly prospering as the capital of the Roman province of Asia.

**Center of commerce and transportation**

Around the time Paul was preaching the gospel, Ephesus was a huge city with a not small population, and it was the center of politics and commerce. Because Ephesus embraced a good harbor, it was a strategic point of transportation connecting the East and the West, and it was a crossroad where sea and land routes gathered together. For this reason, it was a place where people from various regions constantly came and went, and this became a very suitable environment for the gospel preached there to naturally spread out in all directions. Actually, it is recorded that while Paul stayed in Ephesus, *"all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:10)*.

### Center of idolatry and magic

However, at the same time, Ephesus was also a dark city where idolatry and magic were deeply rooted. In the middle of this city, a huge temple serving the goddess Artemis was located, and this temple of Artemis was a place counted as one of the great boasts of the ancient world due to its scale and splendor.
Centered around this temple, making and selling idols formed a large industry in Ephesus. When Paul preached the gospel here and many people left idols and returned to the Lord, a silversmith named Demetrius, who made and sold silver shrines of Artemis, instigated his fellow workers and caused a great uproar (Acts 19:23-41). Also, Ephesus was a place where magic and divination prevailed, so there remains a record that those who accepted the gospel gathered their magic books and burned them in front of everyone, and the value of them amounted to fifty thousand pieces of silver (Acts 19:19).
Like this, on the one hand, Ephesus was a splendid city where learning and commerce prospered, but on the other hand, it was a city of darkness full of idols, magic, and sins.

### Paul and the Ephesian church

Paul was forming a very deep connection with this Ephesus. On his way back after finishing his second missionary journey, he briefly stopped by Ephesus (Acts 18:19-21), and during his third missionary journey, he stayed here for about three years and preached the gospel. This was the longest period among the periods Paul stayed in one city. For the first three months, he boldly reasoned in the synagogue, and after that, he borrowed the school of Tyrannus and taught the word daily (Acts 19:8-10). Later, Paul called the elders of the Ephesian church from Miletus to say goodbye and said, "*remember that for three years I did*

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*not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears." (Acts 20:31)*. Within this one word, the deep love and labor that Paul harbored toward the Ephesian church are completely contained. Like this, the Ephesian church was one of the churches where Paul stayed the longest, loved the most deeply, and built up with his whole heart.

**In summary**

Putting all this together, Ephesus was a city where splendid prosperity and deep darkness were located together. It was a large city with a long history of over a thousand years, a center of commerce connecting the East and the West, and at the same time, the middle of sin full of idolatry and magic. Right in the middle of such a city, God built a church and unraveled the highest and deepest truth of the gospel toward that church.
This in itself shows a picture of the gospel. No matter how dark a city full of idols, magic, and sins it was, the light of the gospel that came upon that place was never extinguished. The gospel that Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again, was a gospel powerful enough to make the magic books of Ephesus be burned. The very fact that Ephesus, the city of idols, instead became a great channel through which the light of the gospel spread out in all directions clearly testifies to us that this gospel is God's power capable of overcoming any darkness.

## 6. What is the relationship between the Apostle Paul, the author of this epistle, and the Ephesian church?

The Ephesian church was a church that had a very deep and special relationship with the Apostle Paul. Among the various epistles Paul wrote and sent, there are letters sent to churches he had not personally visited (Romans is such), but the Ephesian church was one of the churches where Paul personally stepped in to preach the gospel, stayed for the longest period, and built up with the deepest love. Examining the relationship between Paul and the Ephesian church is of great help in figuring out with what heart this letter was written.

### First visit — A short stay and a promise

It was on the way back to Antioch after finishing his second missionary journey that Paul first formed a connection with Ephesus. Paul stopped by Ephesus with the couple Priscilla and Aquila, where he briefly entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. People asked him to stay a little longer, but Paul did not consent, and left leaving only the promise, *"I will return again to you, God willing" (Acts 18:21).* And the couple Priscilla and Aquila remained in Ephesus and took charge of laying the foundation of the gospel there.

### Meeting disciples who only knew the baptism of John

When Paul returned to Ephesus again as promised, he met a very meaningful group of people there. They were about twelve disciples who were following Jesus to some extent, but still only knew the baptism of John and did not know about the Holy Spirit. When Paul asked them, *"Did you receive the Holy Spirit when*

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*you believed?"* they answered, *"We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit" (Acts 19:2)*. When asked what baptism they received, they said, *"John's baptism.'"* At this, Paul clearly unraveled that John's baptism was a baptism of repentance, intended to make people believe in the One coming after him, that is, Jesus. When they heard those words and were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 19:1-7).

This scene is a very meaningful event located at the starting point of the Ephesian church. The people who had remained at the level of repentance heard the complete gospel accomplished in Jesus Christ and fully entered into that gospel.

**Deep ministry for three years**

After laying the foundation of the Ephesian church like this, Paul stayed here for about three years and preached the gospel. This was the longest period among the periods he stayed in one city.

For the first three months, he entered the synagogue and boldly reasoned concerning the kingdom of God, and when the Jews hardened their hearts and did not believe, he departed from there, borrowed the school of Tyrannus, and reasoned the word daily. As he taught like that for two years, the gospel spread to the whole region of Asia Minor centered around Ephesus, enough to be recorded that *"all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:10)*. Also, as God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, people even brought handkerchiefs or aprons from his body and laid them on the sick (Acts 19:11-12).

Through this three-year ministry, the Ephesian church was firmly established, and the deepest affection of love came to be

formed between Paul and the Ephesian saints more than anyone else.

### A tearful farewell

How deeply Paul loved the Ephesian church is most clearly revealed in the scene where he said goodbye to this church. On his way up to Jerusalem after finishing his third missionary journey, Paul could not stop by Ephesus directly, but called the elders of the Ephesian church from Miletus and gave them his final exhortation.

At this place, he said, *"remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31),* and warned that after his departure, false teachers like savage wolves would come in and harm the flock, entrusting them to God and the word of His grace. It is recorded that when he knelt down and prayed with them all, they all wept freely, fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. This tearful farewell scene vividly shows us how deep and sincere the love formed between Paul and the Ephesian church was.

### A letter written and sent again in the body of a confined person

And as time passed, Paul came to be confined in a Roman prison for the sake of the gospel. In that confined place, Paul embraced the Ephesian saints he loved so much in his heart again, and sent a letter in the hands of Tychicus (Ephesians 6:21-22). Because he was in a situation where he could not visit them directly on foot, he took up his pen and sent the deepest truth of the gospel he had realized all his life contained within this one letter.

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Therefore, Ephesians is not a letter written indifferently toward a distant, unfamiliar church. This letter was a picture of a love letter written and sent with unchanging love even in the body of a confined person, toward those beloved saints whom he had taught with tears for three years, knelt and prayed together with, and said goodbye to by falling on their necks and kissing them.

**In summary**

Like this, the relationship between Paul and the Ephesian church was very deep and special. Paul personally laid the foundation of this church, stayed and taught for the longest period, built it up with the greatest love, and finally, unable to forget them even in the body of a confined person, wrote and sent this letter.

In particular, at the starting point of the Ephesian church, there is located a scene where people who only knew the baptism of John heard the complete gospel accomplished in Jesus Christ and became new people. This is by no means an accidental event. They, who had remained at the level of repentance, came to fully enter into that complete gospel that Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again. Precisely because it was a church built upon the foundation of that gospel, the Ephesian church could become the church that most abundantly received and inherited that glorious truth of obtaining salvation by grace through faith.

## 7. In what respects is this epistle distinguished from Paul's other epistles?

Ephesians has a very unique character and atmosphere even among the various epistles written by the Apostle Paul, thus possessing several characteristics that clearly distinguish it from other letters. Examining these characteristics is of great help in correctly understanding what kind of letter Ephesians is.

### A letter that does not deal with specific problems

Paul's other epistles were mostly written to deal with specific problems or circumstances faced by those churches. 1 Corinthians was written to correct disputes and various disorderly problems within the Corinthian church, and Galatians was written to sternly rebuke false teachings that had entered the Galatian church. Therefore, the unique circumstances and tensions of those churches are deeply permeated in those letters, and sometimes a very fierce and controversial tone appears.
However, in Ephesians, contents dealing with such specific problems are hardly seen. Disputes to be corrected, false teachings to be rebuked, or urgent circumstances to be resolved hardly appear in this letter. Paul did not hurriedly take up his pen here chased by some crisis, but rather, with a calm and peaceful mind, he is unraveling the deepest and eternal truth of the gospel.

### A universal perspective beyond one church

Unlike other epistles that mostly direct toward the specific circumstances of one local church, Ephesians possesses a very universal perspective that leaps over the walls of one church. As examined earlier in the circular letter theory, it seems this letter was originally sent so that various churches in the region of Asia

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Minor could pass it around and read it.
Therefore, Ephesians does not deal with the small circumstances of one church, but the eternal dispensation of God's salvation toward the whole universe and the mystery of the entire church, which is the body of Christ. The *"church"* Paul speaks of here does not refer to a small group in any one region, but the universal church itself, built up by Jews and Gentiles forming one body.

### A high and deep dimension belonging to heaven

One characteristic that anyone feels when reading Ephesians is that this letter deals with truth of a very high and deep dimension. Paul uses the unique expression *"in the heavenly places"* (en tois epouraniois, ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις) several times within this letter, which is a rare expression in other epistles.
Paul unravels deep and vast truths that transcend time and space, such as God's eternal decree choosing us before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4), God's dispensation to unite all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:10), and the glorious status of the saints who are seated in the heavenly places together with Christ (Ephesians 2:6). Therefore, Ephesians is often referred to as the letter that has climbed to the highest peak among the Pauline epistles.

### A style full of praise and prayer

Another prominent characteristic of Ephesians is that its style is like a piece of praise or prayer. Starting this letter, Paul opens the door with a song of blessing, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:3)*, and offers deep prayers throughout chapters 1 and 3.
For this reason, the Greek original text of Ephesians shows a

form where long and majestic sentences continue windingly. In particular, verses 3 to 14 of chapter 1 are composed of a massive song of blessing connected as one single sentence in Greek, making it seem like a continuously rising wave of praise. Rather than disputes or rebukes, praise, thanksgiving, and prayer completely fill this entire letter.

**Deep resemblance to Colossians**

Ephesians deeply resembles Colossians, which seems to have been recorded together at the same time. The two letters share many similar themes and expressions, and were sent in the hands of the same person, Tychicus (Ephesians 6:21, Colossians 4:7).

However, there is also a clear difference between these two letters. While Colossians focuses on defending the supremacy of Christ in order to correct false teachings that entered the Colossian church, Ephesians focuses on unraveling the glorious mystery of the entire church by unfolding the truth more broadly and deeply rather than dealing with specific problems. In other words, if Colossians is a letter directed at the specific problems of one church, Ephesians can be said to be a letter that elevates that truth to a universal dimension.

**Peace drawn up from within prison**

Lastly, one more point to note is the fact that this letter, full of such high, deep, and peaceful truth, was recorded nowhere else but in prison. Paul wrote this letter in the body of a confined person bound in chains (Ephesians 3:1, 6:20). In a place that would seem full of lamentation and anxiety in the eyes of men, he instead wrote down a letter full of praise, thanksgiving, and peace. This clearly shows that the gospel Paul was holding onto

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was a glorious gospel that is never shaken by any environment.

**In summary**

Like this, Ephesians is clearly distinguished from Paul's other epistles in the points of its calmness not dealing with specific problems, a universal perspective beyond one church, a high and deep dimension belonging to heaven, a style full of praise and prayer, a deep resemblance to Colossians, and peace drawn up from within prison.

All these characteristics ultimately converge into one thing. Ephesians is a letter that lets us look at a glance at the entire dispensation of that great salvation which God decreed from before eternity and accomplished in Jesus Christ, beyond the small problems of any one church. The gospel that Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again, was an eternal gospel originally prepared before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). The reason Paul could sing such high and deep praises even in the darkness of prison was precisely because he was deeply holding onto this eternal gospel that transcends time and space in his heart.

## 8. For what purpose was this epistle written?

In the Apostle Paul's recording of Ephesians, various purposes are blended together. As examined earlier, Ephesians is not a letter written to correct some urgent problem. Rather, even in the body of a confined person, with a calm and peaceful

mind, Paul recorded this letter to unravel and deliver to the saints the deepest and eternal truth of the gospel he had realized all his life.

### 1) To make them realize God's eternal dispensation of salvation

The greatest purpose of recording Ephesians was to make the saints deeply realize the dispensation of that great salvation which God decreed from before eternity and accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Paul earnestly desired that the saints would not just remain in the fact that they were saved, but would deeply know in their hearts how great and glorious that salvation is. He prays in chapter 1, verses 17-18, *"that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."* That is, he wrote this letter so that the eyes of the saints' hearts would be opened wide and they would brightly realize the vastness of the salvation they received.

### 2) To clearly reveal the mystery of the church

The second purpose was to clearly reveal the glorious mystery of the church, which is built up by Jews and Gentiles forming one body in Christ.

Paul unravels that Jews and Gentiles, who were originally divided like enemies, became one in Jesus Christ. He declares in chapter 2, verse 14, *"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,"* and reveals that mystery in chapter 3, verse 6, *"that the Gentiles*

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*should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel."* To the churches in Asia Minor including Ephesus, where Gentiles formed the mainstream, this truth was a gospel more precious and comforting than anything else.

### 3) To exhort to a life worthy of the calling

The third purpose was to exhort the saints who received such glorious salvation to live worthily of that calling.
Ephesians clearly reveals this purpose right from its structure. From chapter 1 to 3, it unravels the richness of the grace the saints received, and from chapter 4 to 6, it exhorts the appearance of the life they should live worthily of that grace. In chapter 4, verse 1, the place connecting these two parts, Paul says, *"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called."* That is, he hoped that the grace received would not just remain as knowledge in the head, but would appear as holy fruits in daily life.

### 4) To comfort and firmly establish the saints

The fourth purpose was to comfort the saints who were in the midst of various trials and darkness and to firmly establish their faith.
Revealing the reason for sending Tychicus, Paul says in chapter 6, verse 22, *"whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts."*
To the saints who were living keeping their faith in the middle of Ephesus full of idols and magic, and to the saints whose hearts could be shaken by the news that the apostle who taught them was imprisoned, this letter became a greater comfort and encouragement than anything else.

### 5) To arm them for spiritual warfare

The fifth purpose was to spiritually arm the saints so that they could ably resist the wiles of the devil.

In the final part of this letter, Paul reveals that the fight the saints face is by no means a fight against humans. Saying in chapter 6, verse 12, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places,"* he exhorts in verse 11, *"Put on the whole armor of God."* He exhorted them to ably resist the forces of darkness and stand firm by equipping themselves with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit.

### In summary

Like this, Ephesians is a letter where various purposes are blended together: to make them realize God's eternal dispensation of salvation, to reveal the mystery of the church, to exhort to a life worthy of the calling, to comfort and firmly establish the saints, and to arm them for spiritual warfare.

However, all these purposes ultimately converge into one thing. That is, to make the saints realize how great and glorious the gospel they received is, and to make them live a life worthy of that gospel. The gospel that Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again, was an eternal gospel prepared before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). Paul wrote and sent this one letter earnestly hoping that the saints would brightly see the

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depth of this gospel with the eyes of their hearts, stand firm upon that grace, and finally live a holy life worthy of that calling.

## 9. What is the core thought of this epistle?

Ephesians is a letter that unravels God's eternal dispensation of salvation at the highest and deepest dimension, and its core thought is also very clearly revealed. Through this entire letter, Paul repeatedly unravels one great truth, which is about that vast dispensation of salvation that God decreed from before eternity and accomplished in Jesus Christ.

### Core thought — God's dispensation to unite all things in Christ

If the core thought of Ephesians is summarized in one word, it can be said to be "God's eternal dispensation to unite all things in Christ." That is, God harbored one eternal will from before the foundation of the world, which is to gather and unite all scattered and divided things into one in Jesus Christ.
Paul declares this core thought in chapter 1, verses 9-10 like this: *"having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him."* God intends to gather back into one in Jesus Christ all those things that were disconnected from God, divided between person and person, and scattered across all creation due to sin.

### 1) That unification is accomplished only in Christ

The expression that appears most frequently in Ephesians is precisely the word *"in Christ"* (en Christō, ἐν Χριστῷ). Within this one short phrase, the core thought of Ephesians is intactly contained. God choosing us is also in Christ (Ephesians 1:4), giving us all spiritual blessings is also in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), and uniting all things is also only in Christ (Ephesians 1:10). That is, at the center of gathering all scattered things into one, Jesus Christ is always present.

### 2) That unification begins from salvation by grace

This great unification is not accomplished by human merit or effort, but begins only from salvation by God's grace. God made us, who were originally dead in trespasses and sins, alive together with Christ and seated us together in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:5-6). Paul clearly nails it down in chapter 2, verses 8-9, saying, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."* That very grace of salvation, which makes alive those who were dead in sin and reconciles them with God, becomes the starting point of all unification.

### 3) That unification is clearly revealed within the church

The place where God's dispensation to unite all things in Christ is most clearly revealed is precisely the church. The very fact that Jews and Gentiles, who were originally divided like enemies, came to form one body in Christ is the most vivid evidence of this unification. Paul declares in chapter 2, verse 14, *"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation."*
Therefore, in Ephesians, the church is not a simple gathering of

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people, but His body with Christ as the head (Ephesians 1:22-23), the temple where God Himself dwells (Ephesians 2:21-22), and the place where that glorious mystery of all things being united in the future appears in advance. That is, the church is the dwelling place where God's eternal dispensation is visibly revealed.

**4) That unification leads to a worthy life**

This core thought does not stop at realization in the head, but rightfully leads to a holy life. Those who have become one in Christ must now keep that oneness through their lives. Paul exhorts in chapter 4, verse 3, *"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* All relationships between husband and wife, children and parents, and servants and masters are newly established in Christ (Ephesians 5:22-6:9), and finally reach the point of standing firm putting on the whole armor of God to resist the forces of darkness (Ephesians 6:10-18). That is, the truth of unification appears as holy fruits in daily life.

**In summary**

Like this, the core thought of Ephesians is "God's eternal dispensation to unite all things in Christ," and that unification is accomplished only in Christ, begins from salvation by grace, is clearly revealed within the church, and finally leads to a worthy life.

Right in the middle of all this unification lies the perfect gospel accomplished by Jesus Christ. To gather all scattered and divided things back into one, Jesus personally took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River. And with the precious blood He shed by receiving

all the punishment for those sins on the cross, He broke down the wall that was blocked between God and us, and by rising again, He gave us eternal life. This very gospel of the water and the Spirit is the true source of all that unification that reconciles God and man, breaks down the wall between person and person, and finally unites all things under heaven into one in Christ. The great thought that Ephesians unravels from beginning to end ultimately flows out from this one gospel and gathers back into this one gospel.

## 10. Against what background was 'the unification of all things in Christ', the core thought of this epistle, accomplished?

As examined earlier, the core thought of Ephesians is "together in one all things in Christ, both" (Ephesians 1:10). Then, against what background on earth was this great unification accomplished? When we examine what was scattered that had to be gathered again, and what was divided that had to be made into one again, we come to realize the deep meaning this unification holds even more clearly.

### 1) All things that were originally one

First, what must be engraved in the mind is the fact that all things created by God originally formed a perfect one without scattering or division. At that time when God created the heavens and the earth, the heavens and the earth and everything in them were in beautiful order and peace under God's rule. There was no blocked wall between God and man, there was no hatred or strife between person and person, and all things were

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moving in one direction toward the Creator, each in its own place.

That is, in the background of unification lies that beautiful order of creation that was originally one. God intending to unite all things again in Christ is to restore again that order that was originally one.

**2) All things scattered and divided due to sin**

However, as sin entered the world, this beautiful oneness was shattered to pieces. In the background where unification had to be accomplished lies precisely this deep and dark scattering and division.

First, the relationship between God and man was disconnected. Due to sin, man left God and became distant, and as Paul expressed, became one who was *"dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1)*. Man, who originally dwelled close to God, instead became *"having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12)*.

Second, person and person were divided. Among those, the deepest division was the division between Jews and Gentiles. Between the Jews who received the law and the Gentiles who were outside that covenant, a *"middle wall of separation" (Ephesians 2:14)* lay across. The Gentiles were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, and were those who were far off.

Third, the order of all things itself became disordered. As sin entered, the forces of darkness came to strut about, and what Paul calls "*the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12)* came to wield authority that disorders all things.

Like this, in the background of unification lay a deep and

extensive scattering and division reaching God and man, person and person, and all things entirely.

### 3) God's decree prepared from before the foundation of the world

However, the surprising thing is the fact that this unification was not an emergency prescription hurriedly prepared only after sin entered. God already knew that sin would enter and all things would be scattered, and from before the foundation of the world, He predetermined that eternal will to unite all things again in Christ.

Paul says in chapter 1, verse 4, *"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,"* and in chapter 1, verses 9-10, he reveals that this unification is *"the mystery of His will"* and was prepared to be accomplished *"the fullness of the times."* That is, underlying the background of unification is God's eternal decree that had been unwaveringly situated from before all ages.

### 4) Unification accomplished by the cross of Christ

Then, how was this unification concretely accomplished? That work of gathering scattered all things back into one was accomplished by none other than the salvation personally accomplished by Jesus Christ.

Paul clearly reveals that the disconnected relationship between God and man was restored again by the blood of Christ. He declares in chapter 2, verse 13, *"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."* Also, the wall that blocked between Jews and Gentiles was personally broken down by Christ. Paul unravels in chapter 2, verses 14-16,

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*"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross."*

That is, this great unification was not accomplished by human effort or any system, but only by the precious blood Jesus Christ shed on the cross. The blood of Christ reconnected the disconnected relationship between God and man, broke down the blocked wall between person and person, and made the two into one body.

**In summary**

Like this, 'the unification of all things in Christ' was accomplished against the background of the order of creation that was originally one, the deep darkness scattered and divided due to sin, God's eternal decree prepared from before the foundation of the world, and finally the reconciliation accomplished by the cross of Christ.

And right in the middle of all this unification lies the perfect gospel accomplished by Jesus Christ. To gather all scattered and divided things back into one, Jesus first personally took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River. Since what originally scattered all things was none other than sin, He laid the foundation for this unification by personally taking upon Himself those sins. And with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, He broke down the wall that was blocked between God and man, and by rising again, He gave us eternal life. Therefore, the great thought of Ephesians called 'the

unification of all things' is by no means an abstract concept, but a glorious truth firmly established upon the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus personally accomplished through the Jordan River, the cross, and the resurrection.

## 11. Similarities between this epistle and Colossians

Ephesians and Colossians have surprisingly many similarities in their content development and vocabulary expressions, so much so that they are often called "twin epistles." This seems to originate from the fact that the two letters were sent together at the same time, from the same prison, carried in the hands of the same Tychicus (Ephesians 6:21, Colossians 4:7). Examining the similarities of the two letters side by side is a great help in understanding the character of Ephesians even more clearly.

### Similarities in content development

First, the two letters show a very similar appearance in their overall structure and flow.

| Category | Ephesians | Colossians |
|---|---|---|
| Basic structure | Doctrine (Ch. 1-3) → Practice (Ch. 4-6) | Doctrine (Ch. 1-2) → Practice (Ch. 3-4) |
| Recording circumstances | Recorded in prison | Recorded in prison |
| Deliverer | Tychicus (Eph 6:21-22) | Tychicus (Col 4:7-8) |
| Christ and the church | Christ is the head, the church is His body (Eph 1:22-23) | Christ is the head of the body, the church (Col 1:18) |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Hidden mystery | The revelation of the mystery now revealed (Eph 3:5-6) | The mystery now revealed (Col 1:26-27) |
| New man | Put off the old man and put on the new man (Eph 4:22-24) | Having put off the old man and put on the new man (Col 3:9-10) |
| Family ethics | Wives/husbands, children/parents, servants/masters (Eph 5:22-6:9) | Wives/husbands, children/parents, servants/masters (Col 3:18-4:1) |
| Concluding exhortation | Redeem the time, walk in wisdom (Eph 5:15-16) | Redeem the time, walk in wisdom (Col 4:5) |

In particular, the structure of unraveling doctrine first and then exhorting practice upon it, the flow of unraveling the church as His body with Christ as the head, and also the so-called family ethics section that exhorts the relationships between wives and husbands, children and parents, and servants and masters in turn, are dealt with in almost the same order in the two letters, making this the part where their similarity is most distinctly revealed.

### Similarities in vocabulary and expressions

Next, the two letters share many of the same expressions and phrases together. Although the method of measuring the degree differs slightly depending on scholars, there is generally a consensus in seeing that a significant portion of Colossians shares expressions with Ephesians.

| Theme | Ephesians | Colossians |
|---|---|---|
| Redemption and the removal of sins | "through His blood we received redemption, that is, the removal of sins" (Eph 1:7) | "in His Son we obtained redemption, that is, the removal of sins" (Col 1:14) |
| Worthy walk | "walking worthy of the calling with which you were called" (Eph 4:1) | "walking worthy of the Lord" (Col 1:10) |
| Sending Tychicus | "Tychicus will make all things known to you" (Eph 6:21) | "Tychicus will make all my circumstances known to you" (Col 4:7) |
| Praise | "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph 5:19) | "singing in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Col 3:16) |
| Fullness | "the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph 1:23) | "in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col 2:9) |
| Apostle's office | "according to the gift of God's grace I became a minister" (Eph 3:7) | "of which I became a minister of the church" (Col 1:25) |

Like this, expressions such as *"redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins,"* the expression *"speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,"* and the greetings conveyed while sending Tychicus are unraveled in almost the exact same words in the two letters, clearly showing that they are letters that came from the same hand at the same time.

## Differences amidst similarities

However, just because the two letters are similar like this does not mean their contents are completely the same. Clear differences are also situated between the two letters, so

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examining them together is necessary for a balanced understanding.

Colossians places its focus on defending that Christ is preeminent over all things, in order to correct the false teachings that entered the Colossian church. That is, it can be called a "Christ-centered" letter that gathers all attention to Christ. On the other hand, rather than dealing with a specific problem, Ephesians places its focus on unfolding that truth more broadly and deeply to unravel the glorious mystery of the entire church, which is the body of Christ. That is, it can be called a "church-centered" letter that broadened its vision to the church. Therefore, even if the same expressions are used, the words that were used in the place of defending Christ in Colossians are shown to be unfolded even more broadly in the place of unraveling the mystery of the church in Ephesians.

**In summary**

Like this, Ephesians and Colossians have surprisingly many similarities in their structure and vocabulary, so they rightfully deserve to be called "twin epistles." It is extremely natural that two letters sent from the same prison, at the same time, carried in the hands of the same Tychicus are so similar.

And right in the center of what these two letters are consistently unraveling lies the perfect gospel accomplished by Jesus Christ. The very fact that both letters equally sing of *"redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins,"* clearly shows this fact. The very gospel that Jesus personally took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, removed all our sins with that precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave eternal life by rising again, is the essence of the one gospel that

the two letters are holding onto together. Ephesians broadly unfolded this gospel into the mystery of the church, and Colossians deeply defended this gospel as the preeminence of Christ, so the two letters are ultimately like a pair of mirrors brightly reflecting the same one gospel in different colors.

## 12. Briefly explain the main contents of this epistle

Ephesians consists of a total of six chapters, and its contents are largely divided into two parts. The first three chapters (chapters 1-3) are the doctrinal part that unravels the richness of the grace that saints received in Christ, and the latter three chapters (chapters 4-6) are the practical part that exhorts the appearance of life that must be lived worthily of that grace. That is, it forms an orderly structure of first unraveling the "received grace," and then exhorting the "worthy life" upon it. Briefly examining the main contents of each chapter is as follows.

### Chapter 1 — Spiritual blessings received in Christ

The first chapter opens with a massive doxology singing of the spiritual blessings God bestowed upon us in Christ. Paul begins by saying, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3)*, and sequentially unravels the event of choosing us before the foundation of the world, the event of receiving redemption and the removal of sins by the blood of Christ, and the event of being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Following this, Paul earnestly prays that the eyes of the saints' understanding would be enlightened so that they may realize the hope of His calling and the glory of His

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inheritance that they received (Ephesians 1:15-23).

### Chapter 2 — The grace that made alive those who were dead and the united church

The second chapter unravels the grace by which God made us, who were originally dead in trespasses and sins, alive together with Christ. Paul nails it down, saying, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8)*. Following this, he declares that Jews and Gentiles, who were originally divided like enemies, were brought near by the blood of Christ and came to form one body. Just as the word says, *"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation" (Ephesians 2:14)*, the two form one new man and are being built together into a holy temple where God dwells.

### Chapter 3 — The revelation of the hidden mystery and the prayer to know love

In the third chapter, Paul unravels that mystery that was hidden from before eternity but is now revealed, that is, the mystery that the Gentiles become fellow heirs and fellow members of the same body in Christ through the gospel (Ephesians 3:6). After revealing that he was called as a minister to preach this mystery, Paul bows his knees and prays that the saints may comprehend the width and length and depth and height of Christ's love, so that they may be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:14-19).

### Chapter 4 — Keep the unity and put on the new man

From the fourth chapter, the practical part exhorting a life worthy of the received grace begins. Paul exhorts, *"walk worthy*

*of the calling with which you were called" (Ephesians 4:1),* and tells them to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Also, he reveals that Christ gave gifts to each person to equip the saints and edify the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13), and exhorts them to put off the old man and put on the new man (Ephesians 4:22-24).

### Chapter 5 — Walk in love, like children of light

The fifth chapter exhorts the saints to walk in love and live like children of light. Paul says, *"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children" (Ephesians 5:1),* and exhorts them to cast off the works of darkness and walk wisely in the light. Following this, he unravels the relationship between wives and husbands, and he unravels this not merely as simple family ethics but as a deep mystery that exactly reflects and shows the relationship between Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:22-33).

### Chapter 6 — Restoration of all relationships and the whole armor of God

The final sixth chapter sequentially exhorts the relationships between children and parents, and servants and masters, and then exhorts them to put on the whole armor of God for the spiritual battle the saints face. Paul reveals, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12),* and exhorts them to stand firm equipped with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:13-17). And he concludes the letter with greetings sending Tychicus and a final blessing.

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**In summary**

Like this, Ephesians forms an orderly flow that first unravels the spiritual blessings received in Christ (Chapter 1), the grace that made alive those who were dead and made the two into one (Chapter 2), and the revelation of the hidden mystery (Chapter 3), and then sequentially exhorts upon it a life keeping the unity (Chapter 4), a life like children of light (Chapter 5), and the restoration of all relationships and spiritual arming (Chapter 6). And right in the middle of all these contents lies the perfect gospel accomplished by Jesus Christ. All that grace that Ephesians unravels flows out from that gospel that Jesus personally took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again. The fact that we who were dead came alive, the fact that the blocked wall was broken down, and the fact that we came to put on the new man are all fruits of this one gospel. Therefore, when reading Ephesians chapter by chapter, we repeatedly realize that all those words are ultimately glorious truths firmly established upon this gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## 13. What is the position this epistle occupies among all the epistles?

Ephesians is a letter that occupies a very high and glorious position even among the various epistles of the New Testament. Looking at the volume, it is a relatively short letter of no more than six chapters, but the height, depth, and width of the truth contained within it do not fall behind any other epistle. There is

a good reason why many people have referred to this letter as the letter that has climbed to the highest peak among Paul's epistles.

## The letter that unfolded the essence of the gospel at the highest dimension

The first position that Ephesians occupies lies in the fact that it is a letter that unfolded the essence of the gospel at the highest and deepest dimension.

If Romans is the letter that most systematically established the foundation of the gospel by unraveling sin and righteousness, law and grace with orderly logic, Ephesians is the letter that unfolded and showed that gospel with the broadest vision, from God's eternal decree before the foundation of the world to the unification of all things. Here, transcending time and space, Paul makes us look at a glance from the will of God who chose us before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4) to the very end of that eternal dispensation which He *"purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him" (Ephesians 1:9-10)*. Therefore, Ephesians is commonly referred to as "the highest peak of the gospel."

## The letter that most abundantly contains the truth of the church

Secondly, Ephesians occupies a unique position in that it is the letter that most abundantly contained the truth of the church, which is the body of Christ.

Unlike other epistles in the New Testament that usually deal with the specific circumstances of a local church, Ephesians

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unravels the mystery of the universal church itself, transcending any single church. Among the New Testament, Ephesians is the foremost letter that so deeply and gloriously unravels that the church is His body with Christ as the head (Ephesians 1:22-23), the holy temple where God Himself dwells (Ephesians 2:21-22), and the place where Jews and Gentiles form one new man (Ephesians 2:15). For this reason, some people have even called Ephesians "the queen of Paul's epistles."

**The high evaluation received in history**

Thirdly, the position that Ephesians occupies is also clearly revealed in the high evaluations that countless people have dedicated to this letter throughout church history.
The Reformer John Calvin is known to have particularly cherished Ephesians, and a British writer once referred to Ephesians as one of the holiest writings among all texts written by man. Also, many ancestors of faith read this letter, were captivated by the richness of grace contained within it, and experienced their faith and lives being newly transformed. Like this, repeating through the ages, Ephesians has firmly kept its position as the powerful word that has awakened and saved countless souls. (However, since some of these evaluations are quoted slightly differently in the process of their exact expressions being passed down, only their meanings have been preserved and transferred here.)

**The position among the Prison Epistles**

Fourthly, Ephesians forms the so-called Prison Epistles along with Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, and even among them, it is positioned as the letter containing the highest and deepest truth.

Particularly, if Colossians, which was recorded together at the same time, focuses on defending the preeminence of Christ, Ephesians unfolds that truth even more broadly into the glorious mystery of the entire church. That is, Ephesians can be called the letter that elevated the truth of the Prison Epistles to the most universal and vast dimension.

**In summary**

Like this, as the letter that unfolds the essence of the gospel at the highest dimension, most abundantly contains the truth of the church, has consistently received high evaluations in history, and forms the deepest peak even among the Prison Epistles, Ephesians occupies a truly glorious position among all the epistles.

However, that high position that Ephesians occupies never originates from fancy sentences or deep thoughts themselves. The true source of that glorious position lies in the fact that this letter, from beginning to end, is firmly established upon the perfect gospel accomplished by Jesus Christ. All those spiritual blessings, the mystery of the church, and the unification of all things that Ephesians sings of, flowed out from that gospel that Jesus personally took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again. It is exactly that gospel of the water and the Spirit that placed this one letter on the highest peak of the New Testament, and it also makes us ourselves, who read this word today, climb that glorious peak together and newly realize that we are those who have been saved by grace through faith.

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## 14. What is another name for this epistle being called based on the place where it was recorded?

Ephesians is called “Ephesians” after the name of Ephesus, the place receiving it. However, this letter is also called by another different name, which is a title based on the place and circumstances where this letter was recorded, namely the “Prison Epistle.”

### The reason it is called a Prison Epistle

As examined earlier, Paul did not write this letter with a free body, but recorded it in the status of a prisoner for the gospel. He calls himself a *“prisoner”* multiple times inside this letter. He says in Chapter 3, Verse 1, *“I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—”* and also says in Chapter 4, Verse 1, *“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you”* and in Chapter 6, Verse 20, he reveals his situation saying, *“for which I am an ambassador in chains.”*
Like this, because this letter was recorded while Paul was imprisoned in jail, it came to be called by another name, the “Prison Epistle,” based on the circumstances in which it was recorded.

### The four Prison Epistles

There are a total of four letters bundled together under this name “Prison Epistles.” Namely, they are Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. These four letters all possess the commonality that they were recorded by Paul in the body of a prisoner.
Among these, judging from their contents and the circumstances of their sending, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon appear to

have been recorded together at the same time, and all appear to have been sent carried in the hands of Tychicus (Ephesians 6:21, Colossians 4:7). The reason these four letters are bundled together under the single name "Prison Epistles" is precisely because of this common recording circumstance.

**The meaning that the name Prison Epistle holds**

This name "Prison Epistle" does not merely stop at informing of the place where it was recorded, but contains a deep meaning in itself.

To see with human eyes, being imprisoned in jail means that all work stops and the path ahead is blocked. However, from that imprisoned place, Paul rather unraveled the highest and deepest truth regarding the church, Christ, and God's eternal dispensation of salvation. He confessed that even his binding was being a prisoner *"in the Lord,"* and being a prisoner *"of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles" (Ephesians 4:1, 3:1).* That is, he did not consider his binding as a matter of lamentation, but rather accepted it as a glorious binding for the gospel.

**In summary**

Like this, Ephesians is called "Ephesians" following its receiving place, and at the same time, it is called by another name, the "Prison Epistle," following its recorded circumstances. And this name "Prison Epistle" awakens us to the fact that, along with Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, it is a glorious letter drawn up from the hands of the prisoner Paul.

Although Paul's body was bound in a Roman prison, that gospel he preached could never be bound by any chains. That gospel—that Jesus personally took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the

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precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again—was a gospel of power that not even prison doors could lock up. For that very reason, this letter drawn up from the prison of a prisoner rather overflowed toward the whole world, shining the light of that glorious grace even to us today.

## 15. Divide the outline of this epistle.

When we unfold and examine Ephesians like a well-structured piece of writing, we discover that a very orderly structure is situated within it. Apostle Paul certainly did not unfold his thoughts incoherently, but rather unfolds the truth of the gospel following a deep flow of first unraveling the richness of grace the saints have received, and then exhorting a proper life upon it. Therefore, clearly dividing the major streams of Ephesians is a great help in correctly understanding this letter.

### The overall structure of Ephesians

Ephesians is broadly divided into two parts. The first three chapters (1:1-3:21) are the doctrinal part that unravels the grace the saints have received in Christ, and the latter three chapters (4:1-6:24) are the practical part that exhorts the life that must be lived worthily of that grace. That is, unraveling the "received grace" first and then exhorting the "proper life" is the grand structure that pierces through the entirety of Ephesians. If we divide these two parts in more detail, Ephesians can be examined in seven main points as follows.

### 1) Greetings (1:1-2)

The first main point is the beginning part of the letter, the part where Paul introduces himself, reveals the recipients, and conveys his greetings. Paul opens the door of the letter by saying, *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1:1).*

### 2) Spiritual blessings received in Christ (1:3-23)

The second main point consists of a massive doxology singing of the spiritual blessings God has bestowed upon us in Christ. Starting with *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:3),* Paul sequentially unravels the act of choosing us before the foundation of the world, the act of receiving redemption and the removal of sins through Christ's blood, and the act of being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Following this, he earnestly prays that the eyes of the saints' understanding may be enlightened to realize the hope of His calling and the glory of His inheritance (Ephesians 1:15-23).

### 3) Salvation by grace and the united church (2:1-22)

The third main point is the part that unravels the grace of God who made us alive together with Christ, who were originally dead in trespasses and sins. After nailing down that *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8),* he declares that Jews and Gentiles, who were originally divided, have been brought near by the blood of Christ to form one body and are being built together into a holy temple where God dwells (Ephesians 2:14-22).

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**4) Revelation of the hidden mystery and prayer to know the love (3:1-21)**

The fourth main point is the part that unravels that mystery which was hidden from eternity past but is now revealed, namely the mystery that the Gentiles become fellow heirs and fellow members of the body in Christ through the gospel (Ephesians 3:6). After revealing that he was called as a minister to preach this mystery, Paul bows his knees and prays that the saints would realize the love of Christ and be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:14-19). With this prayer and doxology at the end, the doctrinal part is concluded.

**5) The life of keeping the unity and putting on the new man (4:1-32)**

From the fifth main point, the practical part exhorting a life worthy of the received grace begins. Exhorting to *"walk worthy of the calling with which you were called" (Ephesians 4:1)*, Paul tells them to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. He also reveals that Christ giving gifts to each person is to build up His body, and exhorts them to put off the old man and put on the new man (Ephesians 4:22-24).

**6) The life worthy of children of light and the restoration of all relationships (5:1-6:9)**

The sixth main point is the part exhorting the saints to walk in love and live worthily as children of light. Saying, *"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children." (Ephesians 5:1)*, Paul exhorts them to cast off the works of darkness and walk wisely in the light. Following this, he sequentially unravels the relationships between wives and husbands, children and parents, and bondservants and masters, particularly unraveling the

relationship between wife and husband as a deep mystery by comparing it to the relationship between Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:22-33).

### 7) Spiritual armoring and closing greetings (6:10-24)

The final seventh main point consists of the part exhorting to put on the whole armor of God for the spiritual battle that the saints face, and the greetings that conclude the letter. Revealing that *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12),* Paul exhorts them to stand firm equipped with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. And he finishes the letter with greetings sending Tychicus and a final blessing (Ephesians 6:21-24).

### The deep logic shown by the flow of the main points

Like this, as we follow the main points of Ephesians, a deep flow of logic that naturally connects from one stage to the next is seen. First, it unravels what spiritual blessings the saints received in Christ (second main point), how those who were dead came alive to form one body (third main point), and what glorious mystery is contained within it (fourth main point). And then it sequentially exhorts how those who have received all this grace should rightfully keep the unity (fifth main point), live worthily as children of light (sixth main point), and finally stand firm against the forces of darkness (seventh main point).
Particularly, the single word *"Therefore"* in chapter 4, verse 1, placed at the position connecting these two parts, is very deeply meaningful. The abundant grace unraveled in the first three

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chapters naturally flows into the life of the latter three chapters through the single word *"Therefore."* That is, the received grace does not remain as knowledge in the head, but comes to appear as holy fruit in daily life.

**Synthesizing all of this**

Like this, Ephesians is like a well-structured letter with a very orderly structure. Starting with greetings, passing through the doxology of spiritual blessings received in Christ, advancing to the mystery of salvation by grace and the united church, reaching the revelation of the hidden mystery and deep prayer, and then passing through the exhortations of a life keeping unity and a life worthy of children of light, it forms one great flow that reaches spiritual armoring and a glorious conclusion.

And at the center that the flow of all these main points consistently points to, the perfect gospel accomplished by Jesus Christ is situated. All those spiritual blessings, new life, and unity that the saints received flowed out from that gospel that Jesus personally took upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, saved us with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and gave us eternal life by rising again. Therefore, when we engrave the structure of these main points in our hearts and read Ephesians verse by verse, we will come to realize even more clearly the deep and wide truth of the gospel that Apostle Paul is unraveling, and within that gospel, we ourselves will newly discover that we are glorious ones who have received *"every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:3)*.

## 16. What is the key verse of this epistle?

In a book, there is bound to be a verse that gathers and contains the core of its entirety in one place. This is called a key verse, and Ephesians also possesses a glorious key verse that captures its abundant truth in one frame.

### The key verse of Ephesians — Chapter 2, Verses 8-9

The word most widely counted as the key verse of Ephesians is Chapter 2, Verses 8-9. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).*
Within this passage, the essence of the gospel that Ephesians is unraveling is contained intact. That salvation does not come from human works or merit but solely by God's grace, and that that grace is God's gift received only through faith, and therefore a person can never boast of anything. This completely forms one mind and one will with the truth of justification by faith that Romans unraveled with orderly logic, namely the gospel that one is justified by faith and not by works of the law.

### The reason the key verse illuminates the entirety of Ephesians

The reason this key verse illuminates the entirety of Ephesians is clear. All those spiritual blessings, new life, and the mystery of the church that the earlier part of Ephesians (Chapters 1-3) unravels, ultimately flowed out from the "salvation received by faith through grace" that this one verse proclaims. Also, all that holy life that the latter part (Chapters 4-6) exhorts is also the fruit that the one who received this grace must rightfully bear. That is, the two great streams of Ephesians,

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which are the received grace and the proper life, both have their roots in this single key verse.

### Another verse containing the core thought — Chapter 1, Verse 10

On the other hand, looking from the aspect of the core thought of Ephesians, Chapter 1, Verse 10 can also be counted together as a very important verse supporting the center of this letter. *"He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him" (Ephesians 1:10).*

As examined earlier, "God's eternal dispensation to unite all things in Christ" is the core thought piercing through the entirety of Ephesians. Therefore, if Chapter 2, Verses 8-9 is the key verse containing the essence of salvation conveyed by Ephesians, Chapter 1, Verse 10 can be called the key verse containing the eternal goal that that salvation heads toward, namely the unification of all things. When we engrave these two verses together in our hearts, we come to look at a glance at the starting point of the gospel conveyed by Ephesians and its glorious end.

### Synthesizing all of this

Like this, the key verse of Ephesians is Chapter 2, Verses 8-9, which says, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8),* and Chapter 1, Verse 10 containing its core thought harmonizes together with this, brightly illuminating the center of this letter. And right in the middle of that gracious salvation proclaimed by this key verse, the perfect gospel personally accomplished by Jesus Christ is situated. That salvation, which is the *"gift of God,"* was never given without cost, but was prepared by Jesus

personally taking upon Himself all the sins of the whole world by being baptized in the Jordan River, paying the price with the precious blood He shed by receiving all the punishment for those sins on the cross, and giving us eternal life by rising again. Therefore, when we read this key verse and sing of "salvation received by faith through grace," we come to look together at that great love and that precious blood hidden behind that grace, and we come to bow our heads once again and give thanks before that gospel of the water and the Spirit. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 1

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Ephesians Chapter 1

# Praise God's Plan of Salvation

**< Ephesians 1:1-23 >**

**"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in**

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**whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."**

## The Qualification of an Apostle Came by the Will of God

*"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1:1).*

The Book of Ephesians is a letter the Apostle Paul sent to the saints of the church in Ephesus. Beginning this letter, Paul first reveals how he became an apostle. He confesses that he became

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an apostle not by his own determination or effort, but *"by the will of God."* He made it known that even the office of an apostle did not start from the human side, but was given by calling from God's side.

The part to pay attention to here is the phrase expressing the recipients of the letter, *"the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus."* Becoming a saint, and becoming a faithful person, is not the result of them making themselves holy. The text says they are in Christ Jesus. The way for a person to become holy and faithful is not through their own religious discipline, but only in Christ Jesus. Only when a sinner is transferred into Christ by faith can they be called a saint.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the only way for a person to enter into Christ Jesus is faith believing in the work of salvation Jesus accomplished. Jesus took upon Himself the sins at once through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), and by shedding His blood on the cross while carrying those sins and resurrecting from death, He became the Savior of those who believe. Only those who believe in this work of baptism, the cross, and resurrection enter into Christ Jesus and become saints. Just as Paul attributed his becoming an apostle to the will of God, the saints becoming saints is also due to faith believing in the work of salvation God accomplished in Christ.

## Enjoying Peace Through the Grace of Salvation

*"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:2).*

Paul's first greeting is "grace and peace." These two are not two separate blessings apart from each other, but blessings

coming from one. First, *"Grace"* comes, and through that grace, *"peace"* comes. We must pay attention to the part where the text reveals the source of this grace and peace as *"from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."* Grace and peace are not created from the human side, but are gifts of salvation that flow from God the Father and Jesus Christ and come upon us who believe.

The word *"Grace"* refers to the freely given gift of salvation. What is given to those who believe the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the gift of salvation. God accomplished salvation through the work of eliminating our sins and saving us from the sins of the world, and gave it as a gift to those who believe. It is not something a person obtained by adding deeds or merit, but a gift of salvation that God made and gave freely from beginning to end. Therefore, not even 0.1% of human effort went into this salvation. It is salvation made 100% by God's gift. *"Peace"* comes out precisely from this grace of salvation. If a person had to be responsible for even a part of salvation, the person could never be sure if they had fully handled their share and would always be anxious. However, if salvation is 100% God's gift, all a person has to do is acknowledge and believe in that accomplished salvation. Just as it takes no effort to look at a water cup and acknowledge it is a water cup, He gives true peace to those who acknowledge and accept the salvation given to believers by Jesus Christ, who received the transfer of the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, was put to death on the cross, and resurrected.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the content of this grace and peace must be clear. The grace freely given by God is exactly the gospel of salvation that Jesus bore our sins through the baptism He received from John, paid all the price for those sins on the cross, and guaranteed our

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righteousness by resurrecting from death. When we believe this word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and acknowledge that all sins have been washed away, because our sin problem has been completely solved, an unwavering peace comes upon our hearts. Faith that emphasizes only the blood of the cross misses the baptism that transferred the sins, so the assurance of the removal of sins wavers, but faith believing in Jesus' baptism, the cross, and resurrection from death knows that the sins of the world were handled at once, thus entering into true peace. Conversely, those who try to add something to salvation with their own deeds and religiosity always suffer from guilt under the law and cannot obtain the peace God gives.

## Blessing Us with Every Spiritual Blessing in the Heavenly Places in Christ

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

Finishing his greeting and opening the main subject, Paul first bursts out in joy saying, *"Blessed be."* This word means praising God's love and righteousness. Offering praise with our lips during worship is exactly the act of complimenting God. Paul confesses that because the work God has done is so great and proper, he cannot help but compliment Him.

The reason for the compliment is recorded in the text. It says, *"the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."* Here, *"every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places"* refers to the blessing of becoming God's children. There is no greater blessing than a sinner believing the word of the gospel of the

water and the Spirit, receiving the washing of their sins, and receiving the blessing of becoming God's child. And it is the fact that the channel through which this blessing is given is *"in Christ."* The blessing of salvation is given not by human merit, but only in Jesus Christ, through faith believing in the work of salvation He accomplished.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the expression *"in Christ"* speaks of the entire work of salvation Jesus performed for us. Jesus took upon Himself all our sins of the world at once through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, paid all the price for sin by being crucified and shedding His blood, and confirmed our salvation by resurrecting in three days. When one enters into Christ by believing the work of Jesus taking charge of the sins of the world through the baptism received from John, the blood shed on the cross, and the resurrection from death, they receive the blessing of becoming God's child. Therefore, the blessing of salvation God gives is a gift God bestowed in Christ from beginning to end, and we merely believe in His work and praise Him.

## Chosen in Christ Before the Foundation of the World

*"Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:4).*

This word reveals when our salvation began. *"Before the foundation of the world,"* that is, before this universe was made, God chose us in Christ. It means that long before we were born in this world, even before the world existed, our salvation was already determined in God's plan. Therefore, our being saved is

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never a matter done by our effort or will, but entirely God's work. Then, what kind of person did God the Father choose? The text says He chose in Christ. This means He foreknew that humans would become sinners, and planned to save those sinners in His Son. We can know this by looking at Isaac's sons Esau and Jacob in the Book of Genesis in the Old Testament. The one who looked honest, strong, and diligent was rather Esau, but God decided to save the lacking and weak Jacob. The person God wants to save is one who knows their own weakness like Jacob. God, who wants to save a person like Jacob, places His purpose in wanting to receive praise Himself. God's purpose is *"that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."* From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the reason we become holy and without blame before God is solely because Jesus took upon Himself our sins of the world through the baptism He received from John and paid the price for those sins on the cross. Because the sins of the world were transferred to Jesus' body, the one who believes in Jesus' work of sacrifice stands before God as one who has no sin remaining anymore. It is not a legalistic effort to become holy by human deeds, but the one who believes in the work of salvation Jesus accomplished becomes one who has the faith that reaches holiness.

## Predestined to Adoption as Sons According to the Good Pleasure of His Will

*"Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Ephesians 1:5).*

*"Predestined"* means determined in advance. It means God did not ask or consult us, but *"according to the good pleasure of*

*His will,"* He predestined in advance to save us from the sins of the world and make us God's children. Just as God did not consult with creatures when creating this universe, in the matter of saving us, He predestined to make weak and lacking ones God's children in Jesus' love entirely within God's sovereign will.

However, God's predestination is not a predestination without reason. God's predestination is not an unconditional selection of choosing some and discarding others. The text says that predestination is accomplished *"by Jesus Christ."* It means God the Father chose weak and lacking ones in His Son Jesus Christ and predestined to give them salvation. Therefore, between these two people, Esau and Jacob, He decided to choose, call, and give salvation to a lacking and sinful one like Jacob. This providence of salvation is revealed in the word, *"having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself."* Our becoming sons of God is not because of our qualifications, but solely because Jesus received the transfer of the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, paid the price for sin with His blood on the cross, and resurrected from death, thus deciding to give eternal salvation to those who believe.

## To the Praise of the Glory of God's Grace Freely Given

*"To the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6).*

This verse speaks of the final purpose of all the choosing and predestination mentioned earlier. The reason God wanted to make us His children in Jesus Christ is that the purpose lies in making us praise the glory of God's grace. Our being saved from

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all the sins of the world and becoming God's children is not to boast of ourselves, but to praise and give glory to God's love and plan that bestowed salvation upon us.

It records that our salvation is *"by which He made us accepted in the Beloved." "In the Beloved"* means exactly in the love of God the Father's Son, Jesus Christ. All the grace given to us is a gift of salvation freely given in Christ, through faith believing in His righteousness. The word "freely" speaks of God's gift of grace.

The gift of salvation the Triune God gives to sinners is as follows. He granted it to those who believe the salvation accomplished by Jesus taking upon Himself the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, paying the price for those sins with blood on the cross, and resurrecting from death. God sent His Son to accomplish all that work of salvation on our behalf and gave it as a gift to those who believe. Therefore, the one who has received the salvation God gave comes to boast and praise that grace of salvation even more because they know their own weakness. Our worship and praise are the proper responses to the gift of salvation God has bestowed upon us.

## Redemption Through His Blood, the Removal of Sins

*"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7).*

Paul says, *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."* Here, *"redemption"* means bought by paying a price. We were supposed to receive the judgment of sin due to our sins and enter

into eternal curses, but Jesus Christ took charge of the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, was crucified, shed His blood, and resurrected from death to become our Savior now.

The text says that redemption was accomplished *"through His blood."* This does not merely point to the event of only shedding blood on the cross. Looking at the Day of Atonement sacrifice in Leviticus 16 of the Old Testament, the meaning becomes clear. The High Priest laid his two hands on the head of the goat, transferring all the sins of the people of Israel to that goat at once, and sent the goat carrying the people's sins into the wilderness. What we must know is that only after their sins were first transferred to the sacrificial offering by the laying on of hands did that sacrificial offering shed blood and make atonement.

Jesus also, according to the sacrificial law of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament, received the transfer of the sins of all mankind at once through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), and while bearing those sins of the world, He was crucified, shed His blood, resurrected from death, and became our eternal Savior. That is why John the Baptist, after baptizing Him, could testify, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the phrase *"through His blood"* speaks of the salvation where the sins of the world were transferred to Jesus' body through the baptism Jesus received from John, leading to the blood of the cross. Since the life of the flesh is in the blood, Jesus pouring out all His blood means He gave up His new life for us. If there had been no work of baptism bearing the sins of the world, there would have been no need to shed the blood of the cross either. Because all our sins were transferred to Jesus as the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, that shedding

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of blood became exactly the price for our sins. Therefore, faith that emphasizes only the blood of the cross cannot know how sins were transferred to Jesus, but the one who knows and believes the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit spoken by the Lord reaches the perfect faith of receiving the blotting out of sins in their heart. This is the *"riches of His grace"* and it also becomes the gospel of salvation freely bestowed upon sinners who have no qualification to receive it.

## The Mystery of His Will Made Known in All Wisdom and Prudence

*"Which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ" (Ephesians 1:8-10).*

God not only redeemed us from all the sins of the world, but He also taught us so that we could clearly know the word of the gospel of that redemption. He said, *"which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will."*
The text says all this is *"according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times." "Dispensation"* refers to the plan God has stored up for a long time and the wisdom by which He carries out that plan. God prepared and planned in advance all the things to save us from the sins of the world, and at the *"fullness of the times"* He sent Jesus Christ to this earth and led Him to perform the work of salvation. Jesus being born borrowing a woman's body, taking upon Himself the sins of the world through the baptism

He received from John at the age of thirty, being crucified, shedding blood, resurrecting from death, and becoming our Savior was a work planned before the foundation of the world. That we now hear this word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believe in our hearts is also the salvation that was within the plan of God the Father. In the age of the law, they thought they would obtain salvation from their sins by keeping the law, but now the time of salvation has come where one obtains salvation from sin simply by knowing God's love in the heart and believing in the heart. God foreknew that we would be born in this age and become sinners, and made known the gospel of the water and the Spirit through God's church. Therefore, our coming to believe God's love in our hearts is not a coincidence, but an event permitted so that we could receive salvation in time for the time of salvation prepared from before the foundation of the world.

## Heaven and Earth Gathered Together in One in Christ

*"He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him" (Ephesians 1:10).*

This word reveals the purpose of the salvation God planned. He said, *"He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him."* Namely, God's plan of salvation speaks of God's love bestowed upon all those who are sinners and suffering. All the plans and will of God the Father were God's will to reconcile those who had been enemies with God until now, in Jesus Christ.
God's will was in making them one in Christ. There is no way

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for a person who has become a sinner to become one without paying a price. They could become God's people only by believing in the heart in the Lord of salvation who resurrected from death, the blood of the cross that paid the price of sin, and the baptism received from John where Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the world. Only when all our sins are completely solved can we become one body with God, and this is because the Lord took the transfer of the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, handled our sin problem by shedding blood on the cross, and became our Savior.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, humanity is originally divided into two categories. Those who respond with "Yes" to God's calling and believe the salvation He gave, and those who do not, but believe only in their own strength now and reject God's love. God calls anyone in Jesus Christ, but it is God's will that those who assert their own righteousness and reject the love of Jesus Christ stumble over the stumbling stone and perish. However, He makes those who know their own weakness like Jacob and rely on God's love become God's children through faith believing in the work of Jesus Christ. And within all these plans of God, at the end there is a new heaven and a new earth, and those who obtained salvation by believing in their hearts the salvation prepared in Christ will obtain eternal life and live eternally together with God. This is the grand dispensation God carries out through the gospel of the water and the Spirit of the salvation planned for humanity.

## Predestined According to His Purpose to Obtain an Inheritance

*"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will" (Ephesians 1:11).*

Inheriting the dispensation of salvation mentioned earlier, Paul now reveals how we became God's possession. The phrase *"according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will"* states that God is the One who accomplishes all things according to His will. Our salvation is not done by human will or coincidence, but is something accomplished as planned within the salvation of God who governs all things.

He said, *"we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined."* Here, "obtained an inheritance" means that we became God's, that is, God's possession. We were able to become God's people by believing the word of the gospel of salvation prepared in Christ. However, the word of God clearly says that all this was accomplished by being predestined. Even before making the universe and creating humans, God foreknew that Adam and Eve would be weak and fall into sin, and planned to save them through the salvation work of His Son.

That we became God's inheritance depended entirely on Christ's work. Jesus took upon Himself our sins by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, paid the price of death by shedding blood on the cross, and resurrected on the third day after dying, thereby saving us who believe now from the sins of the world. Those who believe this word of the gospel of salvation in their hearts could become God's children by that faith. There is nothing done on our part, and from beginning to end, we could become those saved by believing the grace of

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Jesus Christ who resurrected from death, the price of the sacrifice of the cross, and the work of baptism of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

## That We Should Be to the Praise of His Glory

*"That we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:12).*

This verse reveals the purpose for which God made us His inheritance. He said, *"that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."* The purpose for which God saved us from the sins of the world and made us His children is to make us praise God's glory. The reason we are saved is to praise and give glory to God.

We must pay attention to the text saying *"we who first trusted."* Our becoming God's people was something desired and planned from a long time ago on God's side. Making us sinless righteous people, His children, is a great glory and joy from God's perspective. Just as parents are proud of their children, God is proud of and rejoices in us who have received the elimination of sins. Therefore, our becoming sinless people becomes glory to God, and to us, it becomes a proper reason to praise God.

## Hearing and Believing the Gospel of Salvation and Being Sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise

*"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13).*

This verse shows in order how salvation is actually applied to us. First, *"after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation;"* then *"also, having believed,"* and as a result of that faith, *"you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."* Namely, salvation begins with hearing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, continues to faith believing that gospel, and is completed by the sealing with the Holy Spirit coming upon the one who believes.

What is the *"gospel of your salvation"* here? It is exactly the truth that Jesus received the transfer of the sins of the world to His body through the baptism He received from John, was crucified, shed blood, resurrected from death, and saved us who believe now. When we hear this gospel and believe it with our hearts, God sends the Holy Spirit as promised and bestows a *"Sealed"* upon our hearts. "Sealing" means confirming that you are My child, just like stamping a seal on a contract. God acknowledged us as His children, and poured the Holy Spirit into our hearts as proof of that.

## The Holy Spirit Who is the Guarantee of Our Inheritance

*"Who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:14).*

This verse explains what meaning the sealing of the Holy Spirit received in the previous verse has. He said, *"who is the guarantee of our inheritance."* The Holy Spirit given in our hearts is the *"guarantee"* for the inheritance, that is, the glorious inheritance we will enjoy in the kingdom of God in the future. A guarantee is a sure collateral that what was promised will

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absolutely be fulfilled. By giving us the Holy Spirit, God guaranteed that the eternal inheritance we will receive is unmistakably ours.

The text says the Holy Spirit redeems the purchased possession and is to the praise of His glory. The ones God obtained by paying the price of His Son's life are exactly us. The Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts, keeps the devil from snatching us away, and protects us so that we remain God's possession to the end. And the purpose of all these things is also *"to the praise of His glory."* Both the beginning and the end of salvation head toward praising God.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the guarantee of the Holy Spirit firmly supports the certainty of our salvation. Because Jesus took upon Himself our sins through the baptism He received from John, paid that price on the cross, and permanently guaranteed our righteousness by resurrecting from death, God gave the Holy Spirit to the one who believes that work, sealed them, and guaranteed that salvation.

## Ceaseless Thanksgiving and Prayer for the Saints' Faith and Love

*"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (Ephesians 1:15-16).*

After explaining at length the dispensation of salvation God bestowed earlier, Paul now reveals his heart toward the Ephesian saints who received that salvation. He said, *"after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints."* What Paul paid attention to are two things, namely faith *"in the*

*Lord Jesus"* and love *"for all the saints."* One who has true faith comes to love the saints who have the same faith, and this faith and love are the fruits that appear in those who are saved.
Hearing this news, Paul says, *"do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."* The news that the saints were standing in faith became a reason for ceaseless thanksgiving to Paul. This was because he knew their faith was not human merit, but the result of the salvation God accomplished. So Paul's thanksgiving ultimately heads toward God who bestowed that salvation.

## Giving the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation to Make God Known

*"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Ephesians 1:17).*

Paul reveals specifically what he prays for the saints. His first petition is that God may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation to make you know God. The important point here is that a person knowing God is not done by human cleverness or effort, but is possible only when God gives the spirit of wisdom and revelation. That we call the invisible God our Father and confess Jesus as our Savior is because God poured the Holy Spirit into our hearts.
This verse directly connects with the sealing of the Holy Spirit (verses 13-14) mentioned earlier. God not only saved us from the sins of the world, but He also gave the Holy Spirit as the guarantee of that salvation to make us know and believe what kind of person God is. A person without the Holy Spirit, even if they believe in Jesus with their mouth, does not know in their

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heart that He is their Savior. However, a person with the Holy Spirit comprehends even the deep things of God, calls God Father, and realizes His will.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the evidence that we know God is clear. As stated in Matthew 3:13-17, the one who has the Holy Spirit is the one who believes exactly that Jesus took charge of all the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, was crucified and died in our place, and resurrected in three days. A person does not first become smart and know God, but only when they believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receive the removal of sins in their heart, and the Holy Spirit comes upon them do they finally come to know God. Therefore, the wisdom and revelation to know God is a gift of salvation God freely gives from beginning to end.

## Enlightening the Eyes of the Understanding to Know the Hope of His Calling and the Glory of His Inheritance

*"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Ephesians 1:18).*

Paul's second petition is that God would enlighten the eyes of your heart to make you know two things. Namely, *"the hope of His calling"* and *"the riches of the glory of His inheritance."* There is a spiritual reality that can only be seen when the eyes of the heart, not the eyes of the flesh, are enlightened. God not only saved us from the sins of the world, but He also wants us to realize how great the salvation we received is and what glory awaits beyond it.

First, *"the hope of His calling"* indicates that the purpose for which God called us is exactly in the kingdom of heaven. God delivering us from sin and making us His children is not to let us live briefly on this earth, but to make us live eternally in the kingdom of heaven together with Him. Therefore, a saved saint must not set their heart only on this earth, but live hoping for the kingdom of heaven they will go and enjoy in the future. Second, *"the riches of the glory of His inheritance"* means that the glory to be enjoyed in that heavenly kingdom is so great and permanent that it cannot be fully expressed with human words. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, faith that stops at the place of receiving the blotting out of sins has not fully known the depth of this hope and inheritance. The salvation Jesus accomplished through baptism, the cross, and resurrection did not stop at delivering us from hell, but made us children who inherit the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven. Because this salvation is so precious, Satan tries to steal this hope using worldly things as bait. Therefore, the saint whose eyes of the heart have been enlightened does not fall into the foolishness of Esau who sold his birthright for a bowl of red bean stew, but firmly holds onto the freely received salvation and the glorious inheritance that follows it to the end.

## The Exceeding Greatness of His Power Toward Those Who Believe

*"And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power" (Ephesians 1:19).*

Paul's third petition is to make us know the exceeding greatness of the power God bestowed upon us who believe. God

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saving us is not a simple matter, but a work of exceedingly great power accomplished according to the working of His mighty power. Elevating us, who were nothing more than mere creatures and were bound to perish having fallen into sin, to be God's children is something only the almighty God can do.

There is no way for a person to become holy or become God's child by their own strength. Just as a grub cannot become a cicada on its own, a creature cannot become God's child on its own. It is possible only by God's mighty love and power. God manifested that great love toward us as power, delivered us from sin, and made us His children. Paul earnestly prayed that the saints would realize the magnitude of this power.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the exceeding greatness of this power is revealed exactly in the work of salvation Jesus accomplished. He, who is God, coming clothed in a human body, taking upon Himself our sins at once through the baptism He received from John, paying all that price on the cross, and guaranteeing our salvation by resurrecting from death is a work that cannot be accomplished without almighty power. How could a person do the work of dying and coming back to life? It was possible only because He is God. Therefore, our believing this word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receiving the removal of sins in our hearts, and becoming God's children itself is the evidence of salvation where God's exceedingly great power was bestowed upon us.

## Raised from the Dead and Seated at His Right Hand in the Heavenly Places

*"Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places"*

*(Ephesians 1:20).*

In the previous verse, Paul spoke of the exceeding greatness of the power bestowed upon us who believe, and now he reveals where that power appeared most clearly. He said, *"which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead."* The most distinct revelation of God's exceedingly great power is exactly the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Raising the dead back to life is something a person can never do, and it is something only the almighty God can do.

The text continues to say that God seated Christ at His right hand in the heavenly places. Seating Him at the right hand means placing Him in the seat of the highest authority and glory. He did not end by dying on the cross, but He is the One who resurrected and sat at the right hand of God, ascending to the most honorable seat. People often think of Jesus only as a pitiful person who suffered on the cross, but that is merely the footprint of Him saving us from sin; now He is the Lord of glory sitting at the right hand of the heavenly throne.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this resurrection and exaltation are the final guarantee of our salvation. Because Jesus took upon Himself our sins through the baptism He received from John, paid all that price on the cross, and resurrected from death in three days, our salvation was permanently confirmed. If He had not resurrected, the payment of the price for sin would have been in vain, but by overcoming death and coming back to life, God's righteousness was eternally guaranteed. Therefore, the power that raised Christ is the very power that raised us, who were previously dead in sin, to new life.

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## Far Above Every Name

*"Far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:21).*

This verse unfolds even more clearly how highly God exalted Christ. He said, *"far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come."* Namely, whether it is the visible world or the invisible world, whether it is this world or the world to come, He made Jesus Christ far above all authorities and all names.

We must pay attention to the mention of even *"that which is to come"* here. Even in the new world to come after this world ends, not God the Father but His Son Jesus Christ rules and judges all things as the King of kings. After resurrecting from death, Jesus said, *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." (Matthew 28:18).* This authority is not something He took Himself, but what God the Father gave to the Son.

## Christ the Head of All Things and the Church His Body

*"And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:22-23).*

Reaching the end of Chapter 1, Paul reveals the relationship between Christ, who is far above all things, and us. He said, *"And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church."* God made all things submit under

Christ's feet, and gave that Christ again to be the head of the church. Namely, He who is the King of all things became the head of the church.

Here, *"church"* does not point to a chapel building. The word meaning church has the meaning of "those who are called out," and it points to the gathering of those who are saved from the sins of the world. Namely, the holy saints who believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior and received the elimination of sins are the very church. The text says, *"the church, which is His body."* Christ is the head and we are the body which is its members, so we are those united with Him as one body. However, while Jesus becomes our eldest brother, He is at the same time our Lord and Savior, so even though we are the same members as Him, He is the head to whom we ought to submit.

## The Core Message Conveyed by the Text

Ephesians 1, beginning with a short greeting and reaching the proclamation of Christ who is far above all things, unfolds that salvation began and was completed from God's side from beginning to end. Just as Paul becoming an apostle came by the will of God, the saints becoming saints and faithful ones also came not by their own righteousness, but by God's work of making them be in Christ Jesus. The place where a person becomes holy is not religious effort, but only in Christ.

The way to enter into that Christ is exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By faith believing in the salvation Jesus accomplished by taking upon Himself the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, paying the price for sin on the cross, and resurrecting from death, a sinner receives salvation from sin. God chose us before the foundation of the

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world, predestined us according to His good pleasure to make us His sons, blotted out our sins at once by His blood, and sealed us with the Holy Spirit of promise to make Him the guarantee of our inheritance. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# God's Love for Us

**< Ephesians 1:1-6 >**

**"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."**

## A Worker of the Gospel Established by the Will of God

The word we read together today is the word from Ephesians chapter 1, verses 1 to 6. The Apostle Paul, while writing a letter to the saints of the Ephesian church, first reveals who he is. He said, *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God" (Ephesians 1:1).*

Paul is not a person who became an apostle by his own will. He is also not a person who started God's work out of his own greed. He became an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. The word apostle means one who is sent by God. Because God sent him, he does God's work, and because God entrusted it to him,

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he testifies to the gospel.
A servant of God does not come to be by his own accord. One who knows the will of God, is sent by God, and lives according to the gospel entrusted by God is a servant of God. Paul clearly knew this fact. Therefore, he did not exalt himself but confessed that he became an apostle by the will of God.
It is the same for us. That we serve the gospel, serve souls, and handle the entrusted work within God's church is not to achieve our own will. It is because God saved us and established us within the church. It is because God entrusted the gospel to us. That we do the work of the gospel is truly a glorious thing. However, at the same time, it is a work that can only be rightly handled within the will of God.

## Grace and Peace Come from God the Father and Jesus Christ

Paul greets the saints who are in Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus, saying, *"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:2).* Grace is a free gift God has given us. Specifically, this grace is the grace of the removal of sins, the grace of salvation. We were those who could not save ourselves. We could not perfectly keep the law, nor could we be justified before God by our own deeds. To us who were like that, God sent Jesus Christ and gave us the grace of the removal of sins.
Peace is the true tranquility that comes upon the heart because of this grace. No matter how many things a person possesses, if there is sin in the heart, there is no true peace. No matter how high a position one reaches in the world, if there is condemnation in the heart, one cannot be at peace. However, to the person who

believes the fact that Jesus Christ eliminated all our sins, the peace given by God comes upon them.
This peace does not come from man. It is not given by the world either. It comes from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. God loved us and sent His Son, and Jesus completely eliminated our sins by receiving baptism, dying on the cross, and resurrecting for us. When we believe this grace of salvation, true peace comes upon our hearts.

## God Has Given Us Every Spiritual Blessing in the Heavenly Places

Paul subsequently says, *"Blessed be."* To bless means to exalt and commend God. Why must we bless God? It is because God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.
People usually want earthly blessings. They think of making a lot of money, living healthily, having their children do well, and having their affairs prosper as blessings. Of course, God also knows our fleshly lives and fills our needs. However, the blessing the Bible speaks of here is not merely an earthly blessing. It is *"every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places."*
The spiritual blessing in the heavenly places is the blessing of the removal of sins. It is the blessing of becoming children of God. It is the blessing of standing before God as holy and blameless ones. It is the blessing of entering the kingdom of God in the future and living eternally. It is the blessing of calling God Father, praying to God, and receiving God's protection and guidance.
This blessing was given in Christ. God does not give this blessing outside of Christ. It is not given within a person's

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religious zeal, nor is it given within the deeds of the law. It is given only in Jesus Christ, within the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit accomplished by Jesus.

Jesus Christ came to this earth. He is the Son of God and the true God. He came in the flesh and received baptism from John the Baptist. Through that baptism, He personally took upon Himself all the sins of the world. And by hanging on the cross and shedding blood to die, He paid the price for those sins. Also, by resurrecting from death, He became our eternal Savior. Those who believe in this baptism, cross, and resurrection of Jesus are the ones who have received every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

## In Love, There is Necessarily Labor and Sacrifice

Verse 4 of the text speaks like this: *"Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."* Here we must see the love of God. It says that God intended to make us holy and without blemish before Him in love. Love is not just words. In love, there is necessarily labor. In love, there is sacrifice. Love entails a price.

Likewise, that we received the removal of sins and became children of God is not something that just happened. God the Father planned it for us, and Jesus Christ personally labored for us. Because the Lord loved us, He came to this earth through the body of a woman. Because He loved us, He received baptism from John the Baptist. Because He loved us, He bore the shame and pain of the cross. Because He loved us, He resurrected from death and became the perfect Savior.

Therefore, we must not treat God's love lightly. We must know

how great a labor of love the Lord undertook to make us sinless. That we became holy and blameless ones before God is not because of our labor. It is also not because of our effort. It is because Jesus Christ fulfilled the labor of love for us.

## The Work of the Lord Who Made Us Holy and Without Blemish

We were not originally holy ones. We were not ones without blemish either. We were those who were born in sin and lived in sin. We were those who lived committing sin in thought, committing sin in word, and committing sin in deed. We were those who could not stand before God. However, God intended to make us holy and without blemish in love. How did He do so? He did so through Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection.

When Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, all the sins of the world passed onto Jesus. This is God's righteous method, like the laying on of hands in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, when a sinner laid hands on the head of a sacrificial offering, the sin passed onto that sacrificial offering, and that sacrificial offering shed blood and died. Like this, by receiving baptism, Jesus took charge of all our sins, and with that body bearing the sins, He died on the cross. That Jesus had the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism received from John, and bled and died on the cross for the judgment of those sins and resurrected, is the work of giving us salvation by receiving the judgment of our sins in our stead. And He gave new life to those who believe. Therefore, the one who believes this gospel has no sin before God. Because the Lord eliminated our sins. Because the Lord made us holy. Because the Lord made us without blemish.

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Looking at the flesh, we are still lacking. We make mistakes and have weaknesses. However, the standard of salvation that God sees is not the perfection of our flesh. God sees the righteousness that Jesus Christ accomplished. Because Jesus washed away all our sins through the baptism received from John, the cross, and the resurrection, we have become those who live holy and without blemish before God within that faith.

## God Chose Us in Christ Before the Foundation of the World

The text says that God *"chose us in Him before the foundation of the world."* God did not suddenly decide to love us after we were born on this earth. Before creating this universe, before the foundation of the world, He already chose us in Christ. This word shows how deep and amazing a plan God's salvation is. Even before we knew God, God knew us. Even before we thought of salvation, God established a plan to save us. Even before we realized God's love, God already loved us.

However, this choosing was accomplished in Christ. God did not choose us outside of Jesus Christ. He chose in Christ those who believe in Jesus Christ, those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit accomplished by Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection.

God does not forcefully impose salvation upon people. God opened the way of perfect salvation through His Son. And He gives the spiritual blessing of heaven to whoever believes this love. However, the one who rejects this love, holds onto their own righteousness, and opposes God cannot receive God's grace. Therefore, we must believe God's love. We must believe the fact that for me, Jesus Christ received baptism from John, died on the

cross, and resurrected from death. The faith that believes this holy word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit saves us. This faith makes us become children of God.

## We Became Sons of God Through Jesus Christ

Verse 5 of the text says, *"having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."* God did not end at merely making us sinless ones. He made us become His own sons. How great a blessing is this? Receiving the removal of sins is also a great and amazing grace, yet God has made us children of God.

A servant does not abide in the master's house forever. A guest also stays for a moment and leaves. However, a son abides in the father's house. A son receives the father's inheritance. That God made us become His own sons means that we have become heirs of the kingdom of God. It means we have become those who will enjoy the eternal life and glory given by God.

How did we become sons of God? We became so through Jesus Christ. It was not done by our bloodline. It was not done by our deeds either. It was not done by our determination either. It was done only by believing the righteousness that Jesus accomplished for us.

Those who believe in Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection receive the removal of sins and become children of God. God made such ones His sons. And He gave them every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

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## The Love the Lord Bestowed for Us Saved Us

To love is to be for someone. To truly love someone is to labor, wait, and sacrifice for that person. That God loved us means that God was for us.

God the Father sent His Son for us. Jesus Christ received baptism from John for us, had the sins of the world transferred to Him, was crucified to shed blood, and resurrected from death. The Holy Spirit made us realize and believe this gospel. All of this is God's love for us.

Also, that we came to know the gospel today is because there was someone's labor. The apostles preached the gospel, the servants of God recorded the word, and the seniors in faith kept the gospel while enduring persecution and hardship. Because they did not end with only themselves being saved, but passed on the gospel for the souls of future generations, today we came to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit and became those who can be saved by believing.

The matter of one soul being saved is by no means a light matter. There is someone's prayer, waiting, serving, and labor. There are people who labor to preach the gospel, people who make and send books, people who serve the church, and people who pray in the background. Through such labor of love, one soul hears the gospel and receives the removal of sins.

Therefore, we must remember the love we received. I was not saved by myself. God was for me, Jesus was for me, and I came to hear the gospel through the labor of the church, the servants, and the saints. When we know this fact, we have no choice but to be thankful.

## Love Requires the Effort of Waiting and Laboring

Waiting is also needed for a person's faith to grow. Because parents feed, clothe, and wait for their children with a heart for them, the children grow. A young child does not become an adult overnight. They grow amidst the parents' love, labor, and long-suffering.

Faith is the same. For one person to receive salvation and grow in faith, much love is needed. Waiting is needed. Exhortation is needed. Sometimes rebuke is needed, and sometimes comfort is needed. However, at the root of all those things, there must be love.

Before the other person knows that "That person is for me. Loves me. Is trying to save me," they do not open the door of their heart. Therefore, love is also needed for the person who preaches the gospel. Love is also needed for the person who serves souls. There must be a heart that I am for you, a heart that hopes your soul receives the removal of sins and becomes a child of God, and a heart that hopes the wounds of your heart are healed and you stand in faith within the church.

God waited for us for a long time. Even when we were weak and lacking, the Lord did not give up on us. Therefore, we must also know how to wait for other souls. We must not build walls in our hearts, but embrace one another with that love with which the Lord loved us.

Of course, love is not unconditionally neglecting. Because we love, we exhort. Because we love, we rebuke. Because we love, we entrust work, and because we love, we train. Because living while serving the gospel is the way to save ourselves as well. When we labor for others, our faith also grows, and we come to know God's love more deeply.

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## The Glory of the Grace God Freely Gave Us

Verse 6 of the text says, *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."* The salvation God gave us is freely given grace. However, the word "freely" does not mean it has no cost. Although it was given to us freely, there was an enormous price for God. There was the price of love, which is the baptism, cross, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We must praise the glory of God's grace. Even when we go to heaven, we cannot boast of ourselves. We cannot say, "I was saved because I did well." We cannot say, "I became a child of God because I kept the law well." We have no choice but to confess only like this: "God loved me. Jesus received baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected for me. I was saved by that grace."

This is the glory of grace. God gave salvation to us who were unqualified to receive it. He made us, who were sinners, into righteous ones. He made us, who were enemies with God, into children of God. He established us as workers who serve the gospel on this earth. He made us to enter the kingdom of God in the future and live forever.

Therefore, we must praise God. We must not praise only with our lips, but praise God with a life of believing the gospel and living while serving the gospel. We must remember the love God gave us, and live passing on that love to other souls.

## We Too Must Live to Save Many Souls

If God labored for us and Jesus sacrificed for us, now we too must live for the souls who do not know this gospel. This is the

life of a saved person. Labor follows the work of us preaching the gospel. Sometimes material things are needed, time is needed, and physical fatigue follows. There are times when we are ignored by people, times when our feelings are hurt, and times when we must wait. However, all this labor is not in vain. Just as God did the labor of love for us, us laboring for souls is the life of the gospel.

Our standard of living well is different from the people of the world. The people of the world think that earning much and enjoying much is living well. However, we who are saved know the life of spending what is left over beyond food, clothing, and shelter for the gospel as a blessed life. Setting our hearts on the work of preaching this gospel so that there is not even one person who does not yet know the gospel of the water and the Spirit is a truly beautiful life.

God loved us. He labored for us. He gave us the spiritual blessing of heaven. A person who knows this fact cannot live only for themselves. We too must pray, wait, serve, and preach the gospel for someone. This is the proper life of one who has received God's love.

## Conclusion: Let Us Not Forget God's Love for Us

Beloved saints, God bestowed great love for us. He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and sent Jesus Christ to make us holy and without blemish in love. Jesus received baptism for us, died on the cross for us, and resurrected for us. As a result, we received the removal of sins and became children of God.

All of this is God's grace. It is the grace freely given to us. However, within that grace is contained the labor of the deep

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love of God the Father and Jesus Christ. We must not forget that love.

Let us remember God's love for us. Let us engrave in our hearts the spiritual blessing of heaven we received. Let us believe the fact that God made us into holy and unblemished ones in Christ. Let us be thankful for the fact that we became sons of God through Jesus Christ.

And now let us too live by this love. Let us be for one another, be for souls, and labor for the gospel. Let us preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the people who do not yet know this gospel. Let us live a life praising the glory of the grace God gave us.

We thank God who labored for us. We thank Jesus Christ who saved us from sin and made us become children of God. I hope you become saints who live by faith within this love and pass on this love. Amen. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# Praise God the Father, the Source of All Creation and Salvation

**< Ephesians 1:1-14 >**

**"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the**

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**counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."**

Beloved saints, today through the words of Ephesians chapter 1, verses 1 to 14, we must clearly know who the source of our salvation is. Apostle Paul, while writing a letter to the saints of the Ephesian church, praises God the Father first of all. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).*

This word shows where the starting point of our faith is. Our salvation did not begin from human determination. It did not begin from our zeal or will either. We were not saved because we sought God first, but we came to receive salvation because God the Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world and predestined us to make us holy and blameless in love. Therefore, we must praise God the Father first. The one who created us is God the Father, and the one who sent Jesus Christ to save us is also God the Father. Jesus coming to this earth, receiving baptism, shedding blood on the cross, and resurrecting are all things accomplished within God the Father's plan of salvation.

## God the Father Gave Us the Spiritual Blessings of Heaven

Saints, the blessing we received is not only a worldly blessing. Of course, God also takes care of our fleshly lives. He allows us food, clothing, and the way to live. However, the greatest blessing we received is the spiritual blessing belonging to heaven.

What is the spiritual blessing of heaven? It is the blessing that we, who were sinners, received the removal of sins in Jesus Christ and became children of God. It is the blessing of becoming able to call God Father. It is the blessing of coming to receive the kingdom of God as an inheritance. It is the blessing of receiving the guarantee that we became God's possession by being sealed with the Holy Spirit.

This blessing cannot be bought with money. It cannot be obtained by worldly authority. It cannot be obtained by human wisdom or moral good deeds. It is a blessing that can only be received in Jesus Christ. Thus, Apostle Paul is repeating the words *"in Christ."*

God the Father chose us in Christ. He made us become His sons in Christ. He gave us the removal of sins in Christ. He made known to us His will to unite all things in heaven and on earth in Christ. He made us become God's inheritance in Christ.

Therefore, there is no salvation outside of Jesus Christ. One cannot stand before God with human religiousness, works of the law, or self-righteousness. The reason we can stand before God is solely because Jesus Christ took charge of our sins.

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## God the Father's Predestination Was Accomplished in Love

Ephesians chapter 1, verses 4 and 5 say this:
*"Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."*
What is important here is the fact that God chose us *"in love."* God the Father's predestination is not a cold and mechanical fate. It is not a human misunderstanding that God unconditionally abandons some people and unconditionally saves some people. God the Father's predestination is the plan of salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ, in God's love.
God loved humans from the beginning. God created humans in His image, and even knowing that humans would fall into sin, He prepared the way to save us. That way is exactly Jesus Christ. God the Father sent His Son to this earth. Jesus came clothed in the flesh, and by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, He personally took charge of all the sins of the world. And by being crucified, shedding blood, and dying with the body that bore those sins, and resurrecting from death in three days, He gave us perfect righteousness and life.
This is God the Father's predestination. This is God the Father's love. This is the way of salvation that God determined in Christ before the foundation of the world.
Therefore, it is not a coincidence that we received salvation. It is not a coincidence that we came to hear and believe the gospel. Because God the Father loved us in Christ, He made us hear the word of truth, that is, the gospel of salvation, made us believe that gospel, and made us receive the seal with the Holy Spirit.

## We Became Children of God Through Jesus Christ

Saints, a person who has received the removal of sins can call God Father. Just because anyone calls God Father does not mean they become a child of God. The children whom God acknowledges are those who have received the removal of sins in Jesus Christ.

We were originally sinners. We were born in Adam and born with sin, and we committed numerous sins while living. Our hearts, thoughts, and deeds were not perfect before God. However, God the Father did not leave us like that.

God sent Jesus Christ and made Him take charge of all our sins. When Jesus received baptism, the sins of the world passed over to Him, and when Jesus shed blood on the cross, the judgment of those sins was accomplished. Therefore, a person who believes in Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection receives the removal of sins from all sins.

To the one who believes this gospel, God says, "You are My child." How great a grace is this? We, who are creatures, became children of God the Creator. We, who were sinners, became righteous ones. We, who were slaves of the devil, became citizens of the kingdom of God.

No matter how great an authority a person has in the world, becoming their child is only temporary. No matter how much wealth one inherits, it is only enjoyed on this earth. However, the blessing of becoming a child of God the Father is an eternal blessing. This blessing is connected to the inheritance of heaven. It is because God the Father promised us an eternal kingdom.

Therefore, we must not be discouraged. On this earth, sometimes we may be poor. Sometimes our bodies may be weak. Sometimes we may be ignored by people. However, we are children of God the Father. Almighty God became our Father.

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Therefore, we must be bold.
When it is difficult, pray to God the Father. When your heart collapses, call upon God the Father. When the way is not seen, rely on God the Father. God hears the prayers of His children. God does not turn away from us. It is because we became children of God in Jesus Christ.

## Our Redemption Was Accomplished According to the Riches of God's Grace

Ephesians chapter 1, verse 7 says:
*"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."*
Here, Paul says that we received the removal of sins *"according to the riches of His grace."* The removal of sins is God's grace. It is not something we obtained by offering much. It is not something we obtained by praying much either. It is not something we obtained by keeping the law well either. We received it solely by the grace God freely gave.
That grace appeared in Jesus Christ. Jesus received baptism instead of us, shed blood on the cross instead of us, and received judgment instead of us. Therefore, we received redemption, that is, the removal of sins, in Jesus Christ.
By the way, today many people speak of Jesus' cross but do not know Jesus' baptism well. However, if one does not know why Jesus received baptism, one cannot fully know the blood of the cross either. Because Jesus took charge of our sins by receiving baptism, He could shed blood and die on the cross. Jesus' baptism is the righteous event of taking over sins, and the cross is the judgment event of paying the price for those sins.
Therefore, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the perfect

gospel. Jesus' baptism, blood, and the witness of the Holy Spirit become one and testify to us the perfect removal of sins. When we believe this gospel, sin disappears from our hearts. When we believe this gospel, we become righteous ones before God. When we believe this gospel, the Holy Spirit comes inside us and seals that we are children of God.

## God Made Us to Be the Praise of His Glory

What is the purpose for which God the Father saved us? This word is repeated in Ephesians chapter 1: *"To the praise of the glory of His grace" (Ephesians 1:6). "Christ should be to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:12). "To the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:14).*

The purpose for which God saved us is to make us praise God. This does not merely mean singing hymns with our lips. It means making our very existence become a praise that reveals God's grace.

The fact that we received the removal of sins and became children of God is a matter of manifesting God's glory. A sinner becoming a righteous person is a matter of revealing the glory of God's grace. The fact that we, who are weak, serve the gospel and undertake God's work is a matter of revealing God's power. Therefore, saints cannot boast of themselves. We have nothing to boast about. It is because we were not saved because we were outstanding. It is not because we were smarter than others that we were saved either. It is not because we were better than others that we became children of God either. We were saved solely by the love of God the Father, the redemption of Jesus Christ, and the sealing of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, our boast is only the Lord. Our praise must be offered

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only to God the Father. Our gratitude must be directed only to Jesus Christ.

"God the Father, thank You for saving a sinner like me. Thank You for making me Your child in Jesus Christ. Thank You for making me hear and believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Thank You for sealing me with the Holy Spirit and making the kingdom of God my inheritance."

This confession must come out every day in our lives.

## The Sealing of the Holy Spirit is the Guarantee That We Are God's Inheritance

Ephesians chapter 1, verses 13 and 14 say this:

*"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance."*

We heard and believed the word of truth, that is, the gospel of salvation. At that time, God sealed us with the Holy Spirit of promise. To be sealed means that He confirmed us as God's possession. God guaranteed, saying, "This person is Mine. This person is My child. This person is the one who will receive the inheritance of My kingdom."

The Holy Spirit does not come upon just anyone. The Holy Spirit dwells inside a person who has received the removal of sins. The Holy Spirit cannot dwell when sin remains as it is in the heart. It is because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the holy God. Therefore, the Holy Spirit comes upon a person who has truly believed in Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection and received the removal of sins.

Because the Holy Spirit is inside us, we call God Father. Because

the Holy Spirit is inside us, we realize the gospel. Because the Holy Spirit is inside us, we come to believe God's word, follow God's will, and serve God's church.

The sealing of the Holy Spirit is the guarantee that the salvation we received does not shake. Our emotions can shake. Our circumstances can change. Our flesh can be weak. However, the salvation God sealed with the Holy Spirit does not change. The salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ is perfect.

Therefore, we must live by faith. We must not live by emotions but by the word of the gospel. We must not live by our own thoughts but live holding onto the promise God gave.

## He Who Knows God the Father Lives with Gratitude

Beloved saints, if we truly know God the Father, we cannot help but give thanks. Our being born into this world was also within God's will, our coming to hear the gospel was also God's grace, and our receiving the removal of sins in Jesus Christ was also God's love.

All of this was done by God the Father. Therefore, we must learn gratitude rather than complaint. We must learn praise rather than resentment. We must live a life that exalts God's grace rather than our own boasting.

We sometimes say that life is difficult. There are times when we feel that the path of living according to the gospel is hard. However, every time that happens, we must remember. We have God the Father. God who created the heavens and the earth, God who washed away all our sins in Jesus Christ, God who made us His children, and God who gave us the Holy Spirit is our Father. Therefore, we are not alone. We are not abandoned ones. We are

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not orphans of the world. We are those who have received the love of God the Father. We are heirs of the kingdom of God. We are those who have received the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ.

A person who has this faith does not collapse in any circumstance. They may stumble, but they rise again. They may be weak, but they pray to God. They may be lacking, but they hold onto the gospel. Because God the Father is holding onto us.

## Conclusion: Let Us Give Glory and Praise to God the Father

Saints, the conclusion of today's word is clear. The source of all creation and salvation is God the Father. God the Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. God the Father made us become His sons through Jesus Christ. God the Father gave us the removal of sins through Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection. God the Father gave us the Holy Spirit and guaranteed that we are God's inheritance.

Therefore, we must praise God the Father. We must give thanks for the grace of Jesus Christ. We must believe in the sealing of the Holy Spirit and live boldly.

Now we are no longer those bound in sin. We are no longer those belonging to the devil. We are no longer those waiting for judgment. We are children of God who have received the removal of sins in Jesus Christ. We are those who have received the spiritual blessings of heaven. We are those called to be the praise of God's glory.

Therefore, let us give thanks to God the Father today as well.

"God the Father, thank You for loving us. Thank You for choosing and saving us in Jesus Christ. Thank You for making

us hear and believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We praise the grace of making us Your children and sealing us with the Holy Spirit to become God's inheritance."

I hope that you and I will become those who live with this faith. I hope you will become saints who deeply engrave the spiritual blessings of heaven that God the Father has given us in your hearts, and live the rest of your lives praising the glory of God's grace. Amen. ✉

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Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

# Those Who Became God's Inheritance

**< Ephesians 1:1-14 >**

**"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in**

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**whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."**

Today, through the words of Ephesians chapter 1, we will think together about what the greatest grace God has given us is. The Bible speaks to us like this. It says that God chose us in Jesus Christ, predestined us, gave us redemption, that is, the removal of sins, and made us become God's inheritance.

Everyone, the saying that we have become God's inheritance is a truly amazing word. The word inheritance does not simply mean some object or property. It means that we have become God's possession. It means that God has made us His own. To speak more accurately, it is the word that God has made us His children.

Did we originally have the qualification to live as God's children? That is not so. We were originally those born as descendants of Adam. As those who became sinners before God, we were those who could not go before God. By our deeds we could not become righteous, by our efforts we could not receive the removal of sins, and by our zeal we could not become God's children. However, God made us, who were like that, His inheritance in Jesus Christ. This is grace. This is the gospel. This is the spiritual blessing belonging to heaven that God has given us.

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## God Chose Us in Christ Before the Foundation of the World

Ephesians chapter 1, verse 4 says this: *"Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world."* The reason God chose us is because God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. This word means that our salvation began within God's heart. It means that even before God created this world, He had the will to save us and make us His children.

People try to boast about their own salvation. *"Believed."* "I lived a life of faith diligently." "I prayed." "I devoted myself." However, the Bible says that our salvation did not begin from us, but began from God. It is because God willed it first, God planned it first, and God loved us first.

Therefore, a person saved from sin cannot boast of themselves. We only give thanks to God. Our becoming God's children is not our merit but God's grace. Our becoming God's inheritance is not due to our deeds, but because of the grace of salvation by which God chose us in Jesus Christ.

## God Made Us Holy and Without Blemish in Love

Ephesians chapter 1, verse 4 continues to say this: *"That we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."* The purpose for which God chose us was to make us holy and without blemish before God.

A person cannot wash away even a single sin in their heart by themselves. Outwardly, they can pretend to be godly, and before people, they can appear to have a good image. However, God looks at the center of our hearts. He sees all the greed, hatred, pride, lust, falsehood, envy, and unbelief in the heart. Therefore,

humans cannot stand holy before God by their own deeds.
If so, how did God make us holy and without blemish? He did so through Jesus Christ. Jesus came to this earth and, through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, had the sins of the world transferred to His body and bore them. And with that body bearing the sins, He was crucified, and by resurrecting from His bloody death, He completed our salvation. This is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The baptism Jesus received from John becomes the place where all our sins were passed onto Jesus. The blood of the cross is the place of judgment where He bore the wages of our sins on our behalf. The resurrection is God's power testifying that Jesus is our perfect Savior. Therefore, our becoming holy and without blemish is because Jesus bore our sins through His baptism and fully paid the price of our sins on the cross. It is because Jesus completely redeemed us.
A saint saved from sin is not a person who becomes bold by looking at their own deeds. They are a person who stands boldly before God by believing in the work of salvation accomplished by Jesus. We are lacking, but Jesus' righteous work is perfect. We are weak, but Jesus' work of salvation is perfect. We change, but the salvation God accomplished in Jesus does not change.

## The Redemption Accomplished by the Baptism Jesus Christ Received from John and the Blood of the Cross Gave the Removal of Sins to Those Who Believe

Ephesians chapter 1, verse 7 says this: *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."* Here, the word redemption means

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that He paid the price and bought us. We were originally living under sin as descendants of Adam. Being under sin ultimately means that we were under judgment. A person who has sin is not a person belonging to God, but a person under the law of sin and death. So humans say they are free by themselves, but in reality, they were living as slaves to sin.

However, Jesus came to this world as the Savior of sinners. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had the sins of the world transferred to His body and shouldered them through the baptism given by John. And by being crucified and shedding His blood, He paid the price of sin.

Therefore, we who believe are now no longer under the judgment of sin. We are no longer slaves to sin. We are not those bound by death. He who believes in the baptism Jesus received from John and the blood of the cross has received the removal of sins. He who believes in Jesus' baptism and blood has become God's. It is because Jesus Christ bought us with His own life and made us His people.

Everyone, how great a grace of salvation is this? We were not bought with money. We were not bought with gold or silver either. We are those who have been bought with the life of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus gave up His body and shed His blood for our salvation. So we have now become God's possession.

The fact that we received salvation from sin does not merely mean that we will not go to hell. It means that we are God's. We have become God's inheritance. This is the glory of salvation. Therefore, one who has been saved from their sins must not consider themselves a lowly person. Just because one has little in the world, they must not evaluate themselves lowly. Even if people do not recognize them, they must not be discouraged. God knows us, God chose us in Christ, and God made us His inheritance.

## Now We Have Become God's Inheritance and Have Become the Praise of God's Glory

Ephesians chapter 1, verses 11-12 say this: *"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."* The purpose for which God made us His inheritance is to make us praise God's glory. The most proper thing we can offer to God is praise and the gratitude of faith offered to God.

What could we boast about to God? Can we boast of our good deeds? Can we boast of our righteousness? Can we boast of our loyalty? No. We have nothing to boast about before God. We can only boast of the grace of salvation that Jesus Christ accomplished for us.

We were truly lacking ones. Looking physically, we were weak, often shaken, sometimes discouraged, and sometimes there were times when our hearts collapsed while looking at the world. However, when we think of the grace of salvation that God clothed us with, we can rise again.

God has made me His inheritance. God has made me His child. God considers me as one who is holy and without blemish. God has sealed me with the Holy Spirit. God has promised the glory to be enjoyed in the future. So how could we not praise God?

This world is truly unstable. People try to find hope in the world, but there is no true hope in the world. Even with money, the heart is not at peace; even with power, one cannot overcome death; and even with honor, one cannot solve the problem of sin. However, there is true hope for the person who believes in Jesus' baptism and blood. That hope is the eternal life given by God. That hope is the glory to be enjoyed in the kingdom of God in

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the future.
The Apostle Paul said in Romans that the present sufferings cannot be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us in the future. That is right. We may briefly suffer hardships on this earth. Sometimes we may be distressed because of the weakness of the flesh. Sometimes our hearts may be frustrated because of the injustice of the world. However, the glory we will enjoy in the future cannot be compared with all these hardships. We are God's inheritance. We are those who belong to God. We are those whom God takes responsibility for. We are those whom God will never abandon forever.

## The Holy Spirit of Promise Has Become the Guarantee of Our Inheritance

Ephesians chapter 1, verses 13-14 say this: *"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance."*
The sealing of the Holy Spirit is not given to just anyone. It is given to those who have heard and believed the word of truth, that is, the gospel of salvation. What is the gospel of salvation here? It is the gospel that Jesus took charge of our sins through His baptism, was judged by shedding His blood on the cross, and saved us by resurrecting.
He who believes this word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit with his heart receives the removal of sins in his heart. And to the one who has received the removal of sins, God gives the Holy Spirit as a gift. The Holy Spirit is God's seal that our salvation is true. The Holy Spirit is the evidence that we are

God's children. The Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we will receive the kingdom of God as an inheritance in the future.
Everyone, the word guarantee is truly important. The fact that God gave us the Holy Spirit means that God takes responsibility for our salvation. Our salvation is not shaken because we are weak. God's promise is not canceled because we are lacking. The salvation God accomplished in Jesus Christ is perfect. The Holy Spirit has become the guarantee of that salvation.
Therefore, we are not people who live a life of faith in fear. We are people who live a life of faith with gratitude through faith believing in the gospel word of the water and the Spirit. We are not people who strive to receive the removal of sins, but people who live thanking God within the grace of salvation, having already received the removal of sins through Jesus' baptism and blood.
A saint who has received the Holy Spirit has clear evidence in their heart. "My sins were passed onto Jesus' body. Jesus fully paid the price of my sins on the cross. Therefore, I have received the removal of sins. I have become a child of God." This faith holds our hearts within the gospel word of the water and the Spirit.

## We Who Live in the Last Days Must Hold Fast to the Faith of Being God's Inheritance

Beloved saints, the era we live in is truly confusing. People increasingly live following their own greed, the truth becomes faint, false faith increases, and there seems to be no true peace in the world. Sometimes, irritation, frustration, and discouragement can come to our hearts as well. At such times, what must we look at? If we look at the world, we become

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discouraged. If we look at ourselves, we become disappointed. However, if we look at the grace God has bestowed upon us, we gain strength again.

God chose me in Christ before the foundation of the world. God made me holy and without blemish in love. Jesus took charge of all my sins through His baptism. Jesus fully paid the price of my sins on the cross. God made me His inheritance. God sealed me with the Holy Spirit. God said He has given me a glorious inheritance in the future.

We must hold fast to the gospel word of the water and the Spirit. This is the faith of the saints living in the last days. We may not be those who have great power in the world. We may not be those whose names are known in the world. We might not be recognized by people. However, before God, we are not ordinary people. We are God's inheritance. We are those who have been saved by the price of Jesus' life.

Therefore, we do not need to live subserviently. This does not mean to be arrogant. It also does not mean to boast of our own righteousness like the people of the world. It merely means to know by faith the grace of salvation God has given and our status as God's children, and to live with gratitude and boldness.

We are those called to praise God's glory. We must praise God with our lips, testify to the gospel with our faith, and manifest God's grace with our lives. The life of a saved saint is not a life for their own glory. It is a life that praises God's glory.

## All We Have to Offer God is Thanksgiving and Praise

When we think of the grace God has given us, all we have to offer God is thanksgiving. We could not buy salvation. We could

not create the removal of sins. We could not become God's children by ourselves. God did it all.

God the Father chose us. God the Son, Jesus, accomplished our salvation with His baptism and blood. God the Holy Spirit came into our hearts and became the guarantee of our salvation. The Triune God has completely saved us. Therefore, we must give glory to God. "God, thank You. Thank You for making someone like me a child of God. Thank You for washing away all my sins with Jesus' baptism and the blood of the cross. Thank You for rescuing me from the power of the devil and making me God's inheritance. Even if there seems to be no hope in this world, let me live looking at the eternal hope God has given." This confession must be in our hearts.

Beloved saints, God has made us God's inheritance. We are those who have received redemption, that is, the removal of sins, by believing in Jesus' baptism and blood. We are those who have been sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise. We are those who will enjoy God's glory in the future.

Therefore, let us not be discouraged. Let us not underestimate ourselves. Let us not look at the world and despair. Let us hold fast to our status by faith. We are God's. We are God's children. We are God's inheritance.

Now, what we must do for the rest of our lives is clear. It is to praise God who saved us. It is to believe and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit completed by Jesus' baptism and blood. It is to live by faith, hoping for the glory to be enjoyed in the future. I hope that we all become those who deeply believe in this grace by which God made us His inheritance, and live giving thanks and praising Him. Amen. ✉

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Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

# The Grace of God Who Chose Us Before the Foundation of the World

**< Ephesians 1:1-14 >**

**"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the**

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**counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."**

Beloved saints, have you been at peace this past week? The words from Ephesians chapter 1, verses 1 to 14, which we read together today, are words that show the great and amazing plan of salvation that God established to save you and me. In the very beginning of this short letter, the Apostle Paul has intactly contained the plan of salvation that God established before the foundation of the world, and how He accomplished that plan in Christ.

## God's Plan of Salvation is Worthy of Praise

Beloved saints, the word we want to share together today is from Ephesians chapter 1, verses 1 to 14. This word is a precious word that shows how God planned to save us, how He accomplished that plan in Jesus Christ, and what blessings He gave to those who believe in that salvation.

As the Apostle Paul recorded this word, the very first thing he cried out was, *"Blessed be."* Why could Paul not help but praise God? It is because God chose us before the foundation of the world, saved us in Jesus Christ, made us His sons, and made us His inheritance.

It is not a coincidence that we came to believe in God. It is not

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because of our zeal or merit that we received the removal of sins. It is not because of our righteousness that we became God's children. All of this is what was accomplished within the plan of salvation that God established before the foundation of the world. Therefore, we must praise God. We must praise God who rescued us from sin, God who made us hear and believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and God who established us as holy and blameless ones in Jesus Christ.

## We Were Called by the Will of God

Introducing himself, the Apostle Paul said, *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God" (Ephesians 1:1)*. Paul did not take his becoming an apostle as his own boast. He confessed that his becoming an apostle was not due to his own will or ability, but due to the will of God.

Beloved everyone, this is not a word that applies only to Paul. Our becoming God's children is also by the will of God. Our hearing the gospel is also God's grace. Our coming to realize and believe this gospel of the water and the Spirit is also God's grace.

A person cannot go before God on their own. A sinner cannot eliminate their own sins by themselves. No matter how much a sinner fasts, no matter how much they cry and pray, and no matter how much they strive to live a good life, the sin in their heart does not disappear. By human effort, one cannot become a holy and blameless person before God.

However, God came to find us first. God had pity on us. God sent His Son Jesus Christ to this earth. And by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, Jesus took all the sins of the world upon His own body, bled and died on the cross, and rose again from

the dead to become our perfect Savior.
Therefore, our salvation is by the will of God. Our faith is also God's grace, and our salvation was also accomplished within God's plan.

## Grace and Peace Come Through Christ

Paul blessed the Ephesian saints, saying, *"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:2)*. Here, grace and peace cannot be separated. First, God's grace comes upon us, and through that grace, peace of mind comes upon us.
There is no true peace for a person who has sin. A person whose sin problem is not resolved is anxious in their heart no matter how long they live a religious life. Even if they praise and pray on the outside, deep in their heart there is condemnation and fear. Why is that? It is because sin remains before God.
However, true peace comes upon the one who believes the fact that Jesus took over all our sins through His baptism and fully paid the price for those sins on the cross. It is because they know the fact that there is no longer any reason to be judged because of their sins. It is because they believe the fact that Jesus took their sins away, received all the judgment for those sins on the cross, and justified them through His resurrection.
This is grace. We did not pay the price. We did not add anything to obtain the removal of sins. God freely gave us the salvation He completed in Jesus Christ. There is peace in the heart of the one who believes this grace.
Beloved saints, do you have this peace in your hearts? There is rest in the heart of the one who has received the removal of sins. There is boldness in the heart of the one who is reconciled with

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God. The one who believes the gospel of the water and the Spirit no longer struggles to resolve their own sins by themselves. They live believing in and thanking God for the salvation that Jesus has already perfectly accomplished.

## He Has Given Us Every Spiritual Blessing in the Heavenly Places

Verse 3 of the main text says this: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."*

The blessing God has given us is a spiritual blessing belonging to heaven. This blessing is not simply an earthly blessing. It is not a blessing that only means having more material wealth, becoming healthy, and prospering in the world. The greatest blessing God has given us is the blessing of the removal of sins, the blessing of becoming God's children, and the blessing of receiving the kingdom of heaven as an inheritance.

No matter how much a person gains in the world, if they do not receive the removal of sins, it is ultimately destruction. Even if a person possesses all the power and wealth of the world, if sin remains before God, that person is not a blessed person. Who is the truly blessed person? It is the person whose transgression is removed and whose sin is covered. The person who has received the removal of all sins by believing in the baptism and blood of Jesus Christ is the most blessed person.

God has given us this spiritual blessing in Christ. The phrase *"in Christ"* is important. Christ means the anointed one. In the Old Testament, kings, priests, and prophets were anointed. Jesus is our true King, true Priest, and true Prophet.

As King, Jesus rescued us from sin and the power of Satan. As

Prophet, Jesus made known to us the will of God and the truth of salvation. As Priest, Jesus offered His own body as an atoning sacrifice. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist, He took our sins upon His own body, and by shedding His blood on the cross, He paid the price for sin.

Therefore, we are those who have received every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. Having received this blessing, we must praise God.

## He Chose Us in Christ Before the Foundation of the World

Verse 4 of the main text says, *"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world."* God chose us in Christ before we were even born, before this world was even created. When we think of this word, we can know how great a grace we have received. We did not hear the gospel by chance one day. We did not come to believe in God by chance one day. God knew us from before the foundation of the world, planned to save us, and when the time came, He made us hear the gospel and believe it.

However, this choosing did not happen because we were outstanding. God did not look at us and say, "You are righteous and perfect, so I will choose you." Rather, we were weak and lacking ones. We were those who had no choice but to be born in sin and live committing sin. We were those who had absolutely no ability to be saved on our own.

Therefore, God had pity on us. God does not save those who establish their own righteousness, but those who know their own weakness and rely on God's grace. A person who thinks they can go to heaven by their own strength does not accept God's salvation. However, the one who confesses, "I am a sinner. I

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cannot be saved by my own strength. The Lord must save me," comes to believe the gospel God has given.
Beloved everyone, we were chosen not because we were strong, but because God had pity on us. It is not because we were righteous, but because of God's love to make us righteous in Jesus Christ.

## He Intended to Make Us Holy and Blameless

The purpose for which God chose us is clear. He chose us *"that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:4)*.
Can a person become holy on their own? Can a person become blameless before God by their own deeds? They absolutely cannot. A person commits sin with their thoughts, commits sin with their heart, and commits sin with their words and actions. Evil thoughts, covetousness, pride, lust, jealousy, and hatred constantly rise up in a person's heart. Therefore, by a person's deeds, they cannot become holy and blameless before God.
However, God has made us holy and blameless. How did He do it? He did so in Jesus Christ. When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, all the sins of the world were passed onto Jesus. And Jesus, bearing those sins, hung on the cross, shed His blood, and died. After that, by resurrecting in three days, He justified us.
Therefore, the one who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit becomes a holy and blameless person before God. This is not because of our deeds, but because of the salvation that Jesus accomplished. We did not become blameless because we are perfect, but we became blameless because Jesus completely washed away all our sins.
Everyone, do you believe this? The one who believes becomes

a righteous person. The one who believes receives the removal of sins. The one who believes comes to stand as a holy and blameless person before God.

## According to His Good Pleasure, He Made Us His Sons

Verse 5 of the main text says, *"having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."*

The purpose for which God saved us does not simply end at rescuing us from hell. God made us His sons. What an amazing blessing is this? We, who are creatures, became the children of God the Creator. We, who were sinners, became the children of God. We, who belonged to Satan, became God's possession.

Even in the world, when a person becomes a child of a powerful family, their status changes. But how much more of a great blessing is it if God, who created the heavens and the earth, has become our Father? We have become those who can call God *"Father."* When we are in difficulty, we can pray to God the Father, and when we are lacking, we can rely on God the Father. God did not merely make us servants. He did not merely call us as hired workers. He made us His sons. Therefore, we can boldly go before God. This is the spiritual blessing belonging to heaven. Therefore, saints must know their identity. We may look lacking and weak when seen from the world. However, spiritually speaking, we are God's children. We are God's inheritance. We are those who will inherit the kingdom of God in the future. A person who has this faith is not subservient before the world. In any circumstance, they do not lose the identity that God has given them.

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## He Intended to Make Us Praise the Glory of His Freely Given Grace

Verse 6 of the main text says, *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."*
The reason God chose us, predestined us, and made us His sons is to make us praise the glory of that grace. Salvation is a freely given grace. We did not pay the price. We did not obtain it by being qualified. It is a gift that God freely gave to those who do not deserve to receive it.
That grace was given in God's Beloved, that is, Jesus Christ. God did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us. Jesus came to this earth, took over our sins through baptism, received the punishment for those sins on the cross, and resurrected to give us new life.
A person who has received salvation like this cannot boast of themselves. They cannot say, "I received salvation because I believed well." They cannot say, "I became God's child because I lived diligently." They have no choice but to confess, "It is God's grace. Jesus accomplished everything. I received this grace by faith."
Therefore, the life of a saved saint is a life of praise. It is not praising only with the lips, but praising God with the heart, and testifying to God's grace with one's life. Because the salvation we received is so great, we cannot help but praise God.

## Through His Blood, We Received Redemption, That Is, the Removal of Sins

Verse 7 of the main text speaks of the core of salvation. *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of*

*sins, according to the riches of His grace."*

Redemption means that He bought us by paying a price. We were originally under sin. We lived as slaves to Satan. Since the wages of sin is death, we were those who had no choice but to be judged and perish. However, Jesus bought us with the price of His own life.

Here, we must correctly know the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus is the blood shed on the cross. However, for that blood to become the blood that washes away our sins, our sins first had to be passed onto Jesus. Even in the atoning sacrifices of the Old Testament, the sinner laid their hands on the head of the offering to pass on their sins, and then that offering shed its blood. The death of an offering to which sins were not passed could not become an atonement.

Likewise, Jesus receiving baptism from John the Baptist is the event where He took over all our sins. John the Baptist was like the last high priest representing mankind. By receiving baptism from him, Jesus bore all the sins of the world upon His own body. That is why John testified, pointing to Jesus, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Because Jesus bore the sins of the world, He could shed His blood on the cross. That blood was the blood that bore sins, and it was the blood of judgment for our sins. Therefore, the baptism and the cross of Jesus cannot be separated. Through Jesus' baptism, sins were passed on; through the blood of the cross, the price for those sins was paid; and through His resurrection, our salvation was completed.

The one who believes this gospel receives redemption, that is, the removal of sins. The removal of sins is not an emotion. It does not come from a person's conviction either. It is accomplished when we believe in the righteous method determined by God. By faith believing in the baptism, blood, and

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resurrection of Jesus, we have been redeemed from all sins.

## He Made Known to Us the Mystery of His Will

The main text says that God *"made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will" (Ephesians 1:8-9).*

The gospel is God's mystery. It cannot be known by human wisdom. It cannot be realized even by worldly academics. It cannot be discovered even by religious zeal. We can know it only when God makes it known, and we can believe it only when the Holy Spirit makes us realize it.

Why do many people still have sin remaining in their hearts even while saying they believe in Jesus? It is because they do not know the mystery of God's will. They know the cross of Jesus, but they do not know the baptism of Jesus. They speak of the blood, but they do not know the water. They try to receive the removal of sins by holding onto only the cross, but because they do not know when and how their sins were passed onto Jesus, sin remains as it is in their hearts.

However, God has made known to us the mystery of His will. He has made us know why Jesus received baptism, why He hung on the cross, and why He resurrected. This is grace. He has made us see what countless people do not see even when they read the Bible, and He has made us realize what countless people do not realize even when they hear it.

Therefore, we must not take knowing the gospel lightly. Knowing and believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit is a great grace within God's dispensation established before the foundation of the world. We must value this truth and preach this gospel.

## All Things in Heaven and on Earth Are United in Christ

Verse 10 of the main text says that God intended *"He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth."*

Sin separated God and humans. Sin also separated people from people. Sin plunged the whole world into confusion and division. However, God gathers everything into one in Jesus Christ.

How do God and humans become one? Sin must be resolved. If sin remains, we cannot be reconciled with God. Therefore, Jesus took away all sins through baptism and paid the price for sins on the cross. Now, the one who believes this gospel becomes reconciled with God. The sinner who was an enemy of God becomes a child of God.

Those who have become one in Christ become members together within God's church. Although physically they are people with different backgrounds and different personalities, because they are those who believe the same gospel and received the same Holy Spirit, they become one body. This is the unification accomplished in Christ.

In the future, God will completely accomplish this work in the new heaven and the new earth. Those who are saved in Christ will live forever with God. Therefore, our hope is not on earth but in heaven. We are those who live looking forward to the heavenly inheritance.

## We Have Become God's Inheritance

Verse 11 of the main text says, *"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being"* This means that we have

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become God's possession. We no longer belong to sin. We no longer belong to Satan. We are God's possession, bought with the price of Jesus Christ's baptism and blood.

Even to a person, their own things are precious. Even a small object is cherished if it is their own. How much more precious would God consider us, whom He bought with the price of His own Son's life? We are God's inheritance. We are God's children. We are God's people. We are those called to be the praise of God's glory.

A person who believes this does not treat themselves carelessly. They do not despair, saying, "I am nothing." Physically, we may be lacking, but spiritually, we belong to God. The world may not recognize us, but God has made us His inheritance.

Also, a person who has become God's inheritance cannot live as they please. Now we belong to the Lord. Our time belongs to the Lord, our bodies belong to the Lord, and our lives belong to the Lord. Therefore, we must live for the Lord. We must live for the gospel. We must live a life that becomes the praise of God's glory.

## Hearing and Believing the Gospel of Salvation, We Were Sealed with the Holy Spirit

Verse 13 of the main text clearly states how salvation comes to us. *"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."*

First, we must hear the gospel. What kind of gospel is it? It is the word of truth, that is, the gospel of salvation. This gospel is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which states that Jesus took over all the sins of the world through baptism, bled and died

on the cross, and saved us from all sins by resurrecting.
Next, we must believe. The gospel does not end at knowing it by hearing. We must believe with our hearts. We must believe that Jesus' baptism is the very event where He took over my sins. We must believe that Jesus' cross is the very event where He received the judgment for my sins in my place. We must believe that Jesus' resurrection is the event that justified me.
To the one who believes like that, God seals them with the Holy Spirit of promise. Sealing means stamping a seal. It is God confirming, "You are my child. You are one who has received the removal of sins. You are my possession."
The Holy Spirit comes upon the one who has received the removal of sins. The Holy Spirit cannot dwell in a person whose sins remain as they are in their heart. However, the Holy Spirit comes upon the person who has had all their sins washed away by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the evidence that our salvation is true, and the seal that we are God's children.

## The Holy Spirit Is the Guarantee of Our Inheritance

Verse 14 of the main text says that the Holy Spirit *"is the guarantee of our inheritance."* God giving us the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of the heavenly inheritance we will receive in the future.
A guarantee is the confirmation of a promise. By giving us the Holy Spirit, God guaranteed, "I will surely give you the kingdom of heaven that I promised you." Therefore, we can look forward to the glory we will receive in the future by faith.
On this earth, saints experience various difficulties. There is

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physical weakness, worries of life, and difficulties in human relationships. While living for the gospel, there is also persecution and hardship. However, the Holy Spirit who is within us holds us. He testifies that the salvation we received is true, and makes us look forward to the glory we will receive in the future.

Therefore, we must not be discouraged. Life on this earth is not everything. We are God's inheritance. God has obtained us, and the Holy Spirit has become the guarantee of our inheritance. Therefore, our future is certain. We will live in glory together with the Lord in the future.

## Beloved Saints, Praise God's Plan of Salvation

Now I will summarize the message. God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. He chose us that we should be holy and without blemish before God in love. Having predestined us according to His good pleasure, He made us His sons through Jesus Christ.

That plan was fulfilled through Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist, Jesus took over all our sins, and by bleeding and dying on the cross, He fully paid the price for those sins, and by resurrecting, He justified us. We, who heard and believed this gospel, received the removal of sins, were sealed with the Holy Spirit, and became God's inheritance.

All of this is God's grace. We have no merit. We have no boast. We only give glory to God. Therefore, we must cry out like Paul: "Praise be to God."

Let us praise God who saved us. Let us praise God who made us His children. Let us praise God who gave us every spiritual

blessing in the heavenly places. Let us praise God who allowed us to hear and believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Beloved saints, you are God's inheritance. You are God's children. You are righteous people who have received the removal of sins in Jesus Christ. Therefore, do not be weighed down by the difficulties of the world, but live remembering the grace you have received. And please live preaching the complete salvation accomplished by Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection to the souls who do not yet know this gospel.

The ultimate purpose for which God saved us is to make us praise the glory of His grace. Therefore, our lips, our hearts, and our lives must become instruments that praise God.

I bless you in the name of the Lord that we all become those who embrace this great plan of salvation in our hearts, praise God every day, and preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the end. Amen. ✉

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Sermon 5 by Paul C. Jong

# Praise God's plan of salvation

**< Ephesians 1:1-23 >**

**"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in**

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**whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."**

## The Apostle's Ministry Begun by the Will of God and the Grace and Peace That Come Upon the Saints

*"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:1-2).*

In Ephesians 1:1-2, the Apostle Paul is not simply recording

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a greeting to start a letter, but he explains his apostleship and the identity of the saints upon the foundation of the gospel he believes and preaches. The core of the gospel Paul preached is not the way for humans to become righteous on their own, but the history of salvation God accomplished through Jesus Christ, and that gospel word of salvation is the gospel completed through the event of Jesus taking on the sins of the world by being baptized by John and receiving the judgment for those sins on the cross. As a person who believes in this gospel of salvation, Paul introduces himself as *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God."*

The gospel Paul preached is not a way for humans to come to God through legalistic efforts or religious acts to resolve sin, but the gospel of faith that believes in the salvation God has already accomplished through Jesus Christ. It is the fact that when Jesus was baptized by John, He took on the sins of the world, and bearing those sins, He bled and received judgment on the cross, and through His resurrection from death, that salvation was completed. Paul testifies that he became an apostle as a person who believes in this very gospel, and that he received the mission to testify to that gospel to the whole world.

Paul then calls the recipients of the letter *"the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus."* From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, a saint is not a person who constantly makes efforts to resolve their own sins. Rather, it is one who has accepted as Savior the Jesus who took on the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, received the judgment for those sins on the cross, and resurrected from death.

Lastly, Paul says, *"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."* The grace mentioned here does not mean a blessing humans obtain through effort, but the gift of

salvation God has given freely. And it is the peace given to those who believe in this grace of salvation. Because humans, who were disconnected from God due to the problem of sin, have become reconciled with God by believing in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, peace comes upon their hearts.
Therefore, although Ephesians 1:1-2 looks like a simple greeting, it is a word that contains the structure of the gospel Paul believed and preached.

## All Spiritual Blessings in Heavenly Places Given in Christ

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

In Ephesians 1:3, the Apostle Paul begins with a praise offered to God. The word *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"* is not a simple declaration of blessing, but a praise offered while looking at the gospel of salvation that God the Father accomplished through Jesus Christ.
The expression *"Blessed be"* that Paul speaks is a confession that comes from deep reverence and gratitude for the history of salvation God has accomplished. Paul praises God because he knew the fact that humans do not come to God on their own to obtain blessings, but God first opened the way of salvation for humans. The gospel he believed and preached is not accomplished by human deeds or religious efforts, but is the history of salvation accomplished by God the Father sending Jesus Christ to this earth. Therefore, for Paul, the gospel is not a

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human boast, but becomes the reason for praise offered to God. Paul then calls God *"Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."* This shows the fact that salvation was accomplished through the ministry of God and Jesus Christ. God is the one who established the plan of salvation, and Jesus Christ is the one who accomplished that plan of salvation in actual history. Paul emphasizes that the center of this salvation was accomplished *"in Christ."* This expression is an important expression that appears repeatedly in Ephesians 1, and it tells us that all blessings of salvation are given within the relationship with Jesus Christ.

When Paul explains this word as a person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the expression *"in Christ"* has a very important meaning. God sent Jesus Christ to resolve the sin problem of mankind, and Jesus had the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and bearing those sins, He bled and received judgment on the cross. And through His resurrection from death, He completed that salvation. Entering into this ministry of salvation is exactly the "gospel in Christ." In other words, a person does not come to God by their own deeds or merits, but receives the blessing of salvation by participating in the gospel word of truth that is within the history of redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ.

Paul also says that God has given the saints *"every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places."* The blessing mentioned here does not mean things like worldly wealth or success. The spiritual blessing Paul speaks of means the blessing of the removal of sins and becoming God's children. These blessings are not explained by earthly standards of value but are blessings belonging to heaven. That is, they do not change according to the circumstances or conditions of human life, but are eternal blessings given within the

history of salvation accomplished by God.
What Paul emphasizes through this word is the truth that God has already given all these spiritual blessings of salvation to the saints in Christ. This is not a word promising blessings to be received in the future, but a word declaring the blessings of salvation that have already been accomplished.
Therefore, Ephesians 1:3 is a word that shows the essence of the gospel Paul believed and preached. God accomplished the salvation of mankind through Jesus Christ, and gave every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places to those who are in Christ. Because Paul realized this fact, he praises God, and clearly testifies to the fact that the blessings the saints received are not worldly, but eternal blessings of salvation given by God in Christ.

## God's Election Established Before the Foundation of the World and the Grace of Sonship

*"Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:4-6).*

In Ephesians 1:4-6, the Apostle Paul explains that God saving humans was not accomplished by chance, but was accomplished within God's plan established before the foundation of the world. Paul says that God *"chose us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4)*. This word shows the fact that God had already established a plan to save mankind from sin even before humans existed. That is, salvation

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is not the result of humans seeking God first, but it began within the plan of salvation God first established toward humans.

From the perspective of the gospel Paul believed and preached, the purpose for which God chose humans is to make them holy and without blemish in Christ. Humans were beings who could not stand before God due to sin. God wanted to resolve that sin problem through Jesus Christ and make people into beings who can stand before God. The holiness Paul speaks of is not a state created by human moral efforts, but refers to the blessing of salvation given within the history of redemption God accomplished through Jesus Christ.

Paul also says that God *"predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Ephesians 1:5).* The word predestination here means that God set up in advance the plan of redemption to save humans. God knew that humans would fall into sin, and at the same time, He was preparing the way of salvation to resolve that sin problem. That way of salvation is exactly the history of redemption accomplished through Jesus Christ.

Paul emphasizes that all this history of salvation was accomplished not because of human merit or qualification, but by God's grace. He says it is God's *"grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6).* The Beloved mentioned here points to Jesus Christ. God freely gave salvation to humans in Jesus Christ. It is not that humans did something to obtain this salvation, but it is a gift God bestowed by grace.

Lastly, Paul explains the purpose for which God accomplished salvation in this way. It is *"to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Ephesians 1:6).* That is, the ultimate purpose for which God saved humans is not to elevate humans, but to reveal how great and amazing God's grace and love are. Humans were beings who could not come to God by their own righteousness,

but because God accomplished salvation through Jesus Christ, people come to realize that grace and praise God.
Therefore, Ephesians 1:4-6 is a word that shows the plan of salvation God established from before the foundation of the world and how that plan was accomplished through Jesus Christ.

## Redemption Accomplished in Christ and the Mystery of God's Salvation

*"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him" (Ephesians 1:7-10).*

In Ephesians 1:7–10, the Apostle Paul explains the gospel of redemption that God accomplished through Jesus Christ, revealing in what way that salvation was accomplished and also within how deep and great a will of God that plan of salvation was accomplished. Through these words, Paul emphasizes that the way for humans to escape from sin does not come from human deeds or religious efforts, but is solely the work of God's grace accomplished in Jesus Christ.
From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached, Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and bearing those sins, He shed blood on the cross and received the judgment of sin. The blood of Christ shed on the cross is an event showing that the punishment for sin was

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actually executed, and through it, the way was opened for sinners to receive the removal of sins. Therefore, the expression Paul speaks of, *"have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Ephesians 1:7)*, is a statement explaining the core of the gospel that the problem of sin was solved through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Paul subsequently says that God *"made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will" (Ephesians 1:8-9)*. The mystery spoken of here does not mean knowledge that humans can discover on their own, but the plan of salvation that God made known through revelation. This mystery is God's dispensation of salvation that had been hidden for a long time but was revealed through Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament era, there was a sacrificial system to solve sin, but it was a shadow foreshadowing the reality of the redemption to come.

Paul also says that God *"according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times" (Ephesians 1:9)* regarding this work of salvation. The word dispensation here means God's plan of salvation by which He governs history.

Lastly, Paul explains the ultimate purpose for which God accomplished this work of salvation. It is *"He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him" (Ephesians 1:10)*. Due to human sin, the relationship between God and humans was broken, and the entire world was placed under the influence of sin and death. However, through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, God was accomplishing the work of restoring all things again and making them one centered on Christ. This points to the completion of salvation where the entire created order of God is restored in Christ, going beyond simply the salvation of individuals.

## The Saints Who Became an Inheritance Within God's Will and the Praise of His Glory

*"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:11-12).*

In Ephesians 1:11–12, the Apostle Paul explains the fact that the work of salvation accomplished by God was not accomplished by chance but within God's will and plan, and as a result of that salvation, the saints became an inheritance belonging to God. Paul first says it was accomplished *"according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will" (Ephesians 1:11).* The history of the world is not moved by human power or chance, but is progressing within the plan of salvation that God is accomplishing according to His own will. From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached, God knew that humanity would fall into sin, but at the same time, He was also preparing in advance the way of salvation to solve that problem of sin. God sent Jesus Christ to bear the sins of humanity, and accomplished the work of salvation through Christ. This is exactly the dispensation of salvation that God works according to the desire of His heart.

Paul subsequently says, *"we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according" (Ephesians 1:11).* The word predestination here contains the meaning that God established a plan in advance to save humanity, rather than meaning that God arbitrarily determined human destiny. God prepared the way of salvation to be accomplished through Jesus Christ, and permitted those who believe within that history of salvation to

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become God's people. The expression *"In Him"* that Paul speaks of always points to Jesus Christ. In other words, humans do not come to belong to God through their own deeds or religious efforts, but become God's people by entering into the history of redemption accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Paul says that the saints "became an inheritance." The word inheritance here has two meanings together. One is that God made the saints His own possession, and the other is that the saints came to receive the inheritance of the kingdom of God. God did not leave sinners simply as forgiven beings through Jesus Christ, but made them His own people. From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached, Jesus Christ bore the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, and by being crucified and receiving the judgment for those sins, He caused the human problem of sin to be solved. Therefore, those who believe in that redemptive work receive the removal of sins before God and become beings belonging to God. Therefore, the saints are no longer beings under the power of sin, but people who have become an inheritance belonging to God.

Paul also uses the expression *"that we who first trusted in Christ" (Ephesians 1:12)*. This points to the promise of salvation that God had prepared from long ago. From the Old Testament era, God promised a Messiah who would save humanity, and He caused that promise to be fulfilled through Jesus Christ. Paul, as a person who lived looking forward to the fulfillment of this very promise, testifies to the fact that the promise was actually fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Lastly, Paul explains the purpose for which God accomplished salvation in this way. It is *"Christ should be to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:12)*. The purpose for which God saved sinners is not to exalt humans, but to reveal how great and

amazing God's love is. Therefore, those who have received salvation cannot boast of their own merits, but solely praise the history of grace that God has accomplished.

## The Sealing of the Holy Spirit and the Guarantee of the Inheritance Given to Those Who Believe the Gospel of Salvation

*"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14).*

In Ephesians 1:13–14, the Apostle Paul explains how a person comes to enter into the gospel of salvation, and what God gives to the person who believes that gospel. This word is an important passage that shows how the process of hearing the gospel, believing, and receiving the sealing of the Holy Spirit are connected, and reveals how God confirms and guarantees those who are saved.

Paul first says, *"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13).* The word of truth here means the gospel of salvation that God the Father accomplished through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ bore the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and bearing those sins, He shed blood on the cross and received the judgment of sin, and completed the work of salvation through His resurrection from death. This is the gospel of salvation that Paul speaks of, and people come to know the way of salvation by hearing this gospel.

Paul subsequently says, *"in whom also, having believed."* He

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states that the gospel does not simply end with hearing, but becomes that person's own when it is accepted by faith. This means that human deeds or merits do not accomplish salvation, but faith believing in the gospel of salvation that God has already accomplished becomes the channel of salvation.

Next, Paul explains the gift that God gives to those who believe the gospel. He says, *"you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."* In ancient society, to seal meant to indicate ownership and confirm authenticity. Paul uses this expression to show the fact that saved people have become beings belonging to God. By giving the Holy Spirit to those who believe the gospel of salvation, God confirms the fact that they are people belonging to God. Therefore, the sealing of the Holy Spirit does not mean a simple emotional experience, but is a spiritual mark that God has acknowledged saved people as His own people.

Paul subsequently explains the Holy Spirit as *"the guarantee of our inheritance."* The word guarantee has a meaning like collateral that surely promises what will be received in the future. By giving the Holy Spirit to saved people, God guaranteed that the eternal life and the inheritance of the kingdom of God they will receive in the future are certain. In other words, the Holy Spirit is God's confirmation that the promise of salvation to be completed in the future will actually be fulfilled.

Paul also explains the purpose for which God gave the Holy Spirit in this way. It is *"until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:14).* Through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, God made people His own people, and He will protect them to the end and accomplish the completion of salvation. And as a result, saved people come to praise the history of grace and salvation that God has accomplished.

Therefore, Ephesians 1:13–14 is a word explaining the fact that God gives the Holy Spirit to those who hear and believe the word of the gospel, confirming and guaranteeing their salvation. A person comes to enter into Christ by hearing and believing the gospel of salvation, and through the sealing of the Holy Spirit, God confirms that the person is a being belonging to God. And the Holy Spirit becomes the guarantee for the kingdom of God and eternal life that will be completed in the future.

## Paul's Prayer for Wisdom and Revelation to Know God

*"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power" (Ephesians 1:15-19).*

In Ephesians 1:15–19, the Apostle Paul, recording the content of the prayer he offers for the saints of the Ephesian church, hopes that the people who believe the gospel of salvation do not merely remain at the level of knowing doctrines, but realize the deep meaning of the salvation God has accomplished. Through this word, Paul explains that what is needed for those who believe the gospel is not a new way of salvation, but the opening of their spiritual eyes to more deeply realize the truth of salvation that God has already accomplished.

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Paul first says, *"I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints" (Ephesians 1:15)*. This means that Paul heard the fact that the saints of the Ephesian church stand firm in the faith believing in Jesus Christ, and at the same time have love toward other saints. For Paul, true faith is not simply a faith confessed with the lips, but includes a life where that faith is manifested as love toward the saints. People who believe the gospel of salvation do not remain in a personal faith that only considers their relationship with God, but come to live within a community interconnected with saints who have received the same grace of salvation.

Therefore, Paul says for them, *"do not cease to give thanks."* He thanks God while thinking of the work God has accomplished among the Ephesian church, and at the same time continues to pray for them to come to know God more deeply. The center of the prayer Paul offers is asking God to give them *"the spirit of wisdom and revelation"* to make them know God.

From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached, the history of salvation that God accomplished through Jesus Christ is a history of God's grace that cannot be fully understood by human reason alone. It is saying that God sent Jesus Christ into the world to bear the sins of humanity, and that Christ bore the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, shed His blood on the cross, and received the judgment of sin, thereby completing the way of salvation. This gospel of salvation is not a religious teaching created by human thoughts, but the truth God made known through revelation.

Paul also says, *"the eyes of your understanding being enlightened."* Here, the expression "eyes of the heart" means spiritual insight. Even if a person hears and believes the gospel, if they do not deeply realize its meaning, they may not properly

understand the richness of the salvation God has accomplished. Therefore, Paul prays that God would enlighten the eyes of the saints' hearts to make them realize three important facts.

First is coming to know what the hope of His calling is. The purpose for which God called people is to have them participate in eternal salvation and the hope of the kingdom of God. The saints must realize how great and glorious the purpose for which God called them is.

Second is coming to know what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints are. God did not give saved people a simple religious status, but gave them an inheritance belonging to the kingdom of God. Paul wants the saints to realize the meaning of this glorious inheritance that God has given.

Third is coming to know what the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe is. The power God used when accomplishing salvation is not a simple power of moral change, but God's power, like the power that raises the dead. This power is the power of resurrection that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, and it is the power by which God accomplishes salvation.

## Christ Who Became the Head Over All Things Through Resurrection and Victory, and the Church Which is His Body

*"Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:20-23).*

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In Ephesians 1:20–23, the Apostle Paul explains how great the power God manifested in Jesus Christ is, and how that power worked through Jesus Christ.

Paul first says that God worked that power in Christ and raised Him from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is an event testifying to the fact that the redemptive work God accomplished is complete. Jesus Christ bore the sins of humanity and received judgment on the cross, and through the resurrection, it was confirmed that the redemptive work was completely accomplished. To Paul, the resurrection is not a simple miracle, but a declaration that God has overcome the power of sin and death. The fact that Jesus Christ rose from death shows that the judgment of sin has already been accomplished and the way of salvation has been completed.

Paul subsequently says that God *"and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places."* The expression of sitting at God's right hand means that Jesus Christ was exalted in God's authority and glory. Jesus is not a simple religious leader, but became the Lord of salvation and the King established by God. Therefore, Paul says that Jesus Christ was placed *"far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come."* This indicates the fact that Jesus Christ is the absolute sovereign who is above all authority.

Paul also explains that God *"put all things under His feet."* This means that God established Jesus Christ as the Lord of the entire universe. Due to human sin, the world was in a state of being disconnected from God, but through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, God is accomplishing the history of restoring all things back to being centered on Christ. Jesus Christ is not merely the Lord of the church, but the Lord of the entire universe.

However, Paul specifically emphasizes one important fact here. It is that God gave Jesus Christ to be head over all things to the church. The church is not a simple religious organization, but a community connected with Jesus Christ. While explaining the church, Paul says, *"the church, which is His body."* The body and the head are in an inseparable relationship. The head governs the body, and the body moves according to the life of the head. Through this expression, Paul explains the fact that the church is a community vitally connected with Jesus Christ.

From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached, the church is a community formed by people gathering who believe in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ bore the sins of the world and received judgment on the cross, thereby opening the way of salvation, and the people who believe that gospel become beings possessing a new life connected with Christ. Therefore, the church is not a simple gathering, but a community where the life of Christ is manifested.

Lastly, Paul explains the church as *"the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:23)*. This expression holds the meaning that the church is a community filled with the life and grace of Christ. Jesus Christ is the one who governs the entire universe, but at the same time, He manifests His life within the church. The church is the place where the fullness of Christ is manifested, and it becomes the channel through which Christ's history of salvation is revealed in the midst of the world.

Therefore, Ephesians 1:20–23 is a word explaining the power of salvation God manifested through Jesus Christ, the absolute authority of Christ, and the identity of the church. God raised Jesus Christ from the dead, exalted Him above all authority, and established Him as the head of the church. The church, as the body of Christ, is a community that manifests the life and

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fullness of Christ. Through this word, Paul is explaining the fact that the redemptive work of Jesus Christ is not a simple historical event, but God's power of salvation that governs the entire universe, and that power is manifested in the midst of the world through the church. ✉

# Questions and Answers on Ephesians Chapter 1

## [Question] 1. Ephesians 1:1-2, *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is the greeting that opens the door to the entire book of Ephesians, and within these short two verses, it contains who the writer of the letter is, who the recipients are, and what he wishes for them. Because the status and grace of those who have been saved by the gospel of the water and the Spirit are compressed in every single word, I will explain the meaning by examining them in order.

### 1. *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God"*

Paul, introducing himself, first reveals the basis for becoming an apostle. As the phrase *"by the will of God"* says, Paul becoming an apostle was not a position he obtained by wanting or making efforts for it, but was established by the will of God. Paul was originally a person who persecuted the church, but God called him and made him an apostle of Christ Jesus, that is, a servant of God.

This shows that both our salvation and calling began from God's side. Just as the Apostle Paul became an apostle not by his own merit but by the will of God, we too, who have been saved by

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the gospel of the water and the Spirit, became His children not by our qualifications or deeds, but by the will and calling of God. From the beginning of the ministry to the beginning of salvation, Paul makes it clear from the very first word that its source is in God.

### 2. *"To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus"*

Paul calls those who receive the letter *"saints"* and *"faithful in Christ Jesus."* Here, a saint means a holy person, and a person is called a saint not because they became holy on their own, but because Christ accomplished the complete removal of all those sins to make them holy. It is solely because of the salvation accomplished by Christ that a person who was originally dead in sin has become a holy person.

Also, the expression *"faithful in Christ Jesus"* is important. The reason we are recognized as faithful ones is not because of our own faithfulness, but because we are in Christ Jesus. Jesus Christ received baptism at the Jordan River to bear our sins, paid the full price on the Cross, and resurrected, thereby making us those who are in Christ. Therefore, this calling is a status given to those who have entered into Christ by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 3. It is from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

This is the word that reveals where the grace and peace that Paul wishes for come from. Grace and peace do not originate from humans or are obtained from the world, but come solely from *"God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."* The reason we, who originally could not call God our Father, have now come to call God *"our Father"* is because Christ accomplished

the blotting out of all our sins and made us children of God.
The reason God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are placed together here indicates that all the grace we have received has been accomplished through the will of the Father and the ministry of His Son, Jesus Christ. The Father established the plan to save us from before the foundation of the world, and His Son, Jesus Christ, accomplished that plan entirely through His baptism, Cross, and resurrection. Therefore, the source of our grace and peace lies entirely in the Triune God from beginning to end.

**4. *"Grace to you and peace"***

The first greeting that Paul wishes for the saints is exactly "grace and peace." Here, grace refers to God's favor given freely to those who do not deserve it. We were dead in trespasses and sins and were children of wrath, but God freely saved us with that great love, so this is exactly grace. It is a salvation given solely as God's gift, where our deeds or merits cannot intervene even an inch.
Following that, *"peace"* is the fruit of that grace. A person who has sin has a weighed-down conscience and cannot enjoy true peace. However, because Jesus Christ took charge of all our sins through His baptism and the Cross and accomplished the elimination of the sin that made us enemies, we have been reconciled with God and have come to enjoy true peace. Therefore, grace and peace are not separated; rather, when the grace of salvation received through the gospel of the water and the Spirit comes upon our hearts, peace follows as its result.

**5. To summarize and tell you**

Ephesians 1:1-2 is not a simple formal greeting, but a word

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that compresses and contains the grace of salvation that will flow throughout the entire letter. Paul, who writes the letter, became an apostle not by his own efforts but by the will of God, and those who receive the letter are the saints who have been made holy and established as faithful ones in Christ. And the grace and peace that Paul wishes for them come solely from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

At the foundation of all this is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God established the will to save us from before the foundation of the world, and His Son, Jesus Christ, received baptism from John at the Jordan River to bear the sins of our world, paid the price on the Cross, and resurrected to deliver us from sin. Therefore, the fact that we are called saints, call God our Father, and enjoy grace and peace are all not our merits but the freely received gifts of God. With this single word of greeting, Paul is reminding us not to forget who we are as saved people and where that grace came from.

## [Question] 2. What is the meaning of the word Paul spoke in Ephesians 1:3, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"*?

Ephesians 1:3 is the first outcry of Paul opening the main body after finishing his greeting, and the core of salvation is condensed within a single verse. I will answer by unfolding in order the meaning of *"Blessed be,"* the channel of *"in Christ"* and the identity of *"every spiritual blessing in the heavenly."*

### 1. *"Blessed be"* means to compliment God

Opening the main body, Paul first says the exclamation *"Blessed be."* This word means believing in Jesus Christ, who saved us who were sinners from all sins, and complimenting Him. What we praise with our lips during worship is exactly complimenting the work God has done. The reason Paul spoke like this is because the work God has done for us is so great that he could not help but compliment Him. The text reveals to us the one to receive compliments as *"the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."* That is because the Father of Jesus Christ, who saved us from the sins of the world, has bestowed the blessing of salvation upon us. Paul is beginning the main body of the letter with praise toward Him.

### 2. *"In Christ"* indicates the only channel of the blessing given

Ephesians 1:3 says that God has blessed us *"in Christ."* This word is by no means a word to pass by lightly. *"Christ"* means the anointed one, and it indicates the three offices of king, priest, and prophet who were anointed in the Old Testament. Jesus is the King of kings, the Prophet who knows everything, and the High Priest of heaven. Jesus, who is that Priest, came to this earth, took charge of the sins of the world upon His body through the baptism received from John, shed blood and died on the Cross, and resurrected from death to save us. Therefore, the word *"in Christ"* exactly indicates the entire ministry of salvation accomplished by Jesus, and when we believe in that ministry and enter into Christ, the blessing of salvation is given. By human merit or effort, one can never reach this blessing.

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### 3. *"Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly"* is the blessing of becoming God's children

This blessing of salvation does not indicate material prosperity of the world or prosperity of the flesh. *"Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly"* is exactly the blessing of receiving the removal of sins and being able to become God's children. There is no greater blessing than a sinner receiving the washing from their sins to become God's child and enjoying the kingdom of heaven in the future. God has delivered us from the sins of the world and made us His righteous and flawless children, and this indeed is the foremost spiritual blessing of salvation among all blessings.

### 4. This blessing is given to those who now believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit

We must clearly know how the spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms comes upon us. That blessing of salvation is given when we believe in the salvation accomplished by Jesus bearing the sins of all mankind once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, and resurrecting in three days after being crucified and shedding blood and dying while taking charge of those sins. That is, the one who receives the blotting out of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit enters into Christ and receives the blessing of becoming God's child. However, a faith that emphasizes only the blood of the Cross misses the baptism that transferred the sins of the world, and thus cannot enjoy the completeness of this blessing. A person who holds onto the baptism Jesus received from John, the blood of the Cross, and the resurrection from death altogether can believe that all sins were handled once and for all, and thus fully enjoys the spiritual blessing.

### 5. True peace and rest follow this spiritual blessing of salvation

True peace and rest of mind come upon the one who has received the elimination of sins and become God's child. Because the problem of their own sins has been completely resolved within the gospel, they escape from the anxiety that they must do something more and enjoy peace. A person who has received the removal of sins does not make a loud fuss trying to wash away sins on their own, but quietly believes in that salvation and rests, just like a little child sleeping comfortably in their mother's arms. This is the fruit that follows the one who has received the spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms.

## [Question] 3. Ephesians 1:4-5 says, *"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."* What does this word mean?

These two verses are words that reveal when our salvation began and toward what kind of person it is directed, and they contain the true meaning of what election and predestination are. First, this word shows the fact that God chose us before the foundation of the world. Also, God intended to make the chosen person a holy and flawless person, and this word reveals exactly that purpose. And it says that God predestined us in advance according to His good pleasure. Lastly, it says the fact that all these things are accomplished only through Jesus Christ.

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### 1. *"Before the foundation of the world,"* our salvation was already planned

Ephesians 1:4 says that God *"chose us in Him before the foundation of the world."* That is, even before this universe was made, and long before we were born on this earth, our salvation was already determined within God's plan. God is One who plans all things in advance and, when the time comes, accomplishes them according to that plan. Before making the universe and creating all things and people, He had already resolved to save us. Therefore, our receiving salvation is by no means something done by our effort or will, and it is God's work that does not place even a single piece of merit on our side.

### 2. God chose those who are lacking and weak

Ephesians 1:4 says that God *"chose us in Him."* If so, what kind of person would God have chosen? Looking at Esau and Jacob in Genesis, the nature of that election is revealed. The side that looked honest, strong, and diligent was rather Esau, but God chose Jacob, who was lacking and weak. The person God chooses is not one who boasts of being strong, but one who knows their own weakness. This is because a person who considers themselves righteous and perfect does not accept the gift of salvation given by God. Because we are lacking, we accepted God's gift, and because we are weak, we relied on that grace and became chosen ones.

### 3. The purpose of election is to make us *"holy and without blame"*

Ephesians 1:4 reveals the purpose of election as *"should be holy and without blame before Him in love."* However, there is no way for a sinner to become holy on their own. The reason we

become holy and without blemish before God is solely because Jesus took upon Himself our sins by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, and fully paid the price for those sins on the Cross. Because the sins were completely transferred to Jesus, the one who believes in that ministry stands before God as a flawless person with no sin remaining anymore. One reaches holiness not through legalistic efforts to become holy by human deeds, but through faith believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 4. "Having predestined us according to His good pleasure" indicates God's sovereign resolution

Following the election, Ephesians 1:5 says, *"having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." "Predestined"* means having determined in advance. God did not ask or consult us, but determined us in advance *"according to His good pleasure."* Just as He did not discuss with the creations when creating this universe, the work of saving us was also resolved entirely by God's sovereign will. However, this predestination is not an unconditional selection of choosing someone and abandoning someone for no reason. God loves all people and promised to eliminate all their sins, but He makes those who know their own weakness and rely on Christ His children. Those who try to establish their own righteousness distance themselves because they reject this gift of salvation on their own.

### 5. *"By Jesus Christ,"* we become sons of God

Ephesians 1:5 says that all this election and predestination are accomplished by *"to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself."* Our becoming sons of God is not because of our

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qualifications, but is solely due to the work Jesus Christ has done. Because Jesus had all the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, paid the price of sin by being crucified, and permanently guaranteed our righteousness through His resurrection, the one who believes in that ministry becomes a son of God. Becoming God's child is a glory that cannot be compared to any high status in the world. It can never be reached by the flesh, and it is something possible only through faith believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

**[Question] 4. Ephesians 1:6-12, *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."* What does this word mean?**

This text unfolds the entire process of salvation in one breath, starting from the freely given grace in verse 6, to the removal of

sins through His blood (verse 7), the dispensation that made known the mystery of His will (verses 8-9), the unification in Christ (verse 10), and our becoming an inheritance (verses 11-12). I will answer by unraveling them in order following the core flow.

### 1. *"His grace, by which He made us accepted"* is the gift of salvation given without cost

Ephesians 1:6 says that everything given to us is *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved." "The Beloved"* is exactly the Son of God, Jesus Christ. The salvation given to us is a gift freely given in Christ and through Him. The word "freely" means it was given without price, without cost. The grace of salvation is what God bestowed without cost upon sinners who have absolutely no qualification to receive it, and not a single piece of human deed or merit was included. And the purpose of giving this grace is to make us *"praise of the glory of His grace."* From the very beginning, salvation is directed toward praising God.

### 2. *"Through His blood,"* we received redemption, that is, the removal of sins

Ephesians 1:7 says, *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." "Redemption"* means buying by paying a price, meaning that God bought and rescued us, who were bound to perish due to sin, by paying the price of His own life. Here, the phrase *"through His blood"* does not merely refer to the event of shedding blood on the Cross. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, Jesus took upon Himself the sins of all mankind at once, and carrying those sins, He fully paid the price of sin by shedding blood and dying on the Cross. Because

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the sins were first transferred to Him through the baptism received from John, His shedding of blood became the perfect price for our sins. This is the redemption preached by the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 3. "Having made known to us the mystery of His will" means He made us realize the truth of salvation

Ephesians 1:8-9 says that God *"made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will."* God not only redeemed us from sin but also taught us so that we could clearly know the truth of that redemption. The reason we came to know and believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not because of our brilliance, but because God abundantly poured out wisdom and prudence, letting us know in our hearts and believe. The hidden *"mystery of His will"* has been revealed to us.

### 4. *"The dispensation of the fullness of the times"* is God's plan accomplished at the appointed time

Ephesians 1:9 says that all this is *"according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times." "Dispensation"* refers to the plan God has stored up for a long time and His skill in carrying out that plan. God prepared in advance all the work to save us, and at the *"fullness of the times"* He sent His Son and actually accomplished that work. Jesus being born borrowing a woman's body, taking on sins through baptism, dying on the Cross, and resurrecting are all the fulfillment of the dispensation accomplished at the appointed time. Our hearing and believing this gospel now is also something within that predestined dispensation.

### 5. *"He might gather together in one all things in Christ"* is God's ultimate goal

Ephesians 1:10 says, *"He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in."* That is, God's plan of salvation lies in gathering together into one in Jesus Christ all things that were scattered and divided due to sin. It is to reconcile those who became enemies of God due to sin back to God in Christ and bind them as God's children. The center of this unification is strictly *"in Christ."* There is no way for a person to become one with God through their own effort or religiosity, and only those who believe in the salvation Jesus accomplished through His baptism, Cross, and resurrection are united with God in Christ.

### 6. *"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance"* means we have become God's possession

Ephesians 1:11 says, *"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will."* *"Obtained an inheritance"* means that we have become God's, that is, God's possession. We received the blotting out of sins in Christ and believed in His righteousness to become God's people and children. However, all this was accomplished *"according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,"* that is, within the decree of God who governs all things. There is nothing done on our part, and because it is a work accomplished by God from beginning to end, it is even more solid.

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**7. The whole purpose is *"Christ should be to the praise of His glory."***

Ephesians 1:12 reveals the purpose of our becoming God's inheritance as *"that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."* The final purpose for which God saved us from sin and made us His children is to have us praise God's glory. From God's perspective, our becoming righteous people without sin and God's children is a great glory and joy. Therefore, those who know the depth of this salvation realize how great a grace they have received, and they live their lives praising God's glory with their lips and lives.

## [Question] 5. Ephesians 1:13-14, *"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."* What is the meaning of this word?

These two verses are words that show in order how salvation is actually applied to us, and they contain the flow of our hearing and believing the gospel to be sealed, and the truth that the Holy Spirit becomes the guarantee of our inheritance. Now, I will examine the contents of these words in order. First, I will clarify what the *"gospel of your salvation"* referred to in these words is. Next, I will explain what the order of our receiving salvation is. And I will unravel what *"sealed with the Holy Spirit"* means. Following that, I will tell you what *"guarantee of our inheritance"* means. Finally, I will clarify what the ultimate

purpose of all these things being accomplished is.

### 1. *"The word of truth, the gospel of your salvation"* is the gospel of the water and the Spirit

Ephesians 1:13 begins with, *"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."* What is the *"gospel of your salvation"* here? It is exactly the truth that Jesus received the transfer of the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, died on the Cross, and resurrected from that death to save us who believe. The reason this gospel is called the *"word of truth"* is that it is not a doctrine invented by man, but it testifies exactly to the fact that God actually accomplished. Salvation from sin begins right from hearing and believing this gospel of the water and the Spirit. (Matthew 3:15-17)

### 2. In salvation, there is a clear order of "hearing, believing, and being sealed"

Ephesians 1:13 clearly reveals the order, saying, *"of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."* That is, first you hear the gospel, then you believe that gospel with your heart, and as a result, the sealing of the Holy Spirit comes upon you. This order is important. A person does not first become holy and then believe the gospel, but the Holy Spirit comes upon them after they hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit, believe it in their heart, and receive the removal of sins. We do not receive the Holy Spirit through our deeds or efforts, but when we believe in the ministry of the baptism Jesus received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection, God pours out the Holy Spirit.

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### 3. *"Sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise"* means He confirmed us as God's children

Ephesians 1:13 says that the believer *"sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."* "Sealing" means that He confirms and marks you as His child, just like stamping a seal on a contract. When we believed the gospel and received the blotting out of sins, God poured the Holy Spirit into our hearts as promised and acknowledged us as His children. Therefore, the reason we call the invisible God our Father and confess Jesus as our Savior is because the Holy Spirit is within us. Because He poured the Holy Spirit into the heart that received the removal of sins and stamped a seal on it, we have unshakeably become God's children.

### 4. The Holy Spirit becomes the *"guarantee of our inheritance"*

Ephesians 1:14 reveals the meaning of this sealing, saying, *"who is the guarantee of our inheritance."* The Holy Spirit given to our hearts is the *"guarantee"* for the inheritance we will enjoy in the kingdom of heaven in the future, that is, the glorious inheritance. A guarantee is a certain security that what was promised will surely be fulfilled. By giving us the Holy Spirit, God guaranteed that the eternal inheritance we will receive is unmistakably ours. Also, the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts, keeping the devil from snatching us away, and protects us so that we remain God's possession to the end. Therefore, because the problem of sin was resolved at once within the gospel, the Holy Spirit dwelling within us becomes an unshakeable guarantee.

**5. *"Until the redemption of the purchased possession"* means He protects God's possession to the end**

Ephesians 1:14 says that the Holy Spirit works *"until the redemption of the purchased possession."* The ones God obtained by paying the price of His Son's life are exactly us. We are God's possession bought by paying the price of sin once and for all, and the Holy Spirit protects that possession to the end and finally delivers it completely. The reason we remain in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the end despite our shortcomings is not by our strength, but because the Holy Spirit dwelling within us protects us.

**6. The whole purpose is *"to the praise of His glory."***

Ephesians 1:14 reveals the purpose of all these things as *"to the praise of His glory."* The final purpose for which God saved us through the gospel, sealed us with the Holy Spirit, and guaranteed our inheritance is to have us praise God's glory. Both the beginning and the end of salvation are directed toward praising God. Therefore, the one who knows the certainty of this salvation, despite their shortcomings, relies on the salvation accomplished in Christ and the Holy Spirit who became its guarantee, and lives their life unshakeably praising God.

## [Question] 6. Ephesians 1:15-19, *"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of*

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***your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.*" What is the meaning of this word?**

This word is a word containing Paul's thanksgiving and prayer toward the saved saints, and along with thanksgiving for the saints' faith and love, three supplications for them follow. I will answer by unraveling in order the content of the thanksgiving, and the three supplications: making them know God, the hope of the calling and the glory of the inheritance, and the exceeding greatness of His power.

**1. Paul gives unceasing thanks because of the saints' faith and love**

Ephesians 1:15-16 begins with, *"Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you."* What Paul paid attention to are two things, namely, faith *"in the Lord Jesus"* and love *"for all the saints."* Since those who have true faith come to love the saints who have the same faith, this faith and love are the fruits that appear in those who are saved. Their faith is the faith that believes in the salvation Jesus accomplished through the baptism He received from John, the Cross, and the resurrection from death, and from that faith, love for the saints flows out. The reason Paul gave thanks unceasingly is because he knew that this faith is not a human merit but the result of the salvation God accomplished. Therefore, his thanksgiving ultimately heads toward God who bestowed that salvation.

### 2. The first supplication is the wisdom and revelation that makes them know God

Ephesians 1:17 reveals Paul's first supplication as, *"may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."* The important point here is the fact that a person knowing God does not happen by human brilliance or effort, but is possible only when God gives the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. The reason we call the invisible God our Father and confess Jesus as our Savior is because God poured the Holy Spirit into our hearts. A person without the Holy Spirit does not know in their heart that He is their Savior, even if they believe in Jesus with their mouth. However, the person who believes the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receives the removal of sins, and upon whom the Holy Spirit has come, knows God and realizes His will. Namely, knowing God is not because we are smart, but it becomes possible only when we believe the gospel and the Holy Spirit comes upon us.

### 3. The second supplication is making them know the hope of His calling and the glory of His inheritance

Ephesians 1:18 reveals the second supplication as, *"the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."* There is a spiritual reality that can only be seen when the eyes of the heart, not the eyes of the flesh, are enlightened. First, *"the hope of His calling"* indicates that the purpose for which God called us is exactly in the kingdom of heaven. The reason God delivered us from sin and made us His children is not to make us live briefly on this earth, but to make us live eternally in the kingdom of heaven together with Him. Next, *"the riches of the glory of His inheritance"*

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means that the glory to be enjoyed in that kingdom of heaven is so great and permanent that it cannot be fully expressed in human words. Therefore, the saved saints must not set their hearts only on this earth, but live hoping for the kingdom of heaven they will go to and enjoy in the future.

**4. Because this salvation is precious, Satan tries to snatch it away with the things of the world**

The hope of His calling and the glory of His inheritance spoken of in Ephesians 1:18 are that precious. That is why Satan tries to snatch away this hope using the things of the world as bait. Just as Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of red bean stew, one can fall into the foolishness of missing out on the eternal inheritance because of momentary fleshly satisfaction. Therefore, the saints whose eyes of the heart have been enlightened deeply know how great this salvation and its accompanying glorious inheritance are, and hold onto it firmly to the end without exchanging it for anything in the world. A faith that stops at the place of receiving the blotting out of sins is one that has not fully known the depth of this hope and inheritance.

**5. The third supplication is the exceeding greatness of His power bestowed toward believers**

Ephesians 1:19 reveals the third supplication as, *"and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power."* The work of God saving us is not a simple matter, but a work of exceedingly great power accomplished according to *"the working of His mighty power."* Raising us, who were nothing more than mere creatures, who had fallen into sin and were bound to perish, into

God's children is something that only the almighty God can do. Just as a grub cannot become a cicada on its own, a creature cannot become a child of God on its own. The greatness of this power is most clearly revealed in the ministry where Jesus bore the sins through His baptism, paid the price on the Cross, and resurrected from death to guarantee our salvation.

## [Question] 7. Ephesians 1:20-23, *"which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is a word that shows what kind of person Jesus Christ, who saved us, is at the climax of His glory, and it proclaims in order His resurrection and exaltation, His becoming the King of kings, and His becoming the head of the church. I will answer by unraveling in order the resurrection (verse 20), making Him far above every name (verse 21), and Christ who is the head of all things and the church which is His body (verses 22-23).

### 1. "*Raised Him from the dead*" is the exceedingly great power of God

In Ephesians 1:19, Paul spoke of "*the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe,*" and in verse 20, he reveals

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where that power appeared most clearly. He said, *"which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead."* The place where God's exceedingly great power was most distinctly revealed is exactly the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Raising someone who was dead back to life is something a person can never do, and it is something only the almighty God can do. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this resurrection is the final guarantee of our salvation. Because Jesus bore our sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, paid all the price for our sins by being crucified on the Cross, and resurrected in three days, our salvation was permanently confirmed. If He had not resurrected, the payment of the price for sin would have been in vain, but by overcoming death and coming back to life, our righteousness was eternally guaranteed.

### 2. *"Seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places"* means placing Him in the highest seat of glory

Ephesians 1:20 says that God seated Christ at His right hand in the heavenly places. Seating Him at the right hand means placing Him in the seat of the highest authority and glory. Jesus did not end by dying on the Cross, but He resurrected, sat at the right hand of God, and ascended to the most honorable seat. People often think of Jesus only as a pitiful person who suffered on the Cross, but that is merely the footprint of Him saving us. Now, He is the Lord of glory sitting at the right hand of the heavenly throne.

### 3. *"And every name that is named"* means Christ is the King of kings

In Ephesians 1:21, it says God made Christ *"far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name*

*that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come."* Namely, whether it is the visible world or the invisible world, whether it is this age or the age to come, He made Jesus Christ far above all authorities and all names. In particular, we must pay attention to the mention of even *"that which is to come."* Even in the new world to come after this world ends, the Son Jesus Christ rules and judges all things as the King of kings. After resurrecting, Jesus said, *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18),* and this authority is not something He took Himself, but what God the Father gave to the Son. Therefore, those who believe in Him as the Savior must know Him as the King of kings and obey His rule.

### 4. *"Gave Him to be head over all things to the church"* means Christ became the head of the church

Ephesians 1:22 says God *"put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church."* God made all things submit under Christ's feet, and gave that Christ again to be *"head over all things to the church."* Namely, He who is the King of all things became the head of the church. Here, *"church"* does not point to a chapel building. The word meaning church has the meaning of "those who are called out," and it points to the gathering of those who are saved and delivered from sin. Namely, the holy saints who believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior and received the removal of sins are the very church.

### 5. *"The church, which is His body"* means we are united with Christ as one body

Ephesians 1:23 says, *"the church, which is His body."* Christ is the head and we are the body which is its members, so we are

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those united with Him as one body. However, while Jesus becomes our eldest brother, He is at the same time our Lord and Savior, so even though we are the members that make up His body, He is the head to whom we ought to submit. The reason we became the body of Christ is because we believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the blotting out of sins. Because sin was dealt with at once and we became those without blemish, we can be united as one body with the holy head.

### 6. *"The fullness of Him who fills all in all"* means God's church is the channel of blessing

Ephesians 1:23 finally says, *"the fullness of Him who fills all in all."* The One who blesses all things is precisely Jesus Christ, who came to this earth clothed in human flesh and eliminated the sins of all people through His baptism, Cross, and resurrection. And God flows that blessing of salvation to the whole world through the church. The church, which is the gathering of saints who received the removal of sins, becomes the channel through which God's blessing flows, preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to those who have not yet entered into Christ. Therefore, the church does not merely stop at being a gathering of saved people, but it is the place where the fullness of Christ, who fills all things, resides.

## [Question] 8. Ephesians 1:3-6, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by*

***Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."* Why did God choose us in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, to save us and make us God's people?**

This text clearly contains within it the "reason and purpose" why God chose us. I will answer by unraveling in order the three purposes that the text directly reveals: to make us holy and without blame in love, to make us His sons, and to make us praise the glory of His grace.

**1. God chose us to make us His children**

Ephesians 1:4 says God *"chose us in Him before the foundation of the world,"* and then clearly reveals the purpose as *"having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself."* Everyone, no person in the world makes an object without a purpose. God also had a clear purpose when He created us. What was that purpose? It was precisely to make us His children. To make us, who were nothing more than mere creatures, into His sons having a glorious status equal to God, He chose us from before the foundation of the world. This is the first purpose why God chose us.

**2. God chose us to make us holy and without blame**

Ephesians 1:4 also states the purpose as *"that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."* To become God's children, one must have no sin. Because a person with sin cannot stand before the holy God. But how can a sinner become holy on their own? They cannot. So God personally accomplished all

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that sanctifying work. The reason we become holy and without blame before God is solely because Jesus took charge of all our sins through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and paid all the price for those sins on the Cross. Because all the sins of the world were transferred onto Jesus' body, the one who believes in that ministry stands before God as a blameless person with no sin remaining anymore.

### 3. That choosing is accomplished *"in Christ,"* namely, through the gospel of the water and the Spirit

We must pay attention to the repeated saying *"in Christ"* in Ephesians 1:4. God did not make us His children for free and unconditionally just like that, but He made us children *"by Jesus Christ."* Namely, God foreknew that humans would fall into sin, and decided to save those sinners in His Son. Because Jesus bore all the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, was crucified on the Cross carrying those sins to receive all the judgment for our sins, and resurrected in three days to become our Savior, we become God's sinless children in Christ. Therefore, the choosing before the foundation of the world cannot be accomplished apart from this gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 4. God chose us to make us live together with Him eternally

There is a deeper meaning in God making us His children. It is to make us live together with Him eternally. Everyone, our flesh is born once, grows old, gets sick, and dies. But that is not the end. For those who are born again by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, a second life, namely an eternal life, is waiting. This is exactly the purpose for which God created us. It is to save us from sin, make us His children, and finally take us

to the kingdom of heaven to live enjoying the same glory and wealth as Him eternally. That is why the Apostle Paul, realizing this mystery, exclaimed, *"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Romans 11:33).*

### 5. The final purpose is to make us praise the glory of His grace

Ephesians 1:6 nails down the final purpose of all this choosing as *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."* Namely, the final purpose for which God chose us, saved us, and made us His children, is to make us praise the glory of His grace. Since we were originally bound to go to hell having fallen into sin, but God saved us without price and made us His glorious children, all creatures and angels see that and come to praise God saying, "God is truly merciful." The very salvation we received becomes glory to God.

### 6. To summarize and tell you

The reasons God chose us in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world gather into three things, just as the text directly reveals. First is to make us holy and without blame in love; second is to make us His sons to live together eternally; and third is to make us praise the glory of His grace. All these things are not because of our qualifications or merits, but the grace God bestowed freely according to His good pleasure because He loved us. And that sanctifying work was accomplished solely by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, where Jesus bore all the sins of the world through His baptism and received all that judgment on the Cross. Therefore, the one who knows the depth of this choosing comes to praise God

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despite their own shortcomings and lives for His glory.

## [Question] 9. Why did the Lord have to accomplish the Lord's will through the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit?

Ephesians 1 shows the will God purposed to save us, and how He accomplished that will in Christ. Following the flow of the text, I will answer in order why God had to accomplish that will through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and not by any other method.

### 1. Because God's will could not be accomplished without solving our sin problem

What was God's will? Ephesians 1:4 and 5 say, *"that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."* Namely, it was God's will to make us His holy and blameless children. But we had sin. A person with sin cannot stand before the holy God, and cannot become God's child. Therefore, to accomplish God's will, He absolutely had to solve our sin problem first. The way to solve that sin problem at once and completely was exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 2. Because that will could not be accomplished by human deeds or the law

Everyone, can a person become a sinless person by their own good deeds or by keeping the law? They cannot. There is not a single person on this earth who has obtained salvation by perfectly keeping the law. The law rather only makes us realize

that we are sinners. Therefore, if God had entrusted our salvation to human deeds, no one would have been saved, and God's will would never have been accomplished. So God did not rely on human deeds, but chose the way to personally accomplish that salvation entirely. That way is exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished through His baptism and the Cross.

### 3. Because there was not a single mediator among humans to release the sins

Looking at Isaiah 59, it says there is no one who sues according to righteousness, no one who pleads for truth, and while people commit sins against each other and suffer injustices, there is not a single mediator to resolve it. So Jehovah saw it, and seeing that there was no man, He wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him. Everyone, because there was not a single blameless person in this world who could take charge of our sins on our behalf, God personally had to come down clothed in a human body and accomplish that work. This is the reason God had to accomplish His will through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 4. Because sins had to be transferred to Jesus first so He could pay the price for the sins

Ephesians 1:7 says, *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."* But Jesus is someone without sin, so how could He pay the price for our sins? It is precisely because sins had to be transferred to Jesus first. Looking at the Day of Atonement sacrifice in Leviticus 16 of the Old Testament, only after the High Priest laid his two hands on the head of the goat and laid

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hands on it, transferring all the sins of the people to that goat, was that offering killed or sent into the wilderness. Only after the sins are transferred first does that death become the price for sin. So Jesus also, according to this law, had to receive the transfer of all the sins of the world onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and pay that price on the Cross while carrying those sins. Because without the baptism, the blood of the Cross alone would have become blood that has nothing to do with our sins.

**5. Because someone had to receive the judgment for sin on our behalf**

God is a righteous One. He must absolutely judge concerning sin. Therefore, in order for us to receive the blotting out of sins, someone had to receive the judgment for our sins on our behalf. After Jesus bore all the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, He was crucified to receive all the judgment for those sins on our behalf, and paid all the price for sin by shedding His blood and dying. If this judgment had not been paid, it would mean God just covered up the sins, and His righteousness would have collapsed. But God, by making His Son receive all that judgment, chose that perfect way which satisfies righteousness and also saves us.

**6. Because this method was so perfect and fair that no one could find fault with it**

This method—where Jesus came in a human body, received baptism from John the Baptist to receive the transfer of all the sins of the world, received all that judgment on the Cross, and resurrected from death to become our Savior—has no flaws no matter how you look at it. The devil cannot find fault with it, and

no creature can find fault with it. Because it is so fair and perfect. Even a lacking and weak person, even a person with many sins, whoever simply believes this gospel receives the removal of sins and becomes God's child. If God had saved by another method, some people would not have met the qualifications and would not have been saved. But because the gospel of the water and the Spirit is received only by faith, it becomes a way of salvation opened fairly to all people.

**7. To summarize and tell you**

The reason God had to accomplish His will through the gospel of the water and the Spirit is clear. To accomplish that will of making us His holy and blameless children, He absolutely had to solve our sin problem, but that work was impossible by human deeds or the law, and there was not a single blameless mediator among humans to take charge of the sins on our behalf. So God personally came clothed in a human body, received the transfer of all the sins of the world onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received all the judgment for those sins on the Cross, shed His blood and died, and resurrected in three days to save us perfectly. Without this gospel of the water and the Spirit, God's righteousness could not be satisfied, and our salvation could not be accomplished either. Therefore, the Lord absolutely had to accomplish His will through this gospel.

## [Question] 10. Among all the creatures God made, what is the reason He wanted to make humans God's children?

Ephesians 1 says that God chose humans from before the

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foundation of the world and wanted to make them His children. Following the flow of the text, I will answer in order the reason why God wanted to make humans, uniquely among countless creatures, His children.

**1. Because God created humans in His image**

When God created the heavens and the earth, He made the plants, animals, stars, sea, and the whole universe. But at the end, when He created humans, unlike other creatures, He said, *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26)*. Namely, He created only humans in God's image. No other creature was created according to God's image. Because only humans were created as beings resembling God, they became the foremost, the greatest creatures among all creations. It is very natural that God wanted to make the human, whom He created in His image, His child.

**2. Because He gave humans a heart resembling God**

Being created in God's image does not point to outward appearance. Because God is Spirit. It points exactly to the heart. God gave humans a heart resembling Himself. He gave a righteous heart, a holy heart, a creative heart, and a loving heart. Everyone, even a person who steals teaches their child, "Do not steal others' things," and tries to divide stolen things fairly. This is because God gave humans a fair heart. Also, even a person who commits dirty sins desires in their heart to live holily and seeks religion. This is also because God gave a holy heart. Because they are beings with a heart resembling God like this, God wanted to make humans His children.

### 3. Because God made humans the object of His love

Ephesians 1:4 and 5 say, *"that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself."* Here is the word *"love."* At the foundation of God wanting to make humans His children is love. God made humans, not other creatures, the object of His love. Becoming a child means becoming the object of love. God loved the human He created in His image, and out of that love, He wanted to make us His children.

### 4. He foreknew that humans would be weak and fall into sin, and chose them in Jesus

Everyone, that love of God wanting to make humans His children is even more amazing. God foreknew that humans would be weak, fall into the devil's temptation, and commit sin. He also knew all along that their descendants would be born as sinners. Yet God did not abandon those humans, but rather pitied them and loved them, and decided to make them His children. He did not love those who were outstanding and perfect, but He loved those who were lacking and weak and needed salvation. So God, even knowing that humans would fall into sin, predestined beforehand to save those sinners in Christ before the foundation of the world.

### 5. The way that accomplished that love is exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit

God did not accomplish that love of wanting to make humans His children only in words. He accomplished it through actual action. When humans fell into sin, God sent His Son. That Son received the transfer of all the sins of the world onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, was

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crucified on the Cross carrying those sins to receive all the judgment for our sins, shed His blood and died, and resurrected in three days to become our Savior. Like this, by washing away all our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and making us holy and blameless ones, He finally made us His children. That love of wanting to make humans His children was perfectly accomplished through this gospel.

**6. Because He wanted to make them beings to live together with Him eternally**

There is a deeper meaning in God wanting to make humans His children. It is to make us live together with Him eternally. Other creatures live briefly on this earth and disappear, but God wanted to save humans from sin, make them His children, and take them to the kingdom of heaven to live enjoying the same glory and wealth as Him eternally. Just as God has no death, we who have become God's children also come to live eternally. Because of this great will to make humans such eternal beings, God wanted to make humans His children among all creatures.

**7. To summarize and tell you**

The reason God wanted to make humans His children among all creatures is clear. It is because He created only humans in His image, namely as beings with a righteous, holy, and loving heart, and because He made those humans the object of His love. Even foreknowing that humans would be weak and fall into sin, God loved them, and predestined to save them in Christ before the foundation of the world. And He accomplished that love through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because Jesus received the transfer of all the sins of the world through His baptism and received all that judgment on the Cross, He made us His holy

children and made us live together with Him eternally. Therefore, that we became God's children is not because of our qualifications, but from beginning to end, because of God's great love toward us.

## [Question] 11. I think that our being chosen in Jesus Christ and becoming God's people means we received a special love; what specifically is that grace of God?

Ephesians 1 specifically lists one by one the graces received by those chosen in Christ. Following the spiritual blessings the text reveals in order, I will answer in detail.

### 1. The grace of salvation received freely, namely the grace of the removal of sins

The very first, and also the most fundamental grace, is the removal of sins. Ephesians 1:7 says, *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."* Here, *"redemption"* means bought by paying a price. It means God paid the price of His life to buy and deliver us, who were bound to perish because of sin. Because Jesus received the transfer of all the sins of the world onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received all that judgment on the Cross while carrying those sins, and shed His blood and died, He eliminated all our sins at once. Everyone, this grace of the removal of sins is the beginning of all grace. Because sin was eliminated, all the subsequent blessings can come upon us.

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**2. The grace of becoming God's children**

Ephesians 1:5 says, *"having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself."* God made us, who received the removal of sins, into His children. Everyone, we were originally nothing more than mere creatures, but now we have become the children of God the Creator. On this earth, if one is the child of a high-ranking person, they receive treatment; how much greater glory is it that we became God's children? A mere creature has completely changed into a status like God, namely the status of God's child. This is called being glorified. Where could there be a greater change in status than this?

**3. The grace of receiving all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places by faith**

Ephesians 1:3 says, *"who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."* Becoming God's children means that the kingdom of heaven has become ours. Because children inherit everything of their father. So we, who have become God's children, come to enjoy all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. This is not worldly material prosperity, but the blessing of inheriting the kingdom of heaven and enjoying all its glory as God's children. No blessing of the world can compare to this spiritual blessing.

**4. The grace of receiving the Holy Spirit of promise as a gift**

Ephesians 1:13 says, *"in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."* When we believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit and receive the removal of sins, God pours the Holy Spirit into our hearts as a gift as proof of that. The Holy Spirit cannot dwell in the heart of a sinner, but the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts who received the blotting out

of sins. Through this Holy Spirit, we come to call the invisible God our Father, and confess Jesus as our Savior. Also, this Holy Spirit becomes the confirmation that we are truly God's children. God has stamped a seal on our hearts saying, "You are now Mine."

**5. The grace of that Holy Spirit becoming the guarantee of our inheritance**

Ephesians 1:14 says that the Holy Spirit *"is the guarantee of our inheritance."* The Holy Spirit given in our hearts is the sure guarantee of the glorious inheritance we will enjoy in the kingdom of heaven in the future. Just as a certificate of guarantee is given when we buy and sell goods, by giving us the Holy Spirit, God has guaranteed that the eternal inheritance we will receive is unmistakably ours. Also, this Holy Spirit keeps and protects us to the end so that the devil cannot snatch us away. The reason we remain in salvation to the end despite our shortcomings is because the Holy Spirit, who is in us as a guarantee, protects us.

**6. The grace of obtaining eternal life**

In God making us His children, there is a will to make us live together with Him eternally. Everyone, our flesh is born once, grows old, gets sick, and dies. But for us who are born again by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, a second life, namely an eternal life, is waiting. Just as God has no death, we who have become God's children also come to live eternally. It is going to the kingdom of heaven and living enjoying glory and wealth together with God eternally. This grace of eternal life is truly the greatest blessing that cannot be compared to winning any lottery.

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### 7. The grace of ruling all things and sitting in a seat higher than angels

Ephesians 1:20 to 23 says that after God raised Christ and made Him far above all authorities, He gave Him as the head of the church. We, who have become one body with that Christ who is the head, also come to participate in that glory together with Him. In the kingdom of heaven, angels are said to be ministering spirits, namely those who serve, but we who received the removal of sins rather sit in a seat higher than angels and become those who rule all of God's things. Right now on this earth we live pressed down by money and pressed down by weakness, but when the time comes, it will be completely reversed, and we will come to live acting as the masters of all things God made.

### 8. To summarize and tell you

The grace of God we received by being chosen in Christ is truly abundant and specific. First is the grace of the removal of sins; second is the grace of becoming God's children; third is the grace of receiving all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places; fourth is the grace of receiving the Holy Spirit of promise as a gift; fifth is the grace of that Holy Spirit becoming the guarantee of our inheritance; sixth is the grace of obtaining eternal life; and seventh is the grace of ruling all things and sitting in a seat higher than angels. The foundation of all these graces is the removal of sins, and that blotting out of sins was accomplished solely by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, where Jesus received the transfer of all the sins of the world through His baptism and received all that judgment on the Cross. And all these graces are not because of our qualifications or merits, but the gift of love that God freely bestowed without price upon sinners who have no qualification to receive it. Therefore, we who have received

this grace live praising the glory of that grace eternally.

## [Question] 12. When we enter the Lord's kingdom, what kind of life should we live and how?

Entering the Lord's kingdom contains two meanings together. One is how the one who has entered into the Lord's kingdom right now on this earth should live, and the other is what kind of life we will come to enjoy when we enter the kingdom of heaven in the future. I will answer by unraveling these two things in order.

### 1. First, we must know how we come to enter the Lord's kingdom

Before speaking of the life in the Lord's kingdom, we must first know how we came to enter that kingdom. That we entered the Lord's kingdom is not because of our good deeds or efforts. It is because we received the removal of sins by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that Jesus received the transfer of all the sins of the world onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received all that judgment on the Cross while carrying those sins, shed His blood and died, and resurrected in three days. Because sin was eliminated, we became able to enter the holy kingdom of God. Therefore, the life in the Lord's kingdom always begins upon this grace of the removal of sins.

### 2. Right now on this earth, we must live in a relationship of faith with God

That we received the blotting out of sins means we have

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formed a good relationship with God. When we had sin, we were enemies with God, but now we have become one family. Therefore, we must live before God not with fear, but with the heart of a child. Among family members, even if there is something lacking, don't they forgive and embrace each other? Even if we are lacking, that sin problem has already been completely solved, so we do not fear but follow His will by faith. This is the proper life of one who has entered into the Lord's kingdom.

**3. We must praise God by faith and live for His glory**

Ephesians 1 repeatedly says, *"to the praise of the glory of His grace,"* and *"Christ should be to the praise of His glory."* Namely, the purpose for which God saved us and made us His children is to make us praise God. Therefore, we who have entered the Lord's kingdom must realize that great grace we received and live praising God with our lips and lives. The praise we sing during worship is exactly the act of complimenting God. Since the very salvation we received becomes glory to God, living for that glory must become our life.

**4. We must live preaching the gospel in union with God's church**

Ephesians 1:22 and 23 call the church the body of Christ, and say, *"the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:23).* Namely, God flows that blessing of salvation to the whole world through the church. Therefore, we who have entered the Lord's kingdom must not live separated alone, but must live united with God's church. God does not work through those who have not received the removal of sins, but works through those who have the Holy Spirit in their hearts. Therefore, we must live being

used in the work of expanding God's kingdom by preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit entrusted to us to the souls who have not yet entered into this kingdom.

### 5. We must hope for the kingdom of heaven and not set our hearts only on this earth

Ephesians 1:18 says, *"what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."* It means the purpose for which God called us is exactly in the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, while we live on this earth, we must not set our hearts only on this earth. Living on this earth is like a station where we stay briefly and leave, and our true home is the kingdom of heaven. So we must look forward to that glory we will go and enjoy in the future, and live in hope without wavering no matter what hardships of this earth come. Without this hope, we cannot overcome when difficulties come and cannot keep our faith either, but if we firmly hold onto this hope, we can overcome any tribulation.

### 6. In the future kingdom of heaven, we will live with a glorified status

Now I will tell you about the life upon entering the kingdom of heaven in the future. Ephesians 1 says we have been glorified. Namely, we who were mere creatures have completely changed into the glorious status of God's children. Right now on this earth we live pressed down by money, pressed down by human affections, and pressed down by the weakness of the flesh, but when the time comes and the Lord comes to take us, it will be completely reversed. In the kingdom of heaven, angels are said to be ministering spirits, namely those who serve, but we who received the blotting out of sins will rather sit in a seat higher

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than angels. We will come to live ruling all things God made and acting as masters.

**7. In the kingdom of heaven, we will live in glory eternally together with God**

The life in the kingdom of heaven is not brief but eternal. Just as God has no death, we who have become God's children also come to live eternally. Our flesh is born once, grows old, gets sick, and dies, but for us who are born again, a second life, namely an eternal life, is waiting. In that kingdom, we will live eternally together with God, enjoying the same glory and wealth as God. This is the glorious life prepared for the chosen ones, which cannot be compared with any blessing of the world.

## [Question] 13. I never even thought that being born in this world I would receive such precious grace through our God, but now I am so thankful for the fact that I have become a person who lives having received such grace. If so, what kind of life of thanksgiving should a person who has received such grace live?

Who would have even thought that being born in this world we would receive such precious grace? The greater the grace received, the deeper the thanksgiving becomes, and that thanksgiving must rightfully appear in our lives. I will answer by unraveling in order what the thankful life of one who received grace is like.

### 1. The more one knows their own ugly appearance, the deeper the thanksgiving becomes

The thanksgiving of one who received grace begins from knowing what kind of person they themselves were. Everyone, if we only know to the extent of saying, "I believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the removal of sins," the thanksgiving just stops at a mediocre level. But when one deeply knows how much of a sinner they were, and what kind of punishment they deserved to receive because of those sins, the dimension of thanksgiving completely changes. The more one knows their own appearance as a sinner, the more greatly thankful it becomes that the Lord saved such a "me" from all sins. Therefore, we must not only know the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but we must fundamentally know what kind of person we ourselves were and become those who offer proper thanksgiving.

### 2. When one knows that the grace of salvation received through the Lord is 100 percent God's gift, thanksgiving overflows

In this grace of salvation we received, not even 0.1 percent of our merit is included. From beginning to end, it is a gift God freely gave. Because Jesus received the transfer of all the sins of the world onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, received all that judgment on the Cross while carrying those sins, and shed His blood and died, He eliminated all our sins. We did nothing. We merely believed and accepted that accomplished salvation. Like this, the one who knows that our salvation is 100 percent God's gift has nothing to boast of, so thanksgiving rather overflows.

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**3. The one who is thankful in heart lives praising God**

Ephesians 1 repeatedly says, *"to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Ephesians 1:6)*. Namely, the purpose for which God saved us and made us His children is to make us praise that grace. Therefore, the thankful life of one who received grace appears as a life of praising God. The praise we sing during worship is exactly the act of complimenting God. It is praising with our lips the God who saved us like this, guided us like this, and blessed us like this. The purpose for which we live is exactly here. It is to live in order to praise that grace God gave.

**4. The thankful one lives a life of testifying the gospel of the water and the Spirit**

The thankful heart for the grace of being saved does not stop at just enjoying that grace by myself. It leads to the heart of wanting to preach that precious gospel to other souls as well. Just as we were born in this world and received unexpected grace, there are countless souls who have not yet received this grace. Making them also hear this gospel of the water and the Spirit and making them receive the blotting out of sins, namely the work of preaching the gospel, is the proper life of one who received grace. Since God flows blessings to all things through the church, we live serving that gospel and being used in the work of expanding God's kingdom.

**5. The one who has obtained thanksgiving in their heart lives by faith**

The thankful life of one who received grace is not a life that is thankful only when circumstances are good. As we live on this earth, our flesh is weak, things do not go as we wish, and we meet many difficult things. But since God has already given us

all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places and prepared the kingdom of heaven where we will live eternally, how could we not praise Him? The suffering we currently face cannot be compared at all with the glory we will enjoy in the future. Therefore, the thankful one remembers the grace received in any circumstance, and lives in thanksgiving and hope without wavering.

### 6. The thankful one lives their whole life in a good relationship with God

The grace we received is exactly the grace of forming a good relationship with God. When we had sin, we were enemies with God, but now we have become one family. Therefore, the thankful one lives before God not with fear, but with the heart of a child. Even if we make mistakes sometimes because we are lacking, since that sin problem has already been completely solved, we quickly realize, turn back, and follow His will by faith. And even when doing God's work, we do not do it by force, but come to joyfully and voluntarily do the work of the One who loves me. This is the life of a thankful one, living like a child within a good relationship. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 2

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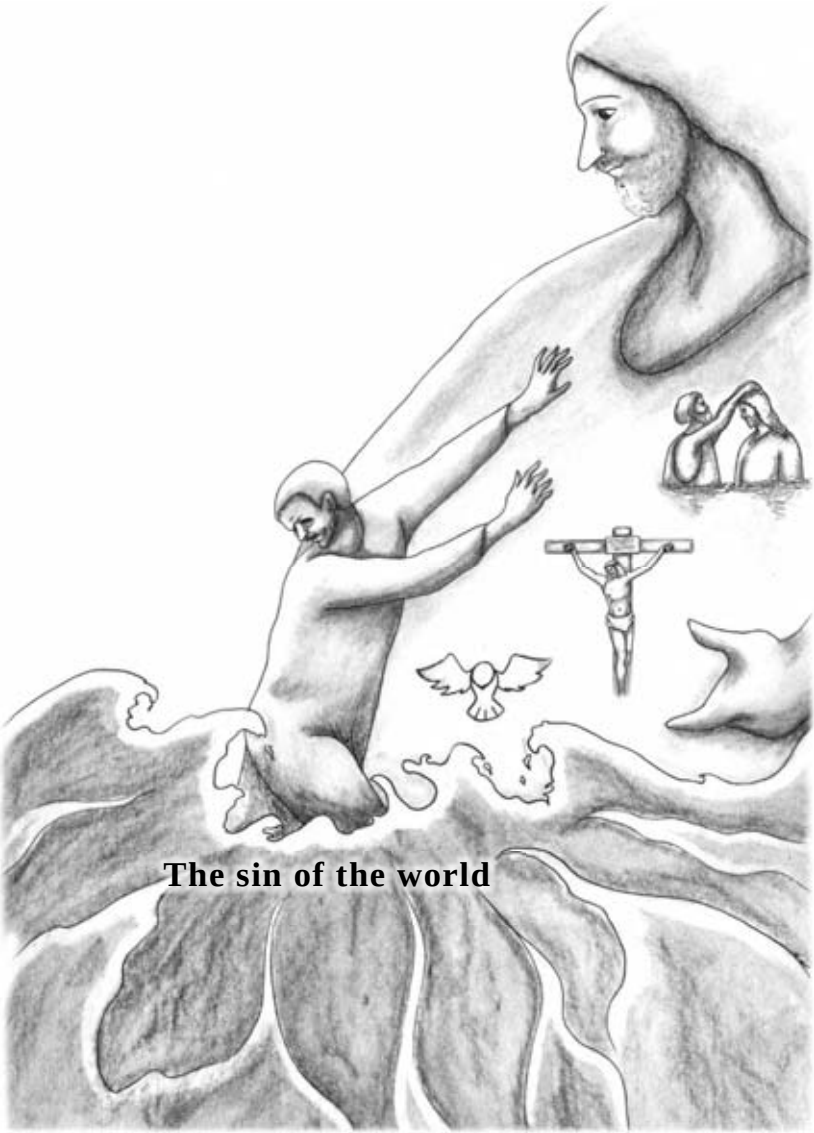


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Ephesians Chapter 2

# Salvation by Faith

**< Ephesians 2:1-22 >**

**"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh— who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our**

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**peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."**

## Our Past State of Being Dead in Trespasses and Sins

*"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others" (Ephesians 2:1-3).*

Before explaining the grace of salvation to the saints of the Ephesian church, the Apostle Paul first clearly reveals what our original state was like before receiving salvation. The expression

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*"dead in trespasses and sins"* used by Paul indicates the fact that our state was not simply being sick or weakened, but that we were already spiritually dead. If there is even the slightest sin in our soul, the soul reaches death, suffocates, and dies. Whether it is a sin committed as a trespass or any other sin, if there is sin, a person is bound to reach death. Therefore, Paul is declaring that we were originally beings who had no choice but to die due to sin and suffer judgment due to sin.

Following this, Paul explains what kind of path we, who were dead like that, had walked. Like the word, *"walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air,"* before being born again, we lived acting as slaves under the authority and receiving the instructions of Satan the devil. *"The prince of the power of the air"* refers exactly to Satan the devil, and as *"the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,"* he captivates people to make them oppose and disobey God. We were originally under the dominion of that evil spirit, and were those who lived *"conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind."*

Paul summarizes all these appearances in one phrase, *"were by nature children of wrath."* Here, the word *"by nature"* means that our sin was not a mistake committed once by chance, but that our very nature itself was already bound to sin. We were fundamentally objects of wrath before God, and beings who deserved to suffer eternal destruction. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this text makes us realize that we were beings who could never escape this place of death by our own efforts or deeds. Because we, who were dead in sin and captivated by the devil, could not save ourselves, our salvation had to be a work accomplished personally by God from beginning to end.

## Made Alive by the Great Love of God Who is Rich in Mercy

*"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)" (Ephesians 2:4-5).*

Paul, who declared our desperate state of being dead as children of wrath, now completely reverses the flow of the text with the single phrase, *"God, who is rich in mercy."* On our side, there was nothing but death, sin, and the dominion of the devil, but on God's side, there was abundant mercy and *"His great love."* The basis upon which we came to receive salvation was not any goodness or qualification within us, but solely that great love with which God loved us. Paul concretizes that love with the word, *"even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ."* A dead person cannot come alive on their own. The One who made us alive was not ourselves but God, and that making alive was accomplished *"together with Christ."* Here, the word *"made us alive together with Christ"* is exactly the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we look at how God made us alive from sin, that making alive begins with Jesus Christ taking upon Himself all our sins at once by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. This was the fulfillment of the law of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament, where sins were transferred to an animal by laying hands on it. Jesus received baptism to take charge of all our sins, fully paid the wages of sin by shedding His blood and dying on the cross while bearing those sins, and made us alive by resurrecting on the third day. Therefore, the word *"made us alive together with Christ"* testifies that we were made alive not merely through the blood of the cross alone, but through the

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entire ministry of the baptism, the cross, and the resurrection.
Paul adds in parentheses at the end, *"by grace you have been saved."* This is a word that clearly reveals that the salvation we received did not come from our deeds or merits, but is a gift given entirely by the grace of God.
We were dead in our sins, bound to the devil, and children of wrath, but solely God, who is rich in mercy, with His great love, made us alive through the gospel of the water and the Spirit accomplished by Jesus Christ. Therefore, in the face of this salvation, what we can offer is not to assert our own righteousness, but only to admit our original state of having no choice but to die, give thanks to the grace of God who made us alive for free, and praise that love.

## Living Seated Together in the Heavenly Places with Christ

*"And raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6).*

The Apostle Paul, who declared in the preceding verse 5, *"love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses,"* now reveals how far the result of that making alive reaches. Paul records the word *"together"* twice repeatedly within one verse, saying, *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places."* This is an expression emphasizing that our salvation does not merely stop at being rescued from sin, but that we are bound as one body with Christ and reach together the place where He went.
The word *"and raised us up together"* indicates that all the works Jesus Christ did when He came to this earth were for us. All those works—Christ, the Son of God, being born as

promised by borrowing the body of Mary, receiving baptism at the Jordan River at the age of thirty, dying on the cross, and resurrecting on the third day after His death—were ministries to make us alive and raise us up. Christ received baptism from John to take charge of our sins, received the judgment for those sins on the cross, and gave new life to us who believe by resurrecting from death. Therefore, the word *"raised us up together"* testifies that our resurrection is guaranteed upon the entire gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is, the ministry of the baptism, the cross, and the resurrection.

Following this, the word *"made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"* shows the climax of the blessing we received. Just as Jesus Christ resurrected and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God the Father, we, who have received salvation by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, will also sit in the heavenly places together with Christ in the future and enjoy wealth and glory along with Him. This is not something done by our will or qualification, but a promise God personally accomplished through Christ by coming to us when we were dead in trespasses and sins. It is an overwhelming thing just to be saved, but the fact that He makes us, who were children of wrath, sit together in the kingdom where the Son of God lives reveals how supreme the grace we received is.

## The Riches of the Grace of Salvation Intended to be Shown in the Ages to Come

*"That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7).*

Paul reveals the reason, that is, the purpose, why God made

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us sit in the heavenly places together with Christ in verse 7. The reason God bestowed such great kindness upon us was *"that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace."* This contains God's will that the work of saving us from the sins of the world does not end as a blessing for us as individuals, but that His abundant grace would be revealed before all the generations to come.

Here, it is necessary to pay attention to the word *"in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."* The channel through which God bestowed kindness upon us was nothing else but solely *"in Christ Jesus."* Through the ministry of salvation that Christ accomplished with the baptism, the cross, and the resurrection, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God bestowed kindness upon us. Therefore, the exceeding riches of the grace we received did not originate from our deeds or merits, but originated from the kindness God bestowed in Christ.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this word even tells us the mission entrusted to us who have been saved. That God intended to *"show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward"* means that He wanted this gospel of salvation to be preached to all generations until the day this world ends, through us who have received the removal of sins. God first established us as the righteous, and entrusted His work to us, making us preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole world. Therefore, the blessing of us receiving the seating in the heavenly places is connected to the life of serving the gospel on this earth.

## God's Gift Received by Grace Through Faith

*"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that*

*not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).*

Paul finally compresses and declares the essence of salvation in one verse. The word *"For by grace you have been saved through faith"* reveals that our salvation is accomplished by two things, namely *"grace"* and *"faith."* Here, "that grace" refers to the salvation God prepared in advance for us. From before He created the universe, from before Adam and Eve were born, God established a plan of salvation for us, and when the time was full, He sent Christ and fully accomplished our salvation through His receiving of baptism, hanging on the cross, and resurrecting.

Therefore, the word *"and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God"* follows. God personally fully accomplished salvation from beginning to end, and gave it to us as a gift. The only thing we did was accept with our hearts the salvation God had fully accomplished, that is, believing it. He who receives with his heart the gift God bestowed within the gospel of the water and the Spirit becomes one who has received the blessing of salvation, and he who does not accept it cannot reach that salvation. There is no room for our merit to intervene in any part of it.

This is the core of salvation testified by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Through mountain prayer, fasting prayer, prayer of repentance, selling all one's property, or any religious act, we cannot add even a single inch to salvation. The attempt to add to salvation with one's own righteousness or effort is, on the contrary, rejecting the righteousness of God. Through the baptism, cross, and resurrection of Christ, God has completely resolved all our sins without exception, namely inherited sin, sin committed in the heart, sin committed in action, sin committed knowingly, and sin committed unknowingly. Therefore, we merely obtained salvation by accepting that grace through faith, and before this salvation, no one can boast of himself.

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## Not of Works, Lest Anyone Should Boast

*"Not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:9).*

Following his declaration in verse 8 that salvation is the gift of God obtained by grace through faith, Paul clearly reveals once again in verse 9 that this salvation is by no means of works. The word *"not of works"* is a declaration making it clear that human merit cannot intervene even a single inch in our salvation. If salvation had to do with works, we would instead be those who must be condemned again because of the sins committed by those works. Because we were originally dead in trespasses and sins, nothing we do could make us alive.

Therefore, Paul reveals the reason, saying, *"lest anyone should boast."* If human works were added even a little to salvation, the saved person would be able to boast by putting forward his own merit. However, because God personally fully accomplished salvation from beginning to end and gave it as a gift, He made it so that no one can boast of himself. Even if one goes to mountain prayer, does fasting prayer, sells all one's property, or builds a hundred churches, one cannot reach salvation with those. The attempt to add to salvation with one's own righteousness or religious effort is exactly rejecting the righteousness of God.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this word distinctly shows what the basis of salvation we must hold onto is. Our salvation stands entirely upon the ministry of Jesus Christ, who received baptism at the Jordan River to bear all our sins, fully paid the wages of those sins on the cross, and made us alive by resurrecting. Not our works, but only the ministry of the baptism, the cross, and the resurrection accomplished by Christ makes us righteous. Therefore, what the saved person can offer is not boasting of his own merit, but only giving thanks to God who freely made alive his self who had no

choice but to die, and praising that grace.

## We Are Those Created for Good Works

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).*

Paul, who stated that salvation from sin is not of works, reveals in verse 10 that this does not mean the saved person lives without doing anything. The word *"For we are His workmanship"* indicates that we are beings created by the hands of God. We did not make ourselves righteous, but God saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, made us righteous, and created us anew.

Following this, Paul reveals the purpose of that creation. Like the word *"created in Christ Jesus for good works,"* God's salvation of us had its meaning in intending to make us do good works. Here, good works refer above all to the work of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We were originally humans full of trespasses who committed sins every day, and beings who could not do good works on our own even if we wanted to, but because the Lord completely liberated us from sin, we finally became able to do good works. Because God eliminated the slave document of sin that was binding us, we became able to serve God's work as free righteous people.

Lastly, Paul concludes, *"which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."* Even those good works we are to do were not created by ourselves, but were prepared in advance by God. God established the plan to save us from before He created the universe, and at the end of that salvation, He even prepared the way for us to live serving the gospel. Therefore, the reason

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we who are saved live in this world does not lie elsewhere, but lies in doing the good works God prepared, namely preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole world and showing the abundant grace of God to the ages to come.

## The Desperate Past of Gentiles Who Were Outside Christ

*"Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:11-12).*

The Apostle Paul begins the text with the command, *"Therefore remember."* Paul, who previously declared the fact of being saved by grace from chapter 2 verse 1 to 10, now exhorts the Ephesian saints, who were Gentiles, to look back once again at their state before receiving salvation in order to make them realize more deeply how great that grace of salvation is. This is because the greatness of the grace we received is fully realized only when we clearly know what position we were originally in.

Paul first says, *"you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands" (Ephesians 2:11)*. The Ephesian saints were physically not people of the nation of Israel, and were those called the Uncircumcision who had not even received circumcision, the evidence of the covenant. That is, they were people who were outside the boundary of the covenant God

bestowed upon Abraham and his descendants. This is not merely a matter of bloodline, but indicates a spiritual situation in which they had no relationship formed with God whatsoever.

Following this, Paul reveals their circumstances one by one in four ways. It is the word, *"that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12)*. They had nothing to do with Christ, were outside the people of God, were strangers to the covenants of promise given by God, and were those who had no hope in the world and were without God.
From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this is no different from the state of being *"dead in trespasses and sins"* earlier in chapter 2 verse 1. We, who were dead in sin, were those who were disconnected from God and could have no hope, and on our side, there was no qualification or channel whatsoever to reach salvation. Therefore, our salvation was a work that God personally had to come and accomplish from beginning to end.

## We Who Have Become Near by the Baptism and Blood of Christ

*"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).*

Paul, who revealed the desperate past of the Gentiles in detail in Ephesians 2:12, completely turns the flow of the text with the single phrase *"But now"* in verse 13. It is a word declaring that our situation, which had nothing to do with God and had no hope, has been moved to a completely different place in Christ. The

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expression *"you who once were far off have been brought near"* indicates that we, who were endlessly far away from God, have now become those who can step near to God.

Paul reveals how that becoming near was accomplished with the word *"in Christ Jesus… by the blood of Christ."* Our becoming near to God was not done by our effort or deed, but only by the blood He shed in Christ Jesus. Here, the blood of Christ refers to His fully paying the price of sin on the cross. However, this blood does not stand alone. Because Jesus Christ received baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River and bore all our sins, He was able to pay the price of sin by hanging on the cross, shedding blood, and dying while bearing those sins. Therefore, the word *"brought near by the blood of Christ"* testifies that our reconciliation stands upon the entire ministry of the baptism, the cross, and the resurrection, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this single verse shows where the direction of salvation comes from and where it heads. The one who was far off did not approach near by himself, but Christ personally took charge of our sins, shed blood, and died, thereby drawing us near. We were originally outside Christ and strangers to the covenants of promise, but because Christ bore our sins through the baptism received from John and fully paid that price on the cross, we have now become those who can step forward to God. Therefore, this becoming near is not a merit we can boast of, but a grace we have come to enjoy freely because Christ paid the unpayable price on our behalf.

## *"Made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation"*

*"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace" (Ephesians 2:14-15).*

The Apostle Paul, who declared the fact of becoming near by the blood of Christ in verse 13, compresses how that reconciliation was accomplished into the single phrase *"For He Himself is our peace"* in verse 14. It is a declaration that Jesus Christ Himself becomes our peace, and He personally becomes the basis of reconciliation. Paul continues to say that Christ *"has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation."* Here, *"both"* primarily refers to Jews and Gentiles, but more fundamentally, it refers to the wall that lay between God and man due to sin. It means that by breaking down that wall, Christ made the one who was far off and the one who was near, God and man, into one.

Paul reveals that the reality of that blocked wall is *"the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances."* The law revealed to man what sin is, but as a person who commits sin, one could not perfectly keep those commandments. Therefore, the law stood in the position of condemning man and making him an enemy of God. However, Paul testifies that Christ *"abolished in His flesh"* that *"enmity."* Here, the word *"abolished in His flesh"* is exactly the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus Christ received baptism from John at the Jordan River, bore all our sins of the world on His body, and by hanging on the cross while bearing those sins and personally

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receiving the judgment for sin, He perfectly eliminated that sin which the law condemned. This is the reason why the Apostle Paul repeatedly emphasizes not only Jesus' blood but also His flesh, that is, His body. Because Christ took charge of our sins with His body, that enmity which the law used to condemn us was abolished.

Paul reveals the result as, *"so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace" (Ephesians 2:15).* It means that because Christ fully took charge of our sins through the baptism received from John and the cross, and abolished the condemnation of the law, we who were enemies with God were created as one new man in Christ and came to enjoy peace. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this peace was not accomplished by our keeping the law, but was freely given by Christ personally withdrawing the condemnation of the law. We were those who deserved to be condemned before the law, but because Christ bore our sins and fully paid that price, we became new men and came to enjoy peace with God.

## Eliminating the Enmity through the Cross and Reconciling with God

*"And that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity" (Ephesians 2:16).*

Paul reveals the reconciliation accomplished by Christ once again centering on the cross in verse 16. Like the word *"and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross,"* the way Christ reconciled God and man was exactly the cross. It means that Christ, who abolished the condemnation of the law with His flesh in the preceding verse, completed that

abolishment on the cross to reconcile us with God in one body. Following this, Paul clearly reveals the core of that reconciliation by saying, *"through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."* Here, *"the enmity"* refers to the sin that separated us from God. Everyone suffers because of sin. Whether one is a person who has received the removal of sin or not, one's conscience becomes weighed down and groans due to the sins committed while living on this earth. However, it means that Christ dealt with that enmity of sin by *"putting to death the enmity"* through the cross — that is, He cleanly removed it. This indicates that Jesus Christ, as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, bore all our sins and completely eliminated sin by fully receiving the judgment for that sin on the cross.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this elimination was not accomplished in a way where we bring out small sins every day and seek forgiveness little by little. Christ bore all sins at once—sins committed in our hearts and sins committed in action, past sins and sins to be committed in the future—and completely eliminated them on the cross. Therefore, one who knows one's own original state and this truth no longer groans because of sin. This is because while admitting that one is a being who has no choice but to commit sin all one's life, one simultaneously believes that Christ has already eliminated all those sins through the baptism and the cross. The reason we can be reconciled with God and live with a light heart is solely because Christ completely removed the enmity of sin through the cross.

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## Preaching Peace to Those Who Were Afar Off and to Those Who Were Near

*"And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near" (Ephesians 2:17).*

The Apostle Paul, who testified in verse 16 of Christ who eliminated the enmity through the cross, reveals in verse 17 how that reconciliation was delivered to us. The word *"And He came"* indicates that Christ personally came to seek us. It means that we did not approach God, but Christ first came to us and preached peace. This directly connects with the word in verse 13, *"you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."* Our reconciliation was initiated and accomplished from Christ's side from beginning to end.

Paul reveals that this peace was preached to both groups, namely *"you who were afar off"* and *"those who were near." "You who were afar off"* refers to the Gentiles who had nothing to do with God, and *"those who were near"* refers to the Jews who had received the law and the covenants. However, there was no discrimination in the peace preached by Christ. That He consistently preached peace to the one who was far off and to the one who was near means that anyone can be reconciled with God through the salvation accomplished by Christ.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this peace preached by Christ is exactly the peace that comes from being reconciled with God because all sins have been eliminated. Because Jesus Christ received baptism at the Jordan River, bore our sins, and eliminated the sin that condemned us by fully paying that price on the cross, we have now come to enjoy true peace that is not weighed down by sin. This peace does not come from our deeds or qualifications, but is a gift that Christ personally came and delivered.

## Granting Us Access to the Father in One Spirit

*"For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father" (Ephesians 2:18).*

Paul reveals in verse 18 the purpose for which Christ preached peace, that is, the place where reconciliation leads. Like the word *"For through Him"* our being able to have access to God is solely through Christ. It is not by our own effort or merit, but only through the work of salvation accomplished by Christ that the way to approach God has been opened.

Following this, Paul declares the result, saying, *"we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."* Those who were previously divided into *"two,"* that is, the Gentiles who were far off and the Jews who were near, have now come to approach the Father together *"one Spirit."* Because Christ eliminated the enmity through the cross and reconciled the two into one body, we no longer remain divided but have become one in one Spirit, able to approach before God.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the word that we *"have access by one Spirit to the Father"* reveals the depth of the salvation we received. Originally, we were dead in trespasses and sins and were completely unable to approach God. However, because Christ completely eliminated our sins through the baptism and the cross, that path which was blocked by sin has been thrown wide open, allowing us to call God our Father and approach before Him. And the One who enables us to approach in this way is the Holy Spirit. Because all our sins have been eliminated and we have become righteous, the Holy Spirit dwells within us, and in that Holy Spirit, we boldly approach the Father.

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## We Who Are No Longer Strangers But Members of God's Household

*"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19).*

Paul concludes the preceding words in verse 19 with the phrase *"Now, therefore."* Since Christ eliminated our sins through the cross, reconciled us to God, and granted us access to the Father in one Spirit, the result is that our status has completely changed. This stands in direct contrast to the old state mentioned in verse 12, *"strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."*

First, Paul reveals, *"you are no longer strangers and foreigners."* Originally, we were strangers outside God's people, and nothing more than foreigners like temporarily staying travelers. But now he declares that we are no longer such people. Following this, Paul clearly states that we are *"fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."* It means we have become equal citizens of the kingdom of God, and furthermore, members of God's household, that is, God's family. This transformation of a stranger becoming a citizen and a foreigner becoming a family member shows that the salvation we received does not merely stop at the removal of sin, but reaches the point of being accepted as God's family.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this amazing change in status is entirely the fruit of the salvation accomplished by Christ. We were strangers who had no God and no hope, but because Christ eliminated our sins at once through the baptism received from John and the cross, we became members of God's household. There is nothing done on our part. Because Christ took charge of our sins and eliminated the enmity

through the cross to reconcile us with God, we have become His family members who call God Father. Therefore, this status is not a merit we can boast of, but a blessing we have come to enjoy by freely received grace.

## Christ Who Became the Cornerstone on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets

*"Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20).*

The Apostle Paul, who declared in verse 19 that we have become members of God's household, reveals in verse 20 upon what foundation that household is built. Like the word *"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,"* we are not built upon our own thoughts or religious efforts, but upon the foundation of faith preached by the apostles and prophets. That is, the salvation we received is inherited from the faith of the apostles, and it succeeds the truth testified in advance by the prophets of old.

Here, it is important to clearly know what that foundation preached by the apostles and prophets is. The prophets of the Old Testament testified that the Savior would come in the future. Just as the Israelites received the removal of sin through the Old Testament sacrifice receiving the laying on of hands and dying, they foretold that Jesus Christ would come to this earth, take charge of the sins of the world through the baptism received from John, hang on the cross, shed blood, and resurrect from the dead to accomplish true salvation. The apostles of the New Testament testified that this prophecy was fulfilled exactly as it was in Christ. Therefore, the foundation of the apostles and

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prophets is exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the truth of salvation accomplished by the baptism, the cross, and the resurrection.

Paul then reveals the center of that foundation, saying, *"Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."* The cornerstone is the reference stone at the corner of a building that connects and holds both walls together. That Christ became the cornerstone means that He becomes the center connecting God and us, and that all faith is fitted together into one upon Him. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that ministry of Christ receiving baptism to take charge of our sins and paying that price on the cross is exactly the unchanging standard of salvation. This standard is a permanent standard that man cannot change and for which there is no other way, and the house of our faith will not be shaken only when it is rightly built upon this cornerstone.

## Being Built Together into a Dwelling Place of God in the Spirit

*"In whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:21-22).*

Paul reveals in verse 21 how we, who are built upon Christ the cornerstone, grow. Like the word *"in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,"* we who are saved are not isolated beings, but are connected to one another in Christ to form one temple. Just as the stones of a building interlock with each other based on the cornerstone to form one house, those who have received the

removal of sin through the gospel of the water and the Spirit are connected to one another centering on Christ and are built up as the temple of God.

This connection does not merely mean a gathering of people. Because Christ is the head and His body is the church of God, we are interlocked as members necessary to one another. There is no member that is unnecessary, and each person is connected with others in Christ to form the temple together. This is the reason why the salvation we received does not end as a blessing for one person, but leads to those who have the same faith being built up together.

Paul reveals the purpose of that being built up in verse 22 as *"in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."* The reason we are being built together into a temple is exactly to become a dwelling place for God. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this word once again reveals the depth of the salvation we received. We, who were originally dead in trespasses and sins and had nothing to do with God, became righteous because Christ completely eliminated our sins through the baptism and the cross, and the Holy Spirit came to dwell in those who have become righteous. Because it is a clean dwelling place where all sins have been eliminated, God can dwell in it. Therefore, our becoming a temple where God dwells is not something accomplished by our effort, but a freely given grace because Christ fully took charge of our sins and made us righteous.

## The Core Message Conveyed by the Text

Ephesians chapter 2 begins with a stark contrast between "us who were dead" and "God who made us alive." We were

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originally dead in trespasses and sins, following the course of this world, and were children of wrath under the control of the prince of the power of the air, that is, Satan the devil. This state was a place of despair from which we could never escape by our own strength. However, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive together with Christ by His great love.

The method by which God made us alive is exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus Christ received baptism from John at the Jordan River to bear all our sins, fully paid the price of those sins on the cross, and by resurrecting, He brought us who were dead back to life. Therefore, we cannot fully understand this salvation just by holding onto the blood of the cross; only when we believe in the baptism received from John, the cross, and the resurrection as one package can we realize the complete meaning of the word, *"even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ" (Ephesians 2:5).* The entirety of Ephesians chapter 2 flows in one continuous stream. Starting from the grace that made us, who were dead in trespasses and sins, alive, it reaches the point of being seated in the heavenly places with Christ, being brought near by the blood of Christ to be reconciled with God, strangers becoming members of God's household, and finally being built together into a temple where God dwells, with Christ as the cornerstone. Because all these things were accomplished not by our merit but solely by God's great love and the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we cannot boast of ourselves but can only praise God who freely made us alive. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# Salvation by Faith Believing in the Gospel Word of Water and the Spirit

**< Ephesians 2:1-22 >**

**"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh— who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— that at that time**

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**you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."**

Beloved saints, Ephesians chapter 2, which we have opened together today, is in a word the word of *"you He made alive, who were dead."* The Apostle Paul, before explaining the grace of salvation to the saints of the Ephesian church, first clearly reveals what kind of people we originally were before we received salvation. The words he used were the word *"dead in trespasses and sins."* Everyone, what kind of beings were we originally? Not to the extent of being sick, not to the extent of

being weakened, but beings who were already dead in sin. Can a dead person come back to life on their own? No. However, it is that God made us alive, who were dead due to that sin. Hallelujah!

Then, with what did God make us alive, who were dead in sin? He made us alive precisely with *"grace"* and *"faith"* given through the gospel word of water and the Spirit. Today's text, verse 8, speaks like this: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).* Beloved saints, our salvation is not from ourselves. It is not something we created, but something God gave as a gift. Today, I want to look at the entirety of Ephesians chapter 2, from verse 1 to 22, together with you, holding this one theme of "salvation by faith." I bless you in the name of the Lord that this will be a time to realize together that this amazing salvation—making us alive who were dead, seating us in the heavenly places, giving the gift of grace, reconciling us with God, making us members of His household, and finally building us up as a temple where God dwells—is all one "salvation by faith."

## Our Original State, Dead in Trespasses and Sins

Beloved saints, please look at verses 1 to 2 of the text. He said, *"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience."* Paul, before speaking of our salvation, first reveals in detail the fact that our original state was descendants of Adam. What does the phrase *"dead in trespasses and sins"* mean? It means that if there is

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even a very small sin in our soul, that soul reaches death, suffocates, and dies. Whether it is a sin committed through a trespass or any sin, if there is sin, a person is bound to reach death.

And Paul speaks of what path we, who were dead like that, walked. He said, *"walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air."* Everyone, before being born again, under whose direction did we live? We lived precisely receiving the direction of Satan the devil, acting as slaves under his power. The *"prince of the power of the air"* is exactly Satan the devil. It means that the devil, as the *"spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,"* captivates people and makes them oppose and disobey God. We were originally under the dominion of that evil spirit, and were those who lived *"conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind."*

Therefore, Paul summarizes all these states in a word as *"were by nature children of wrath."* The word *"by nature"* here is important. It means that our sin was not a mistake committed once by chance, but that our nature itself was already bound to sin. We were fundamentally objects of wrath before God — creatures who deserved to be eternally destroyed. Beloved saints, this is our original state. Could we, who were dead in sin and captivated by the devil, make ourselves alive? We could not. Therefore, our salvation was a work that God Himself had to accomplish from beginning to end.

Right here is the starting point of "salvation by faith." Everyone, a person who does not know that they are one who was dead can never know the grace of salvation. It is just like a person who does not know they are sick not seeking a physician. Only when we admit that we were originally children of wrath and were in a place of death from which we could not possibly escape by our

own strength, do we kneel before the grace of God who made us alive freely. Receiving that grace by faith, that is salvation.

## Made Alive by the Great Love of God Who is Rich in Mercy

Paul, who proclaimed our despairing state of being dead as children of wrath, completely reverses the flow of the text in Ephesians 2:4 and 5. He said, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)."* Beloved saints, look at this one phrase, *"God, who is rich in mercy."* What was on our side? There was nothing but death, sin, and the dominion of the devil. However, what was on God's side? There was abundant mercy and "that great love." The basis on which we received salvation was not any goodness or qualification within us, but only that great love with which God loved us. Hallelujah!

By the way, everyone, this word *"made us alive together with Christ"* is exactly the core of the gospel of water and the Spirit. How did God make us alive from sin? It is that Jesus Christ had the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, was crucified and shed blood, and resurrected from death to save us. This word is the exact fulfillment of the law of laying on of hands in Leviticus 16 of the Old Testament. Just as when the high priest laid his hands on the head of the goat, the sins of the people of Israel were transferred to that goat, coming to the New Testament era, as John baptized the body of Jesus as if laying hands on Him as the representative of humanity, all the sins of the world were transferred to Jesus. Therefore, the next day, John the Baptist

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cried out, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Then, what did Jesus do, who bore those sins? Hanging on the cross while bearing all the sins of the world, He received all the judgment for our sins, paid the price of that sin by shedding blood and dying, and resurrected from death, thereby making us alive who were dead. Beloved saints, where did the blood that Jesus shed on the cross come from? Because the sins of the world were transferred to the body of Jesus through the baptism Jesus received from John, He could shed blood on the cross. Therefore, one must know how sin was transferred to Jesus, that is, the baptism, to fully know the meaning of the blood of the cross. Baptism, the blood of the cross, and resurrection from death; these three as one package are the truth that saved us from all sins.

Paul nails it down at the end with parentheses, *"(by grace you have been saved)."* Everyone, did the salvation we received come from our works, or did it come from God's grace? It came entirely from God's grace. We were dead in our sins, bound to the devil, and were children of wrath, so there is nothing we did on our part. Only God, who is rich in mercy, with that great love, made us alive through the gospel of water and the Spirit accomplished by Jesus Christ. Therefore, what we are to offer before this salvation is not asserting our own righteousness, but only admitting our original state of having no choice but to die, thanking God who made us alive freely, and praising that love. This is precisely salvation by faith.

## Seated Together in the Heavenly Places with Christ and Showing the Riches of Grace

Beloved saints, look at verse 6. He said, *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* Paul repeats the word *"together"* twice within one verse. Saying, *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* This emphasizes that our salvation does not merely stop at being rescued from sin, but that we are bound as one body with Christ and come together to the place where He went. Everyone, the salvation we received is this great. Is it so? Is it not so? It is so.

The word *"and raised us up together"* points out that all the works Jesus Christ did coming to this earth were all for us. Christ, the Son of God, was born as promised by borrowing the body of Mary, had the sins of the world transferred to His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the age of thirty, was crucified and shed blood and died while bearing those sins, and resurrected three days after His death. What was all this work for? It was a ministry to make us alive and raise us up, who were dead in sin. Therefore, the word *"and raised us up together"* testifies that our resurrection is guaranteed upon the ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection.

Following that, the word *"and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"* shows the climax of the blessing we received. Beloved saints, where is Jesus Christ now after resurrecting? He is sitting at the right hand of the throne of God the Father. However, it means that He makes us, who are saved by believing the gospel of water and the Spirit, also sit in the heavenly places together with Christ in the future, to enjoy wealth and glory along with Him. Everyone, is this something done by our will or qualification? No. It is a promise God

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accomplished through Christ by personally coming to seek us when we were dead in trespasses and sins.
Here, pay attention to the word, *"in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7)*. What was the channel through which God bestowed kindness upon us? It was nothing else but only *"in Christ Jesus."* Through the ministry of salvation that Christ accomplished with baptism, the cross, and resurrection, that is, the gospel of water and the Spirit, God bestowed kindness upon us. It is through that work of Jesus having all the sins of the world transferred to His body by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, receiving all the judgment for those sins on the cross, shedding blood and dying, and resurrecting. Therefore, the riches of the grace we received did not originate from our works or merits, but originated from the kindness God bestowed in Christ.

## The Gift of God Obtained by Grace Through Faith

Now, beloved saints, we have reached verse 8, which becomes the center of today's sermon. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."* Paul finally compresses and proclaims the essence of salvation in one verse. What is our salvation made of? It is made of two things, namely *"grace"* and *"faith."* Here, *"grace"* points to the salvation God prepared in advance for us. God had established the plan of salvation toward us from before He created the universe, from before Adam and Eve were born. And when the time was full, He sent Christ, and by Him receiving baptism to bear all the sins of the world, hanging on the cross to die, and resurrecting, He has fully accomplished our salvation.
Therefore, the word *"and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of*

*God"* follows. Everyone, how did God do salvation? He personally accomplished it all from beginning to end, and gave it to us as a gift. What is the work we have done? It is only one thing: accepting with our hearts the salvation God has fully accomplished, that is, believing. The one who receives with the heart the gift God bestowed within the gospel of water and the Spirit becomes the one who has received the blessing of salvation, and the one who does not accept it cannot reach that salvation. There is no place for our merit to intervene in any part whatsoever. A gift is not something bought by paying a price, but something received for free. Is it so? Is it not so? It is so.

Beloved saints, this is the core of salvation testified by the gospel of water and the Spirit. Even if we go to the mountain to pray, even if we do fasting prayer, even if we offer prayer of repentance all night, even if we sell and offer all our property, with no religious act whatsoever can we add even a single inch to salvation. On the contrary, the attempt to add to salvation with one's own righteousness or effort is rejecting the righteousness of God. With the baptism, cross, and resurrection of Christ, God has solved without exception all our sins, namely inherited sin, sin committed with the heart, sin committed with action, sin committed knowingly, and sin committed unknowingly. Therefore, we have only obtained salvation by accepting that grace with faith, and before this salvation, no one can boast of themselves.

## Not of Works, but Created for Good Works

Beloved saints, look at verse 9. He said, *"not of works, lest anyone should boast."* Following his proclamation in verse 8 that salvation is the gift of God obtained by grace through faith,

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Paul nails down once again in verse 9 that the salvation is never of works. The word *"not of works"* is a declaration making it clear that human merit cannot intervene even a single inch in our salvation. Everyone, think about it. If salvation had to do with works, on the contrary, we are the ones who should be condemned again because of the sins committed by those works. Because we were originally those who were dead in trespasses and sins, no work whatsoever that we do could make us alive.

Therefore, Paul reveals the reason, saying, *"lest anyone should boast."* What would happen if human works were added even a little to salvation? The saved person would be able to boast, putting forward their own merit, saying, "I received salvation by doing this." However, because God personally accomplished salvation fully from beginning to end and gave it as a gift, He made it so that no one can boast of themselves. Beloved saints, even if you go to mountain prayer, even if you do fasting prayer, even if you sell all your property, even if you build a hundred churches, you cannot reach salvation with that. The attempt to add to salvation with one's own righteousness or religious effort is exactly rejecting the righteousness of God.

Then what is the basis of salvation that we must hold onto? Looking from the perspective of the gospel of water and the Spirit, it is clear. Our salvation stands completely upon that ministry where Jesus Christ received baptism from John the Baptist to have all the sins of the world transferred to His body, shed blood on the cross while bearing those sins to pay the full price of those sins, and made us alive by resurrecting from death. Not our works, but only the ministry of the baptism Christ received from John, the blood of the cross, and the resurrection from death has made us righteous. Therefore, what the saved person can offer is not the act of boasting of their own merit, but only the act of thanking God who freely made alive oneself who

had no choice but to die due to our sins, believing that grace, and praising God. Hallelujah!

Following this, Paul reveals the purpose of that creation. He said, *"created in Christ Jesus for good works" (Ephesians 2:10)*. God saving us had its intention in making us do good works. Here, good works point above all to the work of preaching the gospel of water and the Spirit. Everyone, we were originally humans with many faults who committed sin every day, and were beings who could not do good works on our own even if we wanted to. However, because the Lord completely liberated us from sin, we were finally able to do good works. Because God destroyed the slave document of sin that was binding us, we became able to serve God's work as free righteous people.

Lastly, Paul concludes, *"which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10)*. Beloved saints, did we create on our own even those good works we are to do? No. God prepared them in advance. God established the plan to save us from before He created the universe, and at the end of that salvation, He even prepared the way for us to live serving the gospel. Therefore, the reason we who are saved live in this world is not elsewhere. It is in preaching those good works God prepared, namely the gospel of water and the Spirit, to the whole world, and showing the abundant grace of God to the various coming generations. Salvation received by faith thus leads to a new life for good works.

## The Despairing Past of Gentiles Who Were Outside Christ

Beloved saints, look at verses 11 and 12. Paul opens a new paragraph with the command, *"Therefore remember."* Paul,

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who previously proclaimed the fact of being saved by grace from verse 1 to 10, now makes the Ephesian saints who were Gentiles recall their despairing past again in order to make them realize more deeply how great the grace of that salvation is. He said, *"that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands" (Ephesians 2:11).* They were not people of the nation of Israel fleshly, and were those called the Uncircumcision who could not even receive circumcision which is the evidence of the covenant.

Following this, Paul reveals their situation in detail in four ways. It is the word, *"that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12).* Everyone, listen. They had nothing to do with Christ, were outside of God's people, were strangers regarding the covenants of promise God gave, and were those who had no hope at all and were without God in the world. What a despairing place is this?

Beloved saints, looking from the perspective of the gospel of water and the Spirit, this state is not a bit different from the state of being *"dead in trespasses and sins"* earlier in chapter 2 verse 1. We, who were dead in sin, were those who were severed from God and could have no hope, and on our side there was no qualification or channel whatsoever to reach salvation. Everyone, remember again who we originally were. We were those outside Christ, those without hope, those without God. Therefore, our salvation was a work that God personally had to come seeking and accomplish from beginning to end.

By the way, everyone, why would Paul bring up this despairing past again after speaking of the grace of salvation for a while? It is because we must know how miserable a place we were

originally in, to realize how great and valuable the salvation we received is. It is a rule that the more a person knows their illness was deep, the more they thank the physician who healed them. Likewise, the more deeply we realize that we were those who were dead without hope outside Christ, the more greatly the grace of salvation by faith, which freely drew us near who were that far away, comes to us.

Paul reveals, *"been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13)*. That we became close to God was not done by our effort or works, but was done only by the blood He shed in Christ Jesus. Here, the blood of Christ points to the work of Him paying the full price of sin on the cross. However, everyone, this blood is not standing alone. Because Jesus Christ received baptism from John the Baptist and had all the sins of the world transferred to His body, He could pay the price of sin by hanging on the cross, shedding blood, and dying while bearing those sins. Therefore, the word *"have been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13)* testifies that our reconciliation stands upon the entire ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection, namely the gospel of water and the Spirit.

Beloved saints, this one verse clearly shows where the direction of salvation comes from and where it heads. The one who was far away did not approach near on their own. Christ personally bore our sins and drew us near by shedding blood and dying. We were originally outside Christ and strangers regarding the covenants of promise, but because Christ bore all the sins of the world with baptism and paid that full price on the cross, we have now become those who can go forward to God. Therefore, this drawing near is not a merit we can boast of, but a grace we came to enjoy for free because Christ paid the unpayable price on our behalf. Is it so? Is it not so? It is so.

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## Breaking Down the Middle Wall of Separation and Creating One New Man

Beloved saints, look at verses 14 and 15. He said, *"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace."* Paul, who proclaimed the fact of being brought near by the blood of Christ in verse 13, compresses how that reconciliation was accomplished into one phrase, *"For He Himself is our peace."* It is a declaration that Jesus Christ Himself exactly becomes our peace, and that He personally becomes the basis of reconciliation. He said He *"has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,"* and here *"both"* primarily points to Jews and Gentiles, but more fundamentally points to the wall that lay across between God and man due to sin.

Paul reveals that the reality of that blocked wall is *"the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances."* The law revealed to man what sin is, but as a person who commits sin, one could not keep those commandments perfectly. Therefore, the law stood in the place of condemning man and making him an enemy with God. However, Paul testifies that Christ *"having abolished in His flesh the enmity" "in His flesh."* Beloved saints, this word *"having abolished in His flesh"* is exactly the core of the gospel of water and the Spirit. By Jesus Christ receiving baptism from John the Baptist to have all the sins of the world transferred to His body, and personally receiving the judgment for sin by hanging on the cross while bearing those sins, He completely eliminated that sin which the law condemned.

Everyone, the reason Apostle Paul repeatedly emphasizes not only Jesus' blood but also His flesh, namely His body, is right here. Because Christ had the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, was crucified, shed blood, and resurrected from death, He could become the Savior of those who believe. Because the Lord bore all the sins of the world with the baptism He received from John, the sin by which the law condemned us was abolished. Therefore, if only the blood of the cross is emphasized, it is not complete. To know how the sins of the world were transferred to Jesus' body, one must know the baptism Jesus received from John. Because Jesus bore the sins of the world with the baptism He received from John and was crucified with that body to receive the judgment of sin, the condemnation of the law completely disappeared. Hallelujah!

Paul reveals the result, saying, *"so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace."* Because Christ fully bore our sins with baptism and the cross and abolished the condemnation of the law, we, who were enemies with God, were created as one new man in Christ and came to enjoy peace. Beloved saints, this peace is not something we accomplished by keeping the law, but something given for free by Christ personally withdrawing the condemnation of the law. We were those who deserved to be condemned before the law, but because Christ had all the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, was crucified, and resurrected from death, He made us who believe become a new man by fully paying all our sins and the price of sin on the cross. This also is not our works, but the fruit of salvation received by faith believing in the gospel word of water and the Spirit.

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## Abolishing the Enmity Through the Cross and Making Us Reconciled with God

Beloved saints, look at verse 16. He said, *"and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."* Paul once again reveals the reconciliation accomplished by Christ, centering on the cross. What was the way Christ reconciled God and man? It was exactly the cross. It means that Christ, who abolished the condemnation of the law with His flesh in the preceding verse, completed that abolishment on the cross and reconciled us with God in one body.

Following this, Paul nails down the core of that reconciliation, saying, *"through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."* Here, *"the enmity"* points to the sin that separated us from God. Everyone, all people suffer because of sin. Whether a person has received the elimination of sins or not, their conscience becomes weighed down and groans due to the sins committed while living on this earth. However, it means that Christ *"body through the cross"* that sin which became the enmity, that is, He cleanly eliminated it. This is speaking of the fact that Jesus Christ had all the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, was crucified to receive all the judgment for that sin, and resurrected from death, thereby completely eliminating the sin of mankind.

Beloved saints, the extinction of our sins was not accomplished in the manner of prayers of repentance where we bring out small sins every day and seek forgiveness little by little. Christ is the One who became the Savior who abolished them all by bearing all sins—sins committed with our hearts and sins committed with actions, past sins, present sins, and even future sins to be committed—at once through the baptism He received from John,

being crucified, shedding blood, and resurrecting from death. Therefore, the one who knows and believes their own original state and the truth of this gospel word of water and the Spirit no longer groans because of their own sin. It is because, at the same time they acknowledge that they are a being who has no choice but to commit sin all their life, they believe that Christ has already abolished all those sins through the baptism He received from John and the cross. The reason we can live with a light heart, being reconciled with God, is right here. It is because only Christ completely solved and saved those who were enemies at once through the baptism the Lord received from John, the blood of the cross, and the resurrection from death. Hallelujah!

## Preaching Peace and Making Us Go Forward to the Father in One Spirit

Beloved saints, look at verse 17. He said, *"And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near."* Paul, who testified in verse 16 of Christ who abolished the enmity through the cross, reveals in verse 17 how that reconciliation was delivered to us. Look at the word, *"And He came."* It means that Christ personally came seeking sinners. Everyone, did we approach God first? No. Christ came to us first and preached peace. This connects exactly with the word in verse 13, *"you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."* Our reconciliation was started and accomplished on Christ's side from beginning to end.

Paul reveals that the peace was preached to both groups, namely *"you who were afar off"* and *"those who were near." "You who were afar off"* points to the Gentiles who had nothing to do with God, and *"those who were near"* points to the Jews who

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received the law and the covenant. However, everyone, was there discrimination in the peace Christ preached? There was not. He consistently preached peace to those who were far off and to those who were near. This means that anyone can be reconciled with God through the salvation Christ accomplished. Whether Jew or Gentile, whether righteous or full of sin, whoever it is, if they receive the gospel of water and the Spirit by faith, they obtain salvation. Hallelujah!

Beloved saints, what is this peace that Christ preached? It is exactly the peace that comes from being reconciled with God as all sins are extinguished. Because Jesus Christ received baptism from John the Baptist, bore all the sins of the world, and paid that full price on the cross, thereby eliminating the sin that condemned us, we have now come to enjoy true peace that is not weighed down by sin. This peace is not from our works or qualifications, but is a gift Christ personally came and delivered. Everyone, the peace the world gives stays briefly only when circumstances are good and then disappears, but the peace Christ gave is an eternally unshakable peace because all our sins have been solved.

Following this, Paul proclaims the result, saying, *"For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father" (Ephesians 2:18)*. It means that those who were previously divided into *"two,"* namely the Gentiles who were far off and the Jews who were near, have now come to go forward to the Father together *"one Spirit."* Because Christ abolished the enmity through the cross and reconciled the two in one body, we no longer remain divided but have become one in one Spirit and are able to go forward before God. Everyone, how amazing is this?

Beloved saints, this word that we have gained access to go forward to the Father reveals the depth of the salvation we received. Originally, we were those who were dead in trespasses

and sins and could not go forward to God at all. However, because Christ completely eliminated all the sins of the world with baptism and the cross, that path which was blocked by sin has been opened wide, making us able to call God Father and go forward before Him. And who is the One who makes us go forward like that? It is exactly the Holy Spirit. Because all our sins are extinguished and we became righteous, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and in that Holy Spirit we boldly go forward to the Father. If sin remained, the Holy Spirit could not dwell and we could not boldly go forward, but because Christ extinguished all our sins, we have become children who go forward before the Father without a sense of guilt. This is the depth of salvation by faith.

## We Who Are No Longer Strangers but Have Become Members of God's Household

Beloved saints, look at verse 19. He said, *"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."* Paul concludes the preceding words with the phrase, *"Now, therefore."* It means that because Christ extinguished our sins through the cross, reconciled us with God, and made us go forward to the Father in one Spirit, as a result, our status has completely changed. This contrasts directly with the old state in verse 12, which said, *"strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."*

Paul first reveals, *"you are no longer strangers and foreigners."* Originally, we were strangers who were outside God's people, and nothing more than foreigners like travelers staying briefly. However, he declares that we are no longer such people now.

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Following this, Paul nails down that we are *"but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."* Everyone, it means that we have become fellow citizens of the kingdom of God, and furthermore, members of God's household, that is, God's family. Look at this change where a stranger becomes a citizen and a foreigner becomes a family member. It shows that the salvation we received does not just stop at the removal of sins, but has reached the point of being accepted as God's family. Beloved saints, this amazing change of status is entirely the fruit of the salvation Christ accomplished. We were strangers who had no God and no hope, but because Christ completely eliminated all the sins of the world with baptism and the cross, we became members of God's household. What is the work we have done on our side? There is nothing. Because Christ bore our sins and abolished the enmity through the cross to reconcile us with God, we became His family members who call God Father. Therefore, this status is not a merit we can boast of, but a blessing we came to enjoy by grace received for free. Hallelujah!

## Christ Who Became the Cornerstone on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets

Beloved saints, look at verse 20. He said, *"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."* Paul, who proclaimed in verse 19 that we became members of God's household, reveals on what foundation that household was built. Were we built upon our own thoughts or religious efforts? No. We were built upon the foundation of faith preached by the apostles and prophets. Namely, the salvation we received is what inherited

the faith of the apostles, and what succeeded the truth that the ancient prophets testified of in advance.

Here, it is important to clearly know what that foundation preached by the apostles and prophets is. The prophets of the Old Testament testified that the Savior would come in the future. Just as the people of Israel received the blotting out of sins by the Old Testament sacrifice receiving the laying on of hands and dying, they foretold that Jesus Christ would come to this earth, receive the baptism given by John to have the sins of the world transferred to Him and bear them, hang on the cross to shed blood and die, and resurrect, thereby accomplishing true salvation. And the apostles of the New Testament testified that that prophecy was exactly fulfilled in Christ. Therefore, beloved saints, the foundation of the apostles and prophets is exactly the gospel of water and the Spirit, the truth of salvation accomplished by the baptism, the cross, and resurrection.

Paul then reveals the center of that foundation, saying, *"Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."* What is a cornerstone? It is the reference stone at the corner of a building that connects and holds both walls together. That Christ became the cornerstone means that He becomes the center connecting God and us, and that all faith is fitted together as one upon Him. Looking from the perspective of the gospel of water and the Spirit, that ministry where Christ received baptism, bore all the sins of the world, and paid that price on the cross is exactly the unchanging standard of salvation. This standard is a permanent standard that humans cannot change and for which there is no other way, and the house of our faith does not shake only when it is correctly built upon this cornerstone. Is it so? Is it not so? It is so.

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## Being Built Together into a Dwelling Place for God in the Spirit

Beloved saints, lastly, look at verses 21 and 22. He said, *"in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."* Paul reveals how we, who are built upon Christ the cornerstone, grow. Like the word, *"the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,"* we who are saved are not beings separated individually, but are connected to each other in Christ, forming one temple. Just as the stones of a building interlock with each other based on the cornerstone to form one house, those who have received the removal of sins through the gospel of water and the Spirit are connected to each other centering on Christ, being built up as God's temple.

Everyone, this connection does not merely mean a gathering among people. Because Christ is the head and His body is the church, we are interlocked as members necessary to each other. There is not a single member that is unnecessary, and each person is connected with others in Christ, forming the temple together. The reason the salvation we received does not end as one person's blessing, but leads to those who have the same faith being built up together, is right here. Beloved saints, how blessed is this work that we, who have received the elimination of sins by believing in the same gospel of water and the Spirit, hold hands with each other and are being built into one temple?

Paul reveals the purpose of that being built together in verse 22, saying, *"in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."* That we are being built together into a temple is exactly to become a dwelling place for God to reside. Beloved saints, this word once again reveals the

depth of the salvation we received. We, who were originally dead in trespasses and sins and had nothing to do with God, became righteous because Christ completely eliminated all the sins of the world with baptism and the cross, and the Holy Spirit came to dwell in those who became righteous. Everyone, because it is a clean dwelling place where all sins are extinguished, the holy God can dwell in it.

Think about it. If even a speck of sin remained in us, could the holy God dwell in it? He could never dwell in it. However, because Christ bore all the sins of the world through baptism and paid that full price on the cross, thereby extinguishing our sins without leaving anything behind, we became a holy temple where God dwells. Therefore, that we became a temple where God dwells is not a work accomplished by our efforts, but a grace given for free because Christ bore all our sins and made us righteous. From us who were dead coming back to life, strangers becoming family members, to finally becoming a temple where God dwells, all of this is salvation by faith. Hallelujah!

Beloved saints, today we have looked together at the entirety of Ephesians chapter 2, from verse 1 to 22, under the one theme of "salvation by faith." Look back over this one chapter again as one flow from beginning to end. We were originally dead in trespasses and sins, and were children of wrath who followed the course of this world and were ruled by the prince of the power of the air, that is, Satan the devil. It was a place of despair that we could never escape by our own strength. However, God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love, made us alive together with Christ, raised us up together, made us sit together in the heavenly places, brought us near by the blood of Christ to reconcile us with God, made us who were strangers into members of God's household, and finally is building us up together into a temple where God dwells.

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Then, with what did God make us who were dead alive like this? It is exactly the gospel of water and the Spirit. By Jesus Christ receiving baptism from John the Baptist, all the sins of the world, that is, my sins and your sins, were all transferred to His body. This is the exact fulfillment of the law of the laying on of hands in Leviticus 16 of the Old Testament, and that is why John the Baptist cried out, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* While bearing those sins, Jesus received all the judgment for our sins on the cross, paid the full price of sin by shedding blood and dying, and guaranteed our salvation by resurrecting on the third day. Therefore, beloved saints, just holding onto the blood of the cross cannot fully let us know this salvation. One must know how sins were transferred to Jesus, that is, the baptism, to realize the meaning of that blood. Only when one believes in the baptism, the cross, and the resurrection as one package does it become complete salvation.

Everyone, engrave the word of verse 8 in your hearts again. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."* Our salvation is not from ourselves but is the gift of God. The only thing we did is believe in our hearts that salvation which God has completely accomplished. So what can we boast of? There is not a single thing to boast of. Even if we go to the mountain to pray, even if we fast, even if we sell all our property, we cannot add a single inch to salvation. We merely became righteous by receiving through faith that grace which Christ completely accomplished with baptism, the cross, and resurrection. Therefore, what we must offer is not putting forward our own righteousness, but only thanking God who freely made us alive when we were bound to die, and praising that grace.

Beloved saints, is there anyone who is still trying to accomplish salvation by their own actions and efforts, living with a heavy

heart? I hope you lay down all those burdens today. Christ bore all your sins at once—that is, past sins, sins you commit now, and even sins you will commit in the future—and completely extinguished them on the cross. I hope that everyone who believes and receives this gospel of water and the Spirit in their hearts receives the blotting out of sins, becomes members of God's household, and becomes a temple where God dwells. And I hope that we, who are already saved by this gospel, are used together for that good work God has prepared, that is, preaching this gospel of water and the Spirit to the whole world and to the coming generations. I hope that the great grace of God, who freely made us alive when we were dead, seated us in the heavenly places, and made us a temple for Him to dwell in, will fully rest upon all of you beloved saints listening to this word. Amen. ✉

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Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# We Who Became God's People by Being Reconciled in Faith Through the Righteousness of Christ

**< Ephesians 2:1-22 >**

**"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—**

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**who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."**

Beloved saints, Ephesians chapter 2, which we have opened together today, is an amazing word that shows at a glance from where to where a person's sin was transferred. This word begins in the despair of *"who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1),* and finally ends in the glory of *"a dwelling place of God."* It means that the dead come to life, those who

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were far away come near, those who were enemies become reconciled, those who were strangers become members of God's household, and scattered stones are being built together into one temple. Everyone, what a great change is this? How was all this change accomplished? It was accomplished only by the blood of Christ. Hallelujah!

What we especially want to engrave in our hearts at this time today is being reconciled with Jesus Christ through water and the Spirit, becoming God's people, and becoming God's *"temple."* Does the fact that we were saved from the sins of the world end merely at having our sins eliminated and escaping hell? No. The Lord reconciles us from being enemies with God, makes us who believe in the gospel word of water and the Spirit into members of God's household, and builds us up together into a holy temple where God dwells. He tore down the dividing wall of hostility that lay between those who were far away and those who were near, extinguished the enmity through the cross, and created the two into one new man.

## Originally, We Were Dead in Trespasses and Sins and Could Not Be Reconciled with God

In verse 1 of the main text, it says, *"He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins."* Everyone, before speaking of the grace of reconciliation, the Apostle Paul first clearly reveals our original state. What kind of people were we originally? We were those *"dead in trespasses and sins."* It is not merely to the extent of being sick or weakened. It means we were already spiritually dead. If there is even a very small sin in our soul, that soul reaches death, suffocates, and dies. Whether it is a sin committed by trespass or any kind of sin, if there is sin, a person is bound

to reach death.

Then, what path did we, who were dead like that, walk? In Ephesians 2:2 of the main text, it says, *"walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air."* Who is the *"prince of the power of the air"* here? It is exactly Satan the devil. Before we were born again, we lived receiving the instructions of Satan the devil and acting as slaves under his power. It means that the devil, as *"the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,"* captivates people, making them oppose and disobey God. We were originally those who lived under the dominion of that evil spirit, *"conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (Ephesians 2:3).*

How does Paul summarize all these states in one word? In verse 3, he said, *"and were by nature children of wrath."* Everyone, the word *"by nature"* here is truly frightening. It means that our sin was not a mistake committed by chance once, but our nature itself was already bound to sin. This means that as descendants of Adam, we were objects of wrath before God, and a seed that deserved to be eternally destroyed. How could such a person be reconciled with the holy God? It was an utterly impossible matter.

Beloved saints, we must clearly know this original state. Could we, who were dead in our sins as descendants of Adam and captivated by the devil, save ourselves? Was there any way on our part to step closer to God? There was not a single one. Therefore, our reconciliation, our becoming a temple, was a work that God Himself had to come and accomplish from beginning to end. The size of the grace we received is only realized when we clearly know what position we were originally in.

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## God, Who is Rich in Mercy, Made Us Alive with His Great Love

In Ephesians 2:4 and 5, it says, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ."* Everyone, Paul, who proclaimed our desperate state of being dead as children of wrath, now completely reverses the flow of the text with the single phrase, *"God, who is rich in mercy."* On our side, there was nothing but death, sin, and the dominion of the devil, but on God's side, there was abundant mercy and *"His great love."*

What is the basis for us being saved from our sins and coming alive from the judgment of sin? Is it some goodness that was within us? Is it our qualification? No. It was solely the grace of God, that God the Father saved us through the gospel word of water and the Spirit which is in Jesus Christ. The dead cannot come to life on their own. Can a corpse lying in a tomb rise by its own strength? It cannot. The one who made us alive is Jesus Christ.

Everyone, the word here, *"made us alive together with Christ"* means exactly that we could come to life through the gospel word of water and the Spirit. How did God the Father save us from sin in His Son Jesus Christ? It is the salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ receiving the transfer of the sins of the world onto His body through the baptism He received from John the Baptist, being crucified, and resurrecting from death. It begins from the point where my sins and your sins were all transferred to Jesus' body through the baptism received from John. This was the fulfillment of the prophetic law in the Old Testament where they laid hands on the head of the sacrificial offering to transfer their sins. Looking at Leviticus 16, the high priest laid his hands on the head of the goat and transferred the sins of the people onto

its head. It is because, just like that, Jesus received baptism from John, had the sins of the world transferred to His body, and while bearing those sins, hung on the cross, shed blood, and resurrected from death to become our Savior.

Therefore, the word *"even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ"* does not merely point to the blood of the cross. Only when we believe in these three—baptism, the cross, and resurrection—as one package is the complete meaning of this word realized. If we emphasize only the blood of the cross, it is not complete. We must know how those sins were transferred to Jesus, that is, the baptism. If sins were not transferred, how could those sins be judged on the cross?

What does Paul add in parentheses at the end? He said, *"(by grace you have been saved)."* Everyone, the salvation we received did not come from our deeds or merits, but is a gift given entirely by God's grace. We were dead in sin, bound by the devil, and were children of wrath, but there is nothing we did on our part. Only God, who is rich in mercy, freely made us alive with His great love. Therefore, before this salvation, what we must offer is not putting forward our own righteousness, but only thanking God who freely made us alive when we were bound to die, and praising that love.

## The Lord Seated Us, Who are Born Again, Together with Christ in the Heavenly Places

In verse 6 of the main text, it says, *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* Everyone, look at how Paul repeats the word *"together"* twice in one verse. He said, *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* This is a

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word that emphasizes that our salvation does not merely stop at being rescued from sin, but that we are bound as one body with Christ and reach together the place where He went.

What does the word *"and raised us up together"* point to? It points to the fact that all the works Jesus Christ did when He came to this earth were for us. Christ, the Son of God, being born as promised by borrowing Mary's body, receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the age of thirty to have all the sins of the world transferred to His body, hanging on the cross to receive all the judgment for those sins and dying, and resurrecting three days after death—all those works were the ministry to make us alive and raise us up. Therefore, the word *"raised us up together"* testifies that our resurrection is guaranteed upon the ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection.

Following that, he said, *"and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* Everyone, this is the climax of the blessing we received. Just as Jesus Christ resurrected and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God the Father, it means He will make us, who are saved by believing the gospel of water and the Spirit, sit together with Christ in the heavenly places in the future to enjoy wealth and glory along with Him. Is this something done by our will or qualification? No. It is a promise God accomplished through Christ by personally coming to us when we were dead in trespasses and sins.

Beloved saints, just being saved is an overwhelming matter, but to seat us, who were children of wrath, together in that kingdom where the Son of God lives—how supreme is this grace? That we have been seated in such a high place is exactly the proof that we have been completely reconciled with God. How could one seat an enemy beside one's throne? Only those who have been reconciled, those who have become members of the same household, can sit in that seat.

## He Intended to Show the Grace of This Reconciliation to the Coming Ages

In verse 7 of the main text, it says, *"that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."* Everyone, what is the reason God seated us together with Christ in the heavenly places? It was exactly *"show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us."* It contains God's will that the work of saving us does not end as a blessing for just one of us, but that His abundant grace is revealed before all generations to come.

Pay attention to the word here, *"in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."* What is the channel through which God bestowed kindness upon us? It was nothing else but only *"in Christ Jesus."* Through the ministry of salvation that Christ accomplished by baptism, the cross, and resurrection, that is, the gospel of water and the Spirit, God bestowed kindness upon us. Therefore, the abundance of grace we received did not originate from our deeds or merits, but originated from the kindness God bestowed in Christ.

Everyone, this word even tells us the mission entrusted to us who have become reconciled. That God intended to *"in the ages to come"* the abundance of His grace means that He wanted this gospel of salvation to be preached to all generations until the day this world ends, through us who have received the elimination of sins and become reconciled with God. God first established us as the righteous, and entrusted His work to us, making us preach the gospel of water and the Spirit to the whole world.

Therefore, the blessing of us being seated in the heavenly places is directly connected to the life of living while serving the gospel on this earth. Should those who have become reconciled just sit still? No. Those who have received the grace of reconciliation

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must become those who preach the gospel of that reconciliation. That we are being built together into God's temple is, in the end, also to reveal this grace to the coming ages.

## This Reconciliation is God's Gift Received by Faith Through Grace

In verse 8 of the main text, it says, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."* Everyone, Paul finally compresses and proclaims the essence of salvation in one verse. What was our salvation accomplished by? It was accomplished by two things, that is, *"grace"* and *"faith."* "That grace" here points to the salvation God prepared in advance for us.

Since when did God prepare this salvation? Since before He created the universe, since before Adam and Eve were born, He established the plan of salvation toward us. And when the time was full, He sent Christ, and by Him receiving baptism from John to receive the transfer of the sins of the world, being crucified to shed blood and fully pay the price of those sins, and resurrecting from death, He has now fully accomplished the salvation of us who believe. Therefore, it was said, *"that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."*

Everyone, God personally accomplished salvation fully from beginning to end, and gave it to us as a gift. What is the only thing we did? It is only one thing: accepting with our hearts, that is, believing the salvation God fully accomplished. Those who receive in their hearts the gift God bestowed in the gospel of water and the Spirit become those who receive the blessing of reconciliation, and those who do not accept it cannot reach that reconciliation. There is no place for our merit to intervene in any

part.

What else did it say in verse 9 of the main text? It said, *"not of works, lest anyone should boast."* Even if you go to the mountains to pray, even if you do fasting prayers, even if you sell all your property, even if you build a hundred church buildings, you cannot add even an inch to salvation with those. If our deeds were added even a little, we would be able to boast of ourselves. However, because God personally accomplished salvation fully and gave it as a gift, He made it so that no one can boast of themselves. The attempt to add to salvation with one's own righteousness or effort is exactly rejecting God's righteousness.

Everyone, how does this word connect with the truth of reconciliation? If our becoming reconciled with God was done by our deeds, that is not true reconciliation. Reconciliation accomplished by deeds will collapse together on the day the deeds collapse. However, that reconciliation which Christ has fully accomplished is eternally unshaken regardless of our deeds. Therefore, we cannot boast of ourselves, but only thank God who freely reconciled us and praise that grace.

## We Are Those Newly Created for Good Works

In verse 10 of the main text, it says, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."* Everyone, just because salvation is not of works, does it mean we became born-again people without the righteous ministry of Jesus Christ? No. It said, *"we are His workmanship."* We are beings newly created by God's hands.

Did we make ourselves righteous? No. God saved us with the

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gospel of water and the Spirit, made us righteous, and newly created us. Because all the sins of the world were transferred to His body by Jesus receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and because the condemnation of sin that was binding us disappeared by Him receiving all the judgment for those sins on the cross, we became new creations by the faith that believes.

Then, for what were we created? It said we were created *"for good works."* The good works here point, above all, to the work of preaching the gospel of water and the Spirit. Everyone, we were originally humans full of faults who committed sin every day, and beings who could not do good works even if we wanted to do them ourselves. However, because the Lord completely liberated us from sin, we were finally able to do good works. Because the slave document of sin has all disappeared, we are those who have become able to serve God's work as free righteous people.

It said, *"which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."* Everyone, even those good works we are to do were not created by ourselves, but God prepared them beforehand. God established the plan to save us since before He created the universe, and at the end of that salvation, He even prepared the way for us to live while serving the gospel. Therefore, the reason we, who have become reconciled and newly created, live in this world is to preach to the whole world that good work God prepared, that is, the gospel of water and the Spirit.

## Originally, We Were Hopeless Strangers Who Were Outside of Christ

In verses 11 and 12 of the main text, it says, *"Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called*

*Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."* Everyone, with the command *"Therefore remember"* Paul makes us look back at our old state again. It is to clearly remember the situation before reconciliation, in order to make us realize how great the grace of reconciliation is.

Paul first says that the Ephesian saints were *"the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision."* They were not Israelites in the flesh, and were those who could not even receive circumcision, the sign of the covenant. That is, they were people who were outside the boundary of the covenant God bestowed upon Abraham and his descendants. This is not merely a matter of bloodline, but points to the spiritual situation of having no relationship whatsoever established with God.

Following this, Paul reveals their situation one by one in four ways. First, *"were without Christ,"* second, *"aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"* third, *"strangers from the covenants of promise,"* and fourth, they were those *"having no hope and without God in the world."* Everyone, where could there be a more desperate situation than this? It means they had no Christ, were not God's people, the promises belonged to others, they had no hope, and had no God.

Everyone, are these four states different from the state of being *"dead in trespasses and sins"* spoken of in chapter 2 verse 1? They are not different at all. We, who were dead in sin, were those who were cut off from God and could have no hope, and on our side, there was no qualification or channel to reach reconciliation. Therefore, our reconciliation was a work that God Himself had to come and accomplish from beginning to end. Only when we clearly remember this old state can we realize

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how amazing the single phrase *"But now"* that comes next is.

## Now, We Who Once Were Far Off Have Been Brought Near by the Blood of Christ

In verse 13 of the main text, it says, *"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."* Everyone, the single phrase *"But now"* here completely turns around the flow of the main text. It means that our situation, which had nothing to do with God and had no hope, has been moved to a completely different place in Christ. We, who were endlessly far away, have now become those who can step near to God.

However, everyone, this blood does not stand alone. Because Jesus Christ received baptism from John the Baptist and had all the sins of the world, that is, my sins and your sins, fully transferred to His body, He was able to pay the price of sin by shedding blood and dying on the cross while bearing those sins. If sins had not been transferred, what meaning would that blood have? Therefore, the word saying *"brought near by the blood of Christ"* testifies that our reconciliation stands upon the entire ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection, that is, the gospel of water and the Spirit.

Beloved saints, this one verse clearly shows the direction of reconciliation. Did the one who was far off come near by himself? No. Christ personally received the transfer of our worldly sins through the baptism He received from John, shed blood and died on the cross, and resurrected, thereby leading us to the way of life. At that time, we were originally outside of Christ and strangers to the covenants of promise, but because Christ bore the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John

and fully paid the price of those sins with the blood shed on the cross, we have now become those who can step forward to God. Everyone, is this bringing near a merit we can boast of? No. Because Christ paid the price of sin that we could not possibly pay on our behalf, we have become those who received the grace of salvation enjoyed for free. So how could we not give thanks before this grace? We, who were far off, have been brought near. Hallelujah!

## The Lord Broke Down the Middle Wall of Separation and Created One New Man from the Two

In verses 14 and 15 of the main text, it says, *"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace."* Everyone, Paul compresses how reconciliation was accomplished into the single phrase, *"For He Himself is our peace."* It means that Jesus Christ Himself is exactly our peace, and He personally becomes the foundation of reconciliation.

Following this, it said Christ *"has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation."* Here, *"both"* primarily points to Jews and Gentiles, but more fundamentally, it points to the wall that lay between God and man due to sin. Everyone, what was blocking the way between us and God? It is exactly sin. That sin became the middle wall of separation and was dividing us from God. However, by Christ breaking down that wall, He made the one who was far off and the one who was

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near, God and man, into one.

Paul reveals that the reality of that blocking wall is *"the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances."* The law revealed to man what sin is, but as a person who commits sin, one could not perfectly keep those commandments. Therefore, the law stood in the position of condemning man and making him an enemy with God. But what did Christ do to that *"enmity"*? It said, *"having abolished in His flesh."*

Everyone, the word here saying *"having abolished in His flesh"* is exactly the core of the gospel of water and the Spirit. Because Jesus Christ received baptism from John the Baptist and had all the sins of the world transferred to His body, and personally received the judgment for sin by hanging on the cross while bearing those sins, He perfectly eliminated the sin that the law condemned. The reason the Apostle Paul repeatedly emphasizes not only Jesus' blood but also His flesh, that is, His body, is here. Because Christ bore our sins with His body, that enmity which the law used to condemn us has been abolished.

What is the result? It said, *"so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace."* Because Christ fully bore our sins through baptism and the cross and abolished the condemnation of the law, we, who were enemies with God, were created as one new man in Christ and came to enjoy peace. Everyone, is this peace something we accomplished by keeping the law? No. It was given for free by Christ personally taking away the condemnation of the law. We, who deserved to be condemned, became a new man and came to enjoy peace with God because Christ bore our sins and fully paid the price of those sins; so how great a grace is this?

## The Lord Eliminated the Enmity Through the Cross and Reconciled Us with God

In verse 16 of the main text, it says, *"and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."* Everyone, Paul once again reveals the reconciliation accomplished by Christ centering on the cross. The way Christ reconciled God and man was exactly the cross. Christ, who abolished the condemnation of the law with His flesh in the previous verse, completed that abolishment on the cross and reconciled us with God in one body.

Following this, Paul nails down the core of that reconciliation by saying, *"through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."* What is *"the enmity"* here? It is exactly the sin that separated us from God. Everyone, all people suffer because of sin. Whether it is a person who has received the elimination of sins or a person who has not received it, one's conscience becomes weighed down and groans due to the sins committed while living on this earth. However, Christ dealt with that enmity of sin by *"putting to death the enmity"* through the cross — that is, He cleanly removed it.

This points out that Jesus Christ, as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, bore all our sins and completely eliminated sin by fully receiving the judgment for those sins on the cross. What did John the Baptist cry out in John 1:29? He cried out, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* Everyone, because Jesus bore all the sins of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, He was able to become the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

Everyone, was this elimination accomplished in a way where we bring out small sins one by one every day and ask for forgiveness little by little? No. Christ bore all sins at once—sins committed

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in our hearts and sins committed by deeds, past sins and even sins to be committed in the future—and fully eliminated them on the cross. Therefore, the one who knows his own original state and this truth no longer groans because of sin.

Beloved saints, while acknowledging that we are beings who cannot help but commit sin all our lives, because we believe that Christ has already eliminated all those sins through baptism and the cross, we can live reconciled with God with a light heart. The reason we became reconciled with God is solely because Christ fully removed the enmity of sin through the cross. Since sins have been fully eliminated, what could there be now to block the way between us and God? There is nothing. Hallelujah!

## The Lord Consistently Preached Peace to Those Who Were Far Off and to Those Who Were Near

In verse 17 of the main text, it says, *"And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near."* Everyone, pay attention to the word *"And He came"* here. It means Christ personally came to seek us. We did not approach God, but Christ came to us first and preached peace to us. This connects exactly with the word in verse 13, *"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."* Our reconciliation was initiated and accomplished from Christ's side from beginning to end.

Paul says that peace was preached to two groups. It means He preached to both *"you who were afar off"* and *"those who were near."* Those *"who were afar off"* points to the Gentiles who had nothing to do with God, and those *"who were near"* points to the Jews who had received the law and the covenant. However, there was no discrimination in the peace Christ preached. That

He consistently preached peace to the one who was far off and to the one who was near means that anyone can be reconciled with God through the salvation Christ accomplished.

Everyone, where does this peace come from? It is the peace that comes from becoming reconciled with God because sins have been fully eliminated. Because Jesus Christ received baptism from John the Baptist, bore all the sins of the world, and fully paid that price on the cross, thereby removing the sin that condemned us, we have now come to enjoy true peace that is not weighed down by sin. This peace did not originate from our deeds or qualifications, but is a gift Christ personally came and delivered.

What else did it say in verse 18 of the main text? It said, *"For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."* The purpose for which Christ preached peace is here. It is to let us have access to the Father in one Spirit. Those who were previously divided into *"two,"* that is, the Gentiles who were far off and the Jews who were near, have now come to step forward to the Father together in one Spirit.

Beloved saints, originally we were those who were dead in trespasses and sins and could not possibly step forward to God. Since sin was blocking the way, how could we have stepped forward before the holy God? However, because Christ fully removed our sins through baptism and the cross, that way which was blocked by sin has been opened wide, making us able to call God Father and step forward before Him. And the One who makes us step forward like that is the Holy Spirit. Because our sins have been fully eliminated and we have become righteous, the Holy Spirit dwells within us, and in that Holy Spirit, we boldly step forward to the Father.

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## Now We Are No Longer Strangers, But Have Become Members of God's Household

In verse 19 of the main text, it says, *"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."* Everyone, Paul concludes the preceding words with the phrase *"Now, therefore."* Because Christ eliminated our sins through the cross and reconciled us with God, allowing us to step forward to the Father in one Spirit, the result is that our status has completely changed. This directly contrasts with our old state mentioned in verse 12, *"strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."* Originally, we were strangers outside of God's people, and nothing more than foreigners like passing travelers. However, it now declares that we are no longer such people. What have we become? We have become *"fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."* Everyone, what does the word *"household"* mean here? It means exactly God's family members. It means that strangers became citizens, and temporarily staying foreigners became family members of one house. Think about it. If a traveler who was briefly staying on the road was one day adopted as a child of the master of that house and came to sit at the same dining table, how amazing would this be? It means that the salvation we received did not merely stop at the elimination of sins, but reached the point of being accepted as God's family.

Beloved saints, because Christ bore our sins and eliminated the enmity through the cross to reconcile us with God, we have become His family members who call God Father. Therefore, this status is not a merit we can boast of, but a blessing we have come to enjoy through freely received grace. Since children of wrath became children of God, and strangers became members

of God's household, how could we not praise this grace?

## We Are Being Built Together into God's Temple Upon Christ, the Cornerstone

In verse 20 of the main text, it says, *"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."* Everyone, upon what foundation were we, who became members of God's household, built? We were not built upon our own thoughts or religious efforts, but upon the foundation of faith preached by the apostles and prophets. That is, the salvation we received is inheriting the faith of the apostles, and succeeding the truth that the ancient prophets testified of in advance.

Then what is that foundation preached by the apostles and prophets? The prophets of the Old Testament testified that the Savior would come in the future. Just as the Israelites received the elimination of sins through the Old Testament sacrificial offerings receiving the laying on of hands and dying, they foretold that Jesus Christ would come to this earth, bear the sins of the world through baptism, shed blood and die on the cross, and resurrect to accomplish true salvation. The apostles of the New Testament testified that those prophecies were fulfilled exactly as they were in Christ. Therefore, the foundation of the apostles and prophets is exactly the gospel of water and the Spirit, the truth of salvation accomplished by baptism, the cross, and resurrection.

Following this, Paul reveals the center of that foundation by saying, *"Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."* Everyone, what is a cornerstone? It is the reference stone at the corner of a building that connects and holds both walls together.

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That Christ became the cornerstone means that He becomes the center connecting God and us, and that all faith is fitted together into one upon Him. That ministry where Christ received baptism to bear our sins and paid that price on the cross is exactly the unchanging standard of salvation. This standard is a permanent standard that man cannot change and for which there is no other way, and our house of faith will not be shaken only when it is built correctly upon this cornerstone.

What did it say in verses 21 and 22 of the main text? It said, *"in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."* Everyone, we who are saved are not separately isolated beings. Just as the stones of a building interlock with each other based on the cornerstone to form one house, those who have received the elimination of sins through the gospel of water and the Spirit are connected to one another centering on Christ and are being built into God's temple.

This connection does not merely mean a gathering of people. Because Christ becomes the head and His body is the church, we are interlocked as members necessary to one another. There is not a single member that is not needed. Each person is connected with others in Christ to form the temple together. The reason the salvation we received does not end as the blessing of one person, but leads to those with the same faith being built up together, is here.

Beloved saints, for what purpose are we being built together into a temple? It is exactly *"for a dwelling place of God."* Originally, we, who were dead in trespasses and sins and had nothing to do with God, became righteous by faith because Christ fully eliminated our sins through the baptism He received from John and the cross, and the Holy Spirit came to dwell within those

who became righteous. Everyone, can the holy God dwell in a place full of sin? No. Because it is a clean dwelling place where sins have been fully eliminated, God can dwell within it. Therefore, that we became a temple where God dwells is not something accomplished by our efforts, but a grace given for free because Christ fully bore our sins and made us righteous.

Beloved saints, today we have followed Ephesians chapter 2, from verse 1 to 22, in one flow. Starting from the grace that made us alive who were dead in trespasses and sins, we were made to sit in the heavenly places with Christ, brought near by the blood of Christ to be reconciled with God, the middle wall of separation was broken down, the enmity was eliminated by the cross, strangers became members of God's household, and finally, we reached the point of being built together into a temple where God dwells, making Christ the cornerstone. Are all these things our merit? No. They were accomplished solely by God's great love and the gospel of water and the Spirit.

Everyone, what is at the very center of all these changes? It is exactly the blood of Christ, that is, the reconciliation accomplished by baptism, the cross, and resurrection. By Jesus receiving baptism from John the Baptist, all the sins of the world, that is, my sins and your sins, were all transferred to His body, and while bearing those sins, He fully received the judgment for our sins on the cross, shed blood and died, and resurrected on the third day to eternally guarantee our salvation. Upon this one gospel, our reconciliation, our becoming members of the household, and our becoming the temple stand without shaking. Emphasizing only the blood of the cross is not complete. One must know together how those sins were transferred to Jesus, that is, the baptism, to fully realize this truth of reconciliation.

Beloved saints, who were we originally? We were children of wrath, strangers outside of Christ, and those who had no hope

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and were without God. Such people as us have now become those reconciled with God, members of God's family, and a holy temple where God dwells. How amazing a grace is this? So, shouldn't we live like those who have received this grace? I hope that we do not grieve the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, but are connected to one another in love and beautifully built together into a temple.

Finally, I exhort you. Do not confine this gospel of reconciliation we have received only within yourselves. Since God intended to show the riches of His grace in the ages to come, I want all of us to become those who preach this gospel of water and the Spirit to the souls who are still living without hope outside of Christ. I hope that all of us, who have been reconciled by the blood of Christ and have become God's temple, will live a blessed life of enjoying this grace every day and also preaching this blessed news to the whole world. Amen. ✉

# Questions and Answers on Ephesians Chapter 2

**[Question] 1. Ephesians 2:3-5 says, *"among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)."* What is the meaning of this Word?**

This text is a message that shows in a single flow our desperate original state before being saved from sin, and God's great love that overturned that despair. I will explain in order how the transition occurred from us who were *"by nature children of wrath"* to being "made us alive together with Christ."

**1. Formerly, we all also were those who lived among them**

Paul looks back at the state before receiving salvation, saying, *"also we all once."* What to note here is the expression *"also we all."* Paul reveals that not just a specific few, but everyone including himself was in sin without a single exception. This is a confession that in the very place where Ephesians 2:1-2 says the Gentiles followed the course of this world and followed the prince of the power of the air, we all were there together.
From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit,

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this confession is the first step to realizing the grace of salvation we received. Only when one clearly knows what place they were originally in can they finally realize how great the grace that rescued them from that place is. By admitting that he himself was a person in that place of sin, Paul reveals that salvation is never a prize given to the righteous, but a grace freely bestowed upon sinners.

**2. *"Conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind"***

Paul specifically reveals how we lived before receiving salvation. We conducted ourselves following the lusts of the flesh, and lived fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. That is, we lived not according to God's will, but as led by our own passions and thoughts. This indicates that it was not just us doing wrong once in a while, but the very direction of our lives was heading toward sin.

What comes out of a person's heart are evil thoughts and all kinds of filthy things, and a person is born as a seed of sin and lives bearing the fruit of that sin all their life. Therefore, we were beings who could not escape this lust of the flesh by our own strength. This very desperate fact makes it clear that our salvation was not by our efforts, but a work that only Christ Himself had to personally accomplish.

**3. *"And were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."***

Paul summarizes all those appearances in one phrase: *"And were by nature children of wrath."* Here, the word *"by nature"* is the core. It means that our sin was not a mistake committed by chance, but our nature itself was already bound to sin. We were fundamentally objects of wrath before God, and were seeds that

deserved to be destroyed eternally.
This word continues exactly from the state of being *"dead in trespasses and sins"* in verse 1 earlier. Even if there is only a speck of sin, our souls reach death, and since we were by nature children of wrath, there was no qualification or hope on our part to reach salvation. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the more deeply we admit in our hearts this fact that we were children of wrath, the more deeply we realize how great and thankful God's love is that rescued us from that place of wrath.

### 4. *"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us"*

Paul, having revealed our desperate state of being dead as children of wrath, now completely reverses the flow of the text with the single phrase, *"God, who is rich in mercy."* On our part, there was nothing but death, sin, and wrath, but on God's part, there was abundant mercy and *"His great love."* The basis on which we came to receive salvation was not any goodness or qualification within us, but solely that great love with which God loved us.
There is something we must clearly engrave here. Whether we commit sin or not does not bring any benefit or loss to God. Whether we are destroyed due to sin or not, it was something that would return to ourselves. Nevertheless, God had pity on us who were children of wrath, and decided to save us with that great love that cannot be repaid. This is exactly the love of God who is rich in mercy.

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### 5. He made us, who were dead in trespasses, alive together with Christ

Paul reveals how that great love reached us through the word, *"even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ" (Ephesians 2:5).* The dead cannot come back to life on their own. The One who made us alive was not ourselves but God, and that making alive was accomplished *"together with Christ."*

This word *"made us alive together with Christ"* is exactly the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we look at how God brought us back to life, that making alive begins with the event of Jesus Christ taking upon Himself all our sins at once by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. This was the fulfillment of the law of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament, where sins were transferred to an animal by laying hands on it. Jesus took charge of all our sins through baptism, fully paid the price for sin by shedding His blood and dying on the cross while bearing those sins, and brought us who were dead back to life by resurrecting in three days. Therefore, this making alive was accomplished not only through the blood of the cross, but through the entire work of baptism, the cross, and resurrection.

### 6. *"By grace you have been saved"*

Paul adds in parentheses at the end, *"by grace you have been saved."* This is a word that clearly reveals that the salvation we received did not come from our deeds or merits, but is a gift given entirely by God's grace. We, who were dead as children of wrath, did nothing. Only God, who is rich in mercy, with His great love, freely brought us to life through the gospel of the water and the Spirit accomplished by Christ.

This word in parentheses is further explained in verse 8 that follows: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith."* By repeatedly emphasizing that salvation is by grace, Paul makes it so that no one can boast by asserting their own righteousness or effort. The attempt to add to salvation with one's own deeds is rather a rejection of God's righteousness, and all we can offer is simply thanking and praising God's grace that freely brought us to life.

**7. To summarize**

Ephesians 2:3-5 shows in one flow the stark contrast between us who were *"by nature children of wrath"* and God who "made us alive together with Christ." We originally all lived according to the lusts of the flesh, our nature itself was bound to sin making us objects of wrath, and we were those who deserved to be destroyed eternally. On our part, there was no qualification or hope to reach salvation.

However, God, who is rich in mercy, with His great love, made us who were dead in trespasses alive together with Christ. The method by which God brought us to life is exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus Christ received baptism at the Jordan River to take upon Himself all our sins, paid all the price for those sins on the cross, and brought us who were dead back to life by resurrecting. Therefore, this salvation is a gift by God's grace, not our merit, from beginning to end, and we must simply become those who admit our original state of being children of wrath and live thanking God's great love that freely brought us to life.

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## [Question] 2. Ephesians 2:6-7, *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is a word that reveals how far the grace of God, who made us alive when we were dead in trespasses and sins, reaches, and what the purpose of God bestowing such great mercy upon us is. I will explain in order the amazing blessing of "made us sit together in the heavenly places" and His will to *"in the ages to come" (Ephesians 2:7).*

### 1. *"And raised us up together"*

Following Paul's statement in verse 5, *"we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ"* he says in verse 6, *"and raised us up together."* This word *"raised us up together"* indicates that all the works Jesus Christ did when He came to this earth were for us.

Christ, the Son of God, was born according to the promise by borrowing the body of Mary, took charge of our sins by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River at the age of thirty, received the judgment for those sins by hanging on the cross, and resurrected three days after His death. All these events were exactly the ministry to make us alive and raise us up. Therefore, the word *"raised us up together"* testifies that our resurrection is guaranteed upon the entire gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is, the ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection. We have obtained new life because Christ Himself resurrected from death.

**2. *"And made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"***

Paul records the word *"together"* twice in one verse, saying, *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6)*. This is an expression emphasizing that our salvation does not merely stop at delivering us from sin, but we are bound in one body with Christ and reach together the place where He went.

Just as Jesus Christ resurrected and is sitting at the right hand of the throne of God the Father, we who are saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will also in the future sit together in the heavenly places with Christ and enjoy glory. This did not happen by our will or qualification. It is a promise God personally fulfilled by coming to us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, and by Christ taking charge of our sins through baptism, receiving judgment on the cross, and resurrecting. The fact that He makes us, who were children of wrath, sit together in the kingdom where the Son of God lives, reveals how supreme the grace we received is.

**3. Where is the final place that a saved person reaches?**

Paul saying, *"made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,"* shows the most specific and clear conclusion that a saved person will reach. We often say "we are saved and go to heaven," but that expression is somewhat vague. Paul speaks more precisely. We do not just go to a place called heaven, but we sit together and live together with Christ in the very kingdom where He lives.

This is a promise given to all who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Not just me alone, but all family members around the world who believe in this gospel will reach that place

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together and live eternally with Christ. Because this is the conclusion and purpose of God saving us, we look forward with faith to going there in the future and living with Christ. Being saved alone is an overwhelming thing, but since He added even this blessing on top of it, we have received the best grace where we have nothing more to ask of God.

**4. *"In His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."***

In Ephesians 2:7, Paul begins to reveal the reason, that is, the purpose why God made us sit in the heavenly places. Prior to that, Paul clearly reveals that the channel through which God bestowed mercy upon us was none other than solely *"in Christ Jesus."*

God bestowing mercy upon us is not because we were worthy to receive mercy. We were only children of wrath by nature. However, through the ministry of salvation that Christ accomplished with baptism, the cross, and resurrection, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God bestowed immense mercy upon us. Therefore, all the grace we received did not originate from ourselves, but originated from the mercy God bestowed in Christ.

**5. *"The ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His"***

Paul clearly reveals the purpose why God bestowed such great mercy upon us. It was that *"He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward."* This means that the act of saving us does not end as a blessing for just one of us, but contains God's will to have that abundant grace revealed before all coming generations until the day this world ends.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit,

this word tells us the mission entrusted to us who are saved. God intending to show the exceeding riches of His grace in the ages to come means that He wanted this gospel of salvation to be preached to all generations through us who have received the removal of sins. God first established us as the righteous, and entrusted His work to us to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole world. Therefore, the blessing of us being made to sit in the heavenly places is connected to the life of serving the gospel on this earth.

**6. To summarize**

Ephesians 2:6-7 reveals how far the grace of God, who made us alive when we were dead, reaches, and what the purpose of God bestowing that great mercy is. God did not stop at delivering us from sin, but raised us up together with Christ and made us sit in the heavenly places. Because Jesus Christ made us alive and raised us up through baptism, the cross, and resurrection, we are established as those who will sit together in the kingdom where He is and enjoy wealth and glory eternally. God bestowing such great mercy upon us was solely in Christ Jesus, and the purpose was to show the exceeding riches of His grace in the ages to come. That is, He wanted the gospel of the water and the Spirit to be preached to the whole world through us who are saved, and God’s love to be revealed before all generations. Therefore, the heavenly blessing we received is not obtained by our merit but is a freely received grace, and at the same time, we are those who have received the mission to live preaching that abundant grace on this earth.

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## [Question] 3. Ephesians 2:8-9, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is the word that most clearly compresses the essence of salvation in the entire book of Ephesians, and clearly reveals what our salvation is made of and what it is not made of. I will explain in order the three words *"grace" "faith,"* and *"gift"* and the declaration *"not of works."*

### 1. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith"*

Paul reveals what salvation is made of with two things, namely *"grace"* and *"faith."* First, "that grace" refers to the salvation God prepared in advance for us. Before creating the universe, and before Adam and Eve were born, God established a plan of salvation for us. And when the time had fully come, He sent Christ, and He accomplished all our salvation by receiving baptism at the Jordan River to take charge of our sins, paying the price by hanging on the cross, and resurrecting.
Following this, the word *"through faith"* indicates how we received that grace. Us accepting with our hearts the salvation God had fully accomplished, that is, believing it, is exactly faith. Therefore, our salvation is accomplished by the grace God prepared existing first, and us accepting it through faith. Grace became the foundation, and faith became the channel to receive that grace.

### 2. *"And that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God"*

Paul makes clear where that salvation originated from. The

word *"and that not of yourselves" (Ephesians 2:8)* clearly reveals that our salvation did not begin from ourselves. Since we were by nature children of wrath and those who were dead in trespasses and sins, nothing that could reach salvation could come out from within us.

Therefore, Paul declares it is the gift of God. God personally accomplished salvation completely from beginning to end, and gave it to us as a gift. A gift is not something the receiver pays a price to buy, but something received freely. The one who receives this gift, which God bestowed within the gospel of the water and the Spirit, into their heart becomes a person who has received the blessing of salvation, and the one who does not accept it cannot reach that salvation. We obtained salvation not because we are great, but because we thankfully received the gift God completely made for us.

### 3. *"Not of works"*

Following Paul revealing that salvation is the gift of God in verse 8, he clearly reveals once again in verse 9 that the salvation is never of works. If salvation were to have anything to do with our works, we are rather those who should be condemned again because of the sins committed by those works. Because we were originally dead in trespasses and sins, no work that we do could make us alive.

This is the core of salvation testified by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Even if we go to the mountains to pray, do fasting prayers, do prayers of repentance, sell all our property, or build a hundred churches, we cannot add even a single inch to salvation with those things. There is not even a speck of room for our merit to enter into that salvation. This is because God completely resolved all our sins without leaving anything behind—namely, inherited sins, sins committed in the heart, sins

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committed in action, sins committed knowingly, and sins committed unknowingly—through Christ's baptism, cross, and resurrection. The only thing we did is accepting that grace with faith.

**4. *"Lest anyone should boast."***

Paul reveals the reason why salvation is not of works as *"lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:9)*. If human works were added even a little to salvation, the saved person would be able to boast by putting forward their own merit. However, because God personally accomplished salvation completely from beginning to end and gave it as a gift, He made it so that no one can boast of themselves.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this word contains a very important truth. The attempt to add to salvation with one's own righteousness or effort is rather a rejection of God's righteousness. Like Jacob, the one who acknowledges their own shortcomings and relies on the word of promise God gave is a truly righteous person, and the one who tries to establish their own righteousness like Esau or Pharaoh stumbles on the stumbling stone. Therefore, what a saved person can offer is not boasting of their own merit, but only thanking God who freely saved them who were bound to die, and praising that grace.

**5. To summarize the word,**

Ephesians 2:8-9 is a word that clearly reveals what our salvation is made of and what it is not made of. Our salvation was accomplished based on the grace God prepared before the foundation of the world, by us accepting that grace through faith. This did not originate from ourselves but is entirely the gift of

God, and our works or merits cannot intervene even a single inch. At its foundation is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God completely resolved all our sins without leaving anything behind through Christ's baptism, cross, and resurrection, and gave that salvation to us as a gift. Because the only thing we did is accepting that gift with faith, no one can boast of themselves. Therefore, we must discard religious acts or the mind to put forward our own righteousness, and simply become those who thank the grace of God who freely saved us and give glory only to Him.

## [Question] 4. Ephesians 2:10, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is a word that immediately follows after nailing down that salvation is not of works in the preceding verses 8-9. It reveals through the expression *"for good works"* that just because one is not saved by works does not mean a saved person lives without any deeds. I will explain the meaning in order.

### 1. *"For we are His workmanship"*

Paul, following his nailing down that salvation is not of works, begins to reveal that this does not mean a saved person lives without any work. The first phrase of that is *"we are His workmanship."* This indicates that we are beings made by the hands of God.

We did not make ourselves righteous. God saved us, who were originally dead in trespasses and sins, with the gospel of the

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water and the Spirit, made us righteous, and created us anew. That is, we who were seeds of sin were newly made into children of God and workers of God. Therefore, our renewed status was not obtained by our efforts, but originated from the hands of God who personally molded us.

**2. *"Created in Christ Jesus for good works"***

Paul reveals what we were created for. We were created *"in Christ Jesus for good works."* God saving us had its will in making us do good works.

Here, it is important to clearly know what those good works refer to. Above all, it is the work of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We were originally humans with many faults who committed sins every day, and beings who could not do good works even if we wanted to do them ourselves. However, because the Lord eliminated the document of slavery to sin that was binding us and completely liberated us from sin, we were finally able to do good works. Only we who are born again can do the truly precious work, that is, the work of preaching the love and salvation God bestowed upon mankind, and this is possible because we were created anew in Christ.

**3. A person saved from sin has deeds**

The meaning of this verse becomes clearer when read together with the word *"not of works"* in the preceding verse 9. Our salvation was never obtained by our works. However, this does not mean that a saved person lives without any deeds. Rather, because a saved person was created for good works, they come to do good works as the fruit of that salvation.

That is, good works are not the cause of salvation but the result of salvation. We do not receive salvation by doing good works, but because we received salvation, we became able to do good

works. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this order is very important. Trying to add to salvation with works is rejecting God's righteousness, but a saved person living while preaching the gospel in gratitude for that grace is a natural fruit. Because the Lord gave us the truth of salvation and the Holy Spirit, we became able to live serving God and serving this gospel.

### 4. *"Which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."*

Lastly, Paul reveals that even those good works were prepared beforehand by God. The good works we are to do were not created by ourselves, but were prepared beforehand by God for us.

God established the plan to save us from before He created the universe, and at the end of that salvation, He even prepared the path for us to live serving the gospel. Therefore, our salvation, from its beginning to its fruit, is entirely in the hands of God. God freely saved us regardless of our works, and also arranged in advance the good works we are to do. The reason we live in this world is nowhere else, but in doing the good works God prepared, that is, preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole world and showing God's abundant grace to the coming generations.

### 5. To summarize

Ephesians 2:10 is a word that reveals what a saved person was created for, after stating that salvation is not of works. We are those who were created anew by the hands of God, and those created in Christ Jesus for good works. We, who originally could not do good works on our own, were completely liberated from

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sin by God through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so we finally became able to do good works.
Here, good works are not the cause of salvation but the fruit of salvation. We were not saved by doing good works, but because we were saved, we became able to do good works. And even those good works, that is, the work of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit, were prepared beforehand by God. Therefore, we should not boast of our merit, but become those who thank the grace of God who created us as righteous and entrusted us with good works, and live faithfully upholding the mission of preaching the gospel that He prepared.

## [Question] 5. Ephesians 2:11-12, *"Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is a word that makes us look back one by one at the desperate situation of the Gentiles before receiving salvation, in order to make us realize the grace of being brought near by the blood of Christ. Starting with the command *"Therefore remember"* it reveals our old appearance in various branches, so I will explain the meaning in order.

### 1. *"Therefore remember"*

Paul begins this text with the command *"Therefore*

*remember."* Paul, who previously proclaimed the fact of being saved by grace from chapter 2 verse 1 to 10, now exhorts the Ephesian saints who were Gentiles to look back at their appearance before receiving salvation, in order to make them realize more deeply how great that grace of salvation is.

The magnitude of the grace we received is only fully realized when we clearly know what position we were originally in. A person who has not been in the position of a sinner, that is, the position bound to suffer judgment, does not well know how thankful the grace of salvation is. Therefore, Paul commands to *"remember"* intending to make them deeply realize the magnitude of the grace they have now received by reflecting on their old appearance.

### 2. *"Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands"*

Paul first reveals the old status of the Ephesian saints. They were *"Gentiles in the flesh,"* that is, physically not people of the nation of Israel. Also, failing to receive even circumcision, the evidence of the covenant, they were those called *"Uncircumcision"* by the circumcised Jews.

This is not merely a matter of lineage or external rituals. Circumcision was the evidence of the covenant God bestowed upon Abraham and his descendants, and the Gentiles were those who were outside the boundary of that covenant. That is, it indicates a spiritual situation where there was no relationship whatsoever established with God. Originally, we too were in the position of Gentiles who had nothing to do with God.

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### 3. *"That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"*

Paul then reveals their situation more specifically. They were *"without Christ."* That is, they had nothing to do with Christ the Savior, and were those who had not received the removal of sins. Also, they were *"aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"* that is, those who were outside the group of people God had chosen. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the word *"were without Christ"* is very important. All our hope is solely in Christ. There is hope only when we enter into that salvation which Christ accomplished by taking charge of our sins through baptism, paying the price on the cross, and resurrecting; but for those who were outside of it, there was no hope at all.

### 4. Were strangers from the covenants of promise

Paul says they were *"strangers from the covenants of promise" (Ephesians 2:12)*. God promised Abraham and his descendants that a Savior would come in the future and save them from sin. All the sacrificial laws of the Old Testament and the words of the prophets testified to that promise. However, the Gentiles were strangers to those covenants of promise, that is, those who had no relationship with that promise of salvation.
This shows that we were originally those considered to be outside God's plan of salvation. However, as the following word says, by Christ coming and bringing us, who were far off, near by His blood, we too became those who participate in that promise. As much as the old situation was desperate, the grace that allowed us to enter into that promise shines even greater.

### 5. Were those having no hope and without God in the world

Paul finally summarizes the situation of the Gentiles with the single phrase, *"having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12)*. This is the conclusion pointed to by all the previously revealed situations. The only conclusion that those who were without Christ, outside the people of God, and strangers from the covenants of promise could reach was having no hope and being without God.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this appearance is no different from the appearance of being dead in trespasses and sins in the preceding chapter 2 verse 1. We, who were dead in sin, were cut off from God and could have no hope, and on our side, there was no qualification or channel whatsoever to reach salvation. This very desperate fact makes it clear that our salvation was not something that began on our side, but a work that God personally had to come and accomplish.

### 6. To summarize

Ephesians 2:11-12 is a word that makes us look back one by one at our desperate situation before receiving salvation, in order to make us deeply realize the grace of being brought near by the blood of Christ. Paul commands to *"Therefore remember"* making us realize the magnitude of the grace we have now received by reflecting on our old appearance. We were originally Gentiles in the flesh and the Uncircumcision who had not even received circumcision, and were without Christ, outside the people of God, and strangers from the covenants of promise. In a word, we were those having no hope and without God in the world.

This appearance exactly reveals our original situation of being cut off from God, dead in trespasses and sins. On our side, there

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was no hope or qualification whatsoever to reach salvation. Therefore, this text makes us realize that the salvation we received is not our merit, but the absolute grace of Christ personally bringing us, who had no hope, near by His blood. The more we always look back at our old situation, the more deeply we engrave how great and thankful the love of God is, who delivered us from that place of despair.

## [Question] 6. Ephesians 2:13-15, *"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is a word that reveals how we, who had no hope and no God, have now been brought near to God, and how that peace was accomplished. I will explain in order from the declaration *"have been brought near by the blood of Christ." (Ephesians 2:13)* to the conclusion *"to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace" (Ephesians 2:15).*

### 1. But now you who once were far off have been brought near in Christ Jesus by the blood of Christ

Paul, following his detailed revelation of the desperate past of the Gentiles in the preceding verse 12, completely turns the flow of the text with the single phrase *"But now"* in verse 13. It is a word declaring that our situation, which had nothing to do

with God and had no hope, has been moved to a completely different place in Christ. The expression *"you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He"* indicates that we, who were endlessly far away from God, have now become those who can step near to God.

Paul reveals that this bringing near was accomplished *"in Christ Jesus… by the blood of Christ."* That we have been brought near to God was not done by our efforts or deeds, but solely by the blood shed by Christ. Here, the blood of Christ refers to His paying the full price of sin on the cross. However, this blood does not stand alone. Because Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist at the Jordan River and took all our sins upon Himself, He was able to pay the price of sin by shedding His blood and dying on the cross while bearing those sins. Therefore, the word *"have been brought near by the blood of Christ"* testifies that our reconciliation stands upon the entire ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 2. He Himself was our peace

Paul compresses the basis of that reconciliation into the single phrase, *"For He Himself is our peace" (Ephesians 2:14).* It is a declaration that Jesus Christ Himself is our peace, and that He personally becomes the basis of reconciliation. Peace is not something we created, but Christ Himself became that peace for us.

Originally, we were in a position of being enemies with God due to sin, and as long as there was sin, we could not enjoy true peace. However, because Christ took charge of all our sins and eliminated what was blocking the way between God and us, He Himself became our peace. The peace we enjoy does not come from elsewhere, but originates solely from the salvation

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accomplished by Christ.

**3. who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation**

Paul reveals the work of Christ accomplishing peace as *"who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation" (Ephesians 2:14)*. Here, "both" primarily refers to Jews and Gentiles, but more fundamentally, it refers to the wall that lay between God and man due to sin. By breaking down that wall, Christ made those who were far off and those who were near, God and man, into one.

Breaking down this blocked wall is the very way we were brought near to God. What was blocking the way between us and God was none other than our sin. Because Christ took charge of all those sins and eliminated them, the wall blocking us collapsed, and we became able to step forward to God.

**4. *"Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances"***

Paul reveals that the reality of that blocked wall is *"the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Ephesians 2:15)*. The law revealed to man what sin was, but as humans who commit sin, they could not perfectly keep those commandments. Therefore, the law stood in a position of condemning man and making him an enemy of God. However, Paul testifies that Christ *"abolished in His flesh"* that *"enmity."* Here, the word *"abolished in His flesh"* is the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus Christ was baptized at the Jordan River, taking all our sins upon His body, and by personally receiving the judgment for sin on the cross while bearing those sins, He completely eliminated the sin that the law condemned. This is the reason why the Apostle Paul repeatedly

emphasizes not only Jesus' blood but also His flesh, that is, His body. Because Christ took charge of our sins with His body, that enmity, which was the law condemning us, was abolished.

### 5. *"So as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace"*

Paul reveals the result of Christ abolishing the condemnation of the law as *"so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace" (Ephesians 2:15)*. Because Christ took charge of all our sins through His baptism and the cross and abolished the condemnation of the law, we, who were enemies with God, were created as one new man in Christ to enjoy peace. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this peace was not achieved by our keeping the law, but was given freely by Christ personally withdrawing the condemnation of the law. We were those who deserved to be condemned before the law, but by Christ bearing our sins and paying the full price, we became a new man and came to enjoy peace with God. The old man was one dead in sin, but we were created as a sinless new man in Christ.

### 6. To summarize

Ephesians 2:13-15 is a word that reveals how we, who had no hope and no God, have *"now"* been brought near to God, and how that peace was accomplished. Our being brought near to God was not done by our deeds or qualifications, but solely by the blood He shed in Christ Jesus. Jesus Christ was baptized by John at the Jordan River to bear the sins of our world, and by paying the full price of those sins on the cross, He brought us near to God.

Christ Himself became our peace, breaking down the wall lying

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between the two and abolishing in His flesh the law that condemned us, that is, the enmity. As a result, we, who were enemies with God, were created as a sinless new man in Christ to enjoy peace. Therefore, all of this is not something we achieved by keeping the law, but a grace given freely by Christ taking charge of all our sins through His baptism and the cross and paying the price. We must simply become those who live in peace, thanking the grace that brought us near and created us as a new man.

## [Question] 7. Ephesians 2:16-18, *"and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is a word revealing that Christ reconciled us to God through the cross, and that this reconciliation leads from preaching peace to gaining access to the Father in one Spirit. I will explain in order from *"putting to death the enmity. And He came" (Ephesians 2:16-17)* to *"have access by one Spirit to the Father" (Ephesians 2:18).*

### 1. *"And that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross"*

Following his revelation in the preceding verse 15 that Christ abolished the condemnation of the law in His flesh to create one new man, Paul declares in verse 16 that this reconciliation was completed on the cross. As the word says, *"and that He might*

*reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross,"* the way Christ reconciled God and man was the cross itself.
Here, *"them both"* refers to those who were far off and those who were near, that is, those who were separated as enemies of God. By Christ taking charge of our sins through baptism and paying the full price on the cross, He bound us, who were separated, into one body and reconciled us to God. This reconciliation was not achieved by us, but by Christ personally bearing the cross.

### 2. *"Putting to death the enmity. And He came"*

Paul clearly reveals the core of that reconciliation as *"putting to death the enmity. And He came."* Here, *"the enmity"* refers to the sin that separated us from God. Everyone suffers because of sin. Whether a person has received the removal of sins or not, their conscience is weighed down and groans due to the sins they commit while living on this earth.
However, it means that Christ put to death that enmity of sin *"through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity"* — that is, He cleanly eliminated it. This indicates that Jesus Christ, as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, bore all our sins and received all the judgment for those sins on the cross, thereby completely eliminating sin. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this putting to death was not accomplished by us bringing our small sins every day and seeking forgiveness little by little. Christ bore all sins at once—sins committed in our hearts and sins committed in deeds, past sins and sins to be committed in the future—and put them all to death on the cross. Those who know their own original appearance and this truth no longer groan because of sin.

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**3. *"And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near."***

Paul reveals how the reconciliation accomplished by Christ was preached. The word *"And He came"* indicates that Christ personally came to us. We did not approach God, but Christ came to us first and preached peace.

Paul reveals that this peace was preached to both *"you who were afar off"* and *"those who were near."* Those who were afar off refer to the Gentiles who had nothing to do with God, and those who were near refer to the Jews who had received the law and the covenants. However, there was no discrimination in the peace preached by Christ. Preaching peace consistently to both those who were far off and those who were near means that anyone can be reconciled to God through the salvation accomplished by Christ. This peace preached by Christ is the very peace that comes from being reconciled to God because all sins have been put to death.

**4. *"For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father"***

Paul reveals the purpose for which Christ preached peace, that is, the place where reconciliation leads. As the word *"For through Him"* says, our being able to step forward to God is solely through Christ. It is not by our own efforts or merits, but only through the work of salvation accomplished by Christ that the way to step forward to God was finally opened.

Then Paul declares the result: *"We both have access by one Spirit to the Father" (Ephesians 2:18)*. Those who were previously divided into *"both"* that is, the Gentiles who were far off and the Jews who were near, have now come to step forward to the Father together *"by one Spirit."* From the perspective of

the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the word that we have gained access to the Father reveals the depth of the salvation we received. Originally, we were dead in trespasses and sins and could not step forward to God at all. However, because Christ completely eliminated our sins through His baptism and the cross, that way which was blocked by sin was opened wide, enabling us to call God our Father and step forward before Him. Because all our sins were put to death and we became righteous, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and in that Holy Spirit, we boldly step forward to the Father.

**5. To summarize**

Ephesians 2:16-18 is a word revealing that Christ reconciled us to God through the cross, and that this reconciliation leads from preaching peace to gaining access to the Father in one Spirit. By taking charge of our sins through baptism and paying the full price on the cross, Christ bound us, who were separated, into one body and reconciled us to God. This is because Christ cleanly put to death at once through the cross the enmity of sin that separated us from God.

Christ personally came and preached peace without discrimination to both those who were far off and those who were near. This peace is true peace that comes from being reconciled to God because all sins have been put to death. And the purpose of that reconciliation was to allow us to have access to the Father in one Spirit. We, who originally could not step forward to God because we were blocked by sin, were able to boldly step forward before God because the blocked way was opened when Christ completely eliminated our sins through His baptism and the cross. Therefore, we must become those who thank the grace that put our sins to death through the cross and reconciled us to God, and boldly step forward to the Father in

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the Holy Spirit.

## [Question] 8. Ephesians 2:19-20, *"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is a word that reveals how our status has changed through Christ's reconciliation, and upon what foundation we, who have been changed, are built. I will explain in order from the change in status, *"no longer strangers and foreigners" (Ephesians 2:19),* to the position of Christ, *"Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20).*

### 1. Therefore, from now on, our status has completely changed

Paul begins this text with the phrase, *"Now, therefore."* This is an expression that concludes the preceding words. Because Christ put our sins to death through the cross and reconciled us to God so that we could step forward to the Father in one Spirit, the result is that our status has completely changed.

The phrase *"But now"* stands in direct contrast to our old appearance in verse 12. Previously, we were *"strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."* However, through the salvation accomplished by Christ, that old situation has ended, and from now on, we have become those with a completely different status. This transition is not our own change, but is given as the result of Christ accomplishing reconciliation.

### 2. *"You are no longer strangers and foreigners"*

Paul first reveals what kind of people we no longer are. Originally, we were merely *"strangers"* who were outside the people of God, and *"foreigners"* like travelers staying for a short while. A stranger is an outsider who does not belong to that country, and a foreigner is a guest who does not belong to that house. In other words, we were those who belonged neither to the kingdom of God nor to the house of God.

However, Paul declares that we are no longer such people. Because Christ completely eliminated our sins and reconciled us to God, we no longer remain as outsiders or guests. What bound us to the position of strangers and foreigners was our sin, but because that sin was eliminated through His baptism and the cross, our status has changed.

### 3. *"But fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God"*

Paul now reveals what kind of people we have become. We have become *"fellow citizens with the saints"* and furthermore, *"members of the household of God,"* that is, God's family. That we have become fellow citizens of the kingdom of God means we have become those who fully belong to that kingdom, and that we have become members of the household of God means we have been accepted as God's family, going beyond merely being people of a nation.

This change of a stranger becoming a citizen and a foreigner becoming a family member shows that the salvation we received does not stop merely at the removal of sins, but reaches the point of being accepted as God's family. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this amazing change in status is entirely the fruit of the salvation accomplished by Christ. We

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were strangers who had no God and no hope, but because Christ completely eliminated our sins through His baptism and the cross, we became members of the household of God. There is nothing we did on our part; it is a blessing enjoyed by grace received freely.

**4. It says you are having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets**

Following his revelation that we have become members of the household of God, Paul reveals upon what foundation those members are built. As the word says, *"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Ephesians 2:20)*, we are not built upon our own thoughts or religious efforts, but upon the foundation of faith preached by the apostles and prophets. In other words, the salvation we received is the transmission of the apostles' faith, and the inheritance of the truth testified in advance by the prophets of old.

Here, it is important to know what the foundation preached by the apostles and prophets is. The prophets of the Old Testament testified that the Savior would come in the future. Just as the people of Israel received the removal of sins by the Old Testament sacrificial offering receiving the laying on of hands and dying, they foretold that Jesus Christ would come to this earth, take charge of the sins of the world through baptism, shed His blood and die on the cross, and resurrect to accomplish true salvation. The apostles of the New Testament testified that this prophecy was fulfilled exactly in Christ. Therefore, the foundation of the apostles and prophets is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the truth of salvation accomplished by baptism, the cross, and resurrection. Our faith is not a religious life, but the very inheritance of that truth.

### 5. He said, *"Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone"*

Paul reveals the center of that foundation as *"Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20).* A cornerstone is a reference stone at the corner of a building that connects and holds both walls together. That Christ became the cornerstone means that He becomes the center connecting God and us, and that all faith is fitted together as one upon Him.
From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the ministry of Christ receiving baptism to take charge of our sins and paying the price on the cross is the unchanging standard of salvation. This standard is a permanent standard that man cannot change and for which there is no other way, and the house of our faith will not be shaken only when it is built correctly upon this cornerstone. People's faith is shaken because they do not know this standard and believe their own thoughts, so we must clearly hold fast to the fact that only the salvation accomplished by Christ is the truth and there is no other way.

### 6. To summarize

Ephesians 2:19-20 is a word that reveals how our status has changed through Christ's reconciliation, and upon what foundation we, who have been changed, are built. Because Christ put our sins to death through the cross and reconciled us to God, from now on we are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. This change of us, who had no God and no hope, being accepted as God's family is a freely received grace accomplished solely by Christ completely eliminating our sins through His baptism and the cross.
And we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and

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prophets, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The prophets of the Old Testament testified of the Savior to come, and the apostles of the New Testament testified that Christ accomplished that salvation through baptism, the cross, and resurrection, so our faith is the very inheritance of that truth. At the center of that foundation is Christ, who Himself became the chief cornerstone. Because the salvation accomplished by Christ is the unchanging standard, the house of our faith is built correctly without shaking only upon this cornerstone.

## [Question] 9. Ephesians 2:21-22, *"in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."* What is the meaning of this word?

This text is a word revealing that we, who are built upon Christ the cornerstone, are connected to one another to form one temple, and ultimately become a dwelling place for God. I will explain in order the meaning of this word, which serves as the conclusion to the entirety of Ephesians chapter 2.

### 1. *"In whom the whole building, being fitted together"*

Following his revelation in the preceding verse 20 that Christ Himself became the chief cornerstone, Paul reveals in verse 21 how we, built upon that cornerstone, grow. As the word says, *"in whom the whole building, being fitted together,"* we who are saved are not isolated beings, but are connected to one another in Christ.

Just as the stones of a building interlock with each other based on the cornerstone to form one house, those who have received

the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit are connected to one another centered on Christ. This connection is made *"in whom"* that is, in Christ. The reason we are connected to one another is not because our minds match each other, but because we are built together upon Christ, who is the same cornerstone. Therefore, Christ becomes the center and standard of that connection.

### 2. *"Grows into a holy temple in the Lord"*

Paul reveals that we, connected in this way, *"grows into a holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:21).* It means that we interlock with each other in Christ to form one temple. This connection does not merely mean a gathering of people. Because Christ is the head and the church is His body, we are interlocked as members necessary to one another.

In this body, there is not a single unnecessary member. Each person is connected to others in Christ to form the temple together. This is the reason why the salvation we received does not end as a blessing for one person, but leads to those with the same faith being built up together. Also, as the expression *"grows into"* suggests, this temple is not completed all at once, but is in the process of continuously growing and being built.

### 3. *"In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."*

In verse 22, Paul reveals the purpose for which we are being built into a temple. It is *"for a dwelling place of God."* That we are being built together into a temple means it is to become a place where God dwells.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this word once again reveals the depth of the salvation we

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received. Originally, we were dead in trespasses and sins and had nothing to do with God, but because Christ completely eliminated our sins through His baptism and the cross, we became righteous, and the Holy Spirit came to dwell within those who have become righteous. Because it is a clean dwelling place where all sins have been put to death, God can dwell within it. If sin remained as it is within us, the holy God could not dwell in it. However, because Christ put all our sins to death through the cross, we have become a holy dwelling place where God resides.

**4. *"Are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit"***

Paul concludes this text with the word, *"are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22)*. Here, two things must be engraved. First is "in Jesus." Our being built into God's dwelling place is not by our efforts or merits, but is a work accomplished solely in Jesus. Because Jesus Christ took charge of all our sins and made us righteous, we can become the temple where God dwells.

Second is *"are being built together."* This being built is not something achieved alone, but something achieved together by those who have the same faith. As connected members, we are built together into God's dwelling place making Christ the cornerstone. Therefore, our becoming the temple where God dwells is not a work achieved by our efforts, but a grace given freely because Christ took charge of all our sins and made us righteous.

**5. To summarize**

Ephesians 2:21-22 is a word revealing that we, who are built

upon Christ the cornerstone, are connected to one another to form one temple, and ultimately become a dwelling place for God. We who are saved are not isolated beings, but interlock with each other in Christ to be built into one temple. Because Christ is the head and the church is His body, we are being built together as members necessary to one another.

Above all, this text testifies that the purpose of our being built together is to become a dwelling place for God. We, who were dead in trespasses and sins and had nothing to do with God, became righteous because Christ completely eliminated our sins through His baptism and the cross, and the Holy Spirit came to dwell within that cleansed dwelling place. All of this is not our effort, but grace accomplished solely in Jesus. Therefore, the entirety of Ephesians chapter 2 flows as one stream. Starting from the grace that made us alive who were dead in trespasses and sins, it reaches the point of being seated in the heavenly places with Christ, being brought near by the blood of Christ to be reconciled to God, strangers becoming members of the household of God, and finally being built together into a temple where God dwells, making Christ the cornerstone. This is the perfect salvation accomplished for us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

**[Question] 10. Ephesians 2:1-9 says, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."* We consider the salvation we received from the Lord, our becoming children of God, and the life of glory we will enjoy in the future. Realistically, we received salvation and grace that we could not possibly receive, and**

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**physically, we became recipients even though we were not qualified to receive God's love and blessing. If so, could you explain in detail what kind of people we originally were that we had absolutely no qualification to receive that grace, how such people as us came to receive this great salvation and grace, and with what kind of heart such people as us should live?**

This text is the word that most clearly reveals the amazing paradox that "those who could not possibly receive it, received it." I will explain in order what position we were in that made us unqualified to receive it, how we came to receive that great grace, and with what kind of heart those who received it without qualification should live.

### 1. We were originally those who had absolutely no qualification to receive the grace of salvation

First, we must clearly see why we were those who could not possibly receive it. Verse 1 of the text calls us *"who were dead in trespasses and sins."* It said we were dead. What can a dead person do? A dead person cannot even lift a single finger. We were not alive but just a little weakened; we were beings who were already spiritually dead.

Following this, verse 2 says we *"walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air."* We were those who lived acting as slaves under that power, receiving the instructions of Satan the devil. And verse 3 clearly reveals us as *"by nature children of wrath."* Here, the phrase *"by nature"* is important. It means we were not just those who made a mistake once by chance, but our very nature was bound to sin, making us beings who fundamentally deserved to receive

God's wrath. Therefore, far from God's love and blessing, we were those who deserved to receive wrath and judgment and be destroyed forever. This was our original appearance.

### 2. Because we were those who had no qualification to receive blessings, it is called *"grace"*

Everyone, it is right here that the true meaning of the word *"grace"* is revealed. Grace is not a rightful reward given to those who are qualified to receive it. God's favor bestowed freely upon those who have absolutely no qualification to receive it is exactly what grace is. Verse 4 of the text says, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us."* On our part, there was nothing but death, sin, and the dominion of the devil, but on God's part, there was abundant mercy and that great love.

As you asked, receiving salvation that realistically we could not possibly receive is exactly this. If we had even the slightest qualification to receive it, it would no longer be grace but a rightful price. However, we did not have even a speck of such qualification. Because God had pity on us, who were children of wrath, with that great love and determined to save us, this is grace freely received by those who could not receive it from beginning to end.

### 3. He met us, who could not receive blessings, with the gospel of the water and the Spirit

Then how did we, who had no qualification to receive blessings, come to receive that salvation? Verse 5 of the text says, *"even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ."* The way that we, who had no qualification to receive, came to receive it is precisely the gospel of the water

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and the Spirit.

By Jesus Christ receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the age of thirty, all the sins of the world, that is, the sins of all mankind and the sins of you and me, were passed onto Jesus' body once and for all. This is the exact fulfillment of the law of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament, Leviticus 16, on the Day of Atonement, where the High Priest laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat and transferred the sins of the people to that goat. That is why John the Baptist testified the next day, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)*. And Jesus, carrying those sins, was crucified and received all the judgment for our sins, paying the full price of sin by shedding His blood and dying, and by resurrecting on the third day, He eternally guaranteed our salvation.

Everyone, who did all these things? Not us, but Jesus did it all. We, who had no qualification to receive, did nothing; the Lord simply accomplished all that salvation through baptism, the cross, and resurrection. Therefore, this salvation we received is grace received by those who could not receive it, and the content of that grace is precisely the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 4. We became children of God and were even made to sit in the heavenly places

Everyone, however, God's grace did not stop at the removal of sins. Ephesians 2:6 says, *"and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* It means that He made us, who had no qualification to receive, His children, and furthermore, seated us together with Christ in the heavenly places to enjoy wealth and glory with Him in the future. As you asked, this is exactly what it means that physically we became recipients even though we were not qualified to receive God's love and blessing. We were originally children of wrath,

but now we have become His children who call God Father. We were originally those who deserved to be destroyed, but now we have become those who will sit together in the kingdom where Christ lives. Receiving salvation alone is overwhelming, but on top of that, He added our becoming children of God and the life of glory we will enjoy in the future; where could there be a greater grace than this? We are those who received the greatest blessing even though we had no qualification to receive it.

**5. All of this is not of our works but is the gift of God**

Ephesians 2:8 and 9 clearly reveal the basis of all this. It said, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."*

Everyone, that we had no qualification to receive means that we could not obtain this salvation by our works. Even if we go to the mountains to pray, fast and pray, sell all our property, or build a hundred churches, we cannot add even a single inch to salvation with those things. God personally accomplished salvation completely from beginning to end and gave it to us as a gift. The only thing we did was believe and accept that gift with our hearts. That is why it is called *"the gift of God."*

There is a deep meaning here. It said, *"lest anyone should boast." (Ephesians 2:9)*. If we had even the slightest qualification to receive it, we could have boasted. However, because God gave it freely to those who had absolutely no qualification to receive it, He made it so that no one can boast saying, "I received it because I did this much." This salvation is not a salvation that makes people boast, but a salvation that makes us praise only God.

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### 6. The blessed person comes to thank God when they know themselves correctly

Everyone, then what must we do to truly be thankful for this grace? It is when we know ourselves correctly. Only the person who knows how lacking and sinful a seed they originally were knows how great the grace is that freely saved such a person.
A person who thinks they are good, or a person who considers they have some qualification to receive, is not very thankful for the grace the Lord bestowed. However, the person who knows they were a child of wrath, a person dead in sin, and a person who could not possibly receive it, is endlessly thankful that Jesus took charge of all those sins through baptism and eliminated them by receiving all the judgment on the cross. Therefore, they humble themselves, exalt God, and always live moved by that grace received without qualification.

### 7. To summarize

The words from Ephesians 2:1 to 9 testify to the amazing grace that "those who could not possibly receive it, received it." We were originally those who were dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath who lived following Satan the devil, and those who had absolutely no qualification to receive God's love and blessing. Yet, God, who is rich in mercy, with that great love, freely saved us who had no qualification to receive.
The way of that salvation is precisely the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By Jesus receiving baptism from John the Baptist, all the sins of the world were passed onto His body, and carrying those sins, He received all the judgment on the cross and died, and by resurrecting, He eternally guaranteed our salvation. Thus, we who had no qualification to receive were saved, became children of God, and became those who will sit in the heavenly places with Christ in the future to enjoy glory.

All of this is not of our works but is the gift of God. Therefore, no one can boast, but it is only right to correctly know one's own original appearance, humble oneself, thank God who freely gave this great grace without our qualification to receive it, and live praising only Him. Since we who could not receive it have received it, our whole life should be a life of living by preaching this gospel of the water and the Spirit with gratitude, as there is no way to repay that grace.

**[Question] 11. We were fundamentally those who had nothing to boast of and nothing to present before God, but the Lord looked upon us with pity, loved us, and clothed us with the grace of salvation to make us children of God. Do such people as us have anything to put forward before God? There is nothing. Even so, since it is said that the Lord took charge of our sins with the baptism He received from John the Baptist and the blood of the cross, and received all the judgment for those sins, I am so thankful and that truth is believed in my heart. If so, could you explain in detail how we, who had nothing to present before God, came to freely receive this great grace of salvation, and how the desire to preach the grace of God who gave such salvation to the whole world springs up within us?**

Within this question, both of the hearts that a saved person ought to have are contained. One is the heart that correctly knows oneself and admits there is nothing to present before God, and the other is the heart that is moved by the grace that freely saved such a person and desires to preach this gospel. I will

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explain these two hearts in order.

**1. Did we have any righteousness of our own to put forward?**

The confession you asked about is truly precious. We are fundamentally those who have nothing to boast of, and those who have nothing to present before God. Ephesians chapter 2 clearly testifies to this. We were originally those who were dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath who lived following Satan the devil, and those who had no hope and were without God.

Everyone, knowing oneself correctly is the starting point of faith. A person who considers they have something to boast of, or a person who thinks they have some righteousness to present before God, is actually a person who does not know themselves. What comes out of our human hearts is only evil thoughts and all kinds of filthy things, and we are seeds of sin who have no choice but to commit sin all our lives. Therefore, do we have anything to put forward before God? There is nothing. The one who admits this with their heart is precisely the one who is ready to receive the gospel.

**2. God looked upon such people as us with pity and gave us the love of salvation**

However, God looked upon exactly such people as us with pity and loved us. In Ephesians 2:4 it says, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us."* Everyone, God did not love us because there was something in us worthy of being loved. We had nothing. God simply had pity on us with His abundant mercy and great love.

This is exactly what grace is. What is given to those who are qualified to receive is not grace but a rightful price. However,

what is freely bestowed upon those who have absolutely no qualification to receive is grace. We had nothing to present before God, but God looked upon us with pity and loved us, clothed us with the grace of salvation, and made us, who were children of wrath, into children of God. Do such people as us have anything to put forward before God? There is nothing. We are only thankful for that grace.

### 3. The Lord took charge of our sins with the baptism He received from John and the blood of the cross, and received the judgment of sin

As you asked, the content of that grace is exactly this. It is that the Lord took charge of our sins with the baptism He received from John the Baptist and the blood of the cross, and received the judgment of sin. This is precisely the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

With the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist at the age of thirty, He had all the sins of the world passed onto His body and shed His blood on the cross. This is the exact fulfillment of the law of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament, Leviticus 16, where the High Priest laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat and transferred the sins of the people to that goat. That is why John the Baptist testified the next day, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* And Jesus, carrying the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, was crucified and shed His blood to receive the judgment for our sins, and by resurrecting on the third day after dying, He eternally guaranteed the salvation of us who believe.

Everyone, it is exactly the heart you asked about. We are those who have nothing to put forward, but since the Lord took charge of all our worldly sins with the baptism He received from John, shed His blood on the cross, and resurrected from death, how

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can we not be thankful with faith? And the fact that this truth of salvation is believed in our hearts, that is precisely the evidence of salvation. The one who believes this gospel of the water and the Spirit in their heart is a child of God who has received the removal of sins.

### 4. In the salvation we obtained, not a single one of our merits is included

Ephesians 2:8 and 9 clearly reveal that there is not a single merit of ours in this salvation. It said, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."*

Everyone, the confession that we have nothing to present before God aligns exactly with this word. Our salvation is not of ourselves but is the gift of God, and it is not of works. Even if we go to the mountains to pray, fast and pray, or sell all our property, we could not add even a single inch to salvation. God accomplished salvation completely from beginning to end through baptism, the cross, and resurrection, and gave it freely as a gift. Therefore, we have nothing to boast of, and we only come to praise God who gave that grace. This is the meaning of the word that said, *"lest anyone should boast."*

### 5. The greater the grace of salvation received, the more the desire to preach it arises

Everyone, the last heart you asked about is truly precious. I mean that desire to preach the grace of God who gave such salvation to the whole world. This is a heart that naturally arises in a saved person. The greater the grace received, and the more one is moved by that grace, the more the desire to preach this gospel to others springs up.

In verse 7 of the text, the purpose for which God saved us

appears. It said, *"that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace."* God saving us does not end as a blessing for just one of us. He desired that this gospel of the water and the Spirit be preached to the whole world through us, so that His abundant grace might be shown in all the ages to come. And verse 10 of the text says we are *"created in Christ Jesus for good works."* What is that good work? Above all, it is the work of preaching this gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Everyone, even now in this world, there are so many people who say they believe in the cross but do not know the truth that Jesus took charge of our sins by receiving baptism from John the Baptist. So, even while saying they have received the removal of sins, they still live groaning in guilt. We must preach this perfect gospel. Since we, who had nothing to put forward, received it freely, it is only right to preach this gospel to those souls who, like us, have nothing to put forward.

### 6. We are those who are fit to preach this word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

Everyone, what kind of person can best preach this word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit? It is the person who knows they were a sinner with nothing to put forward, and the person who knows the Lord freely saved such a person through baptism and the cross. A person who thinks they were saved because they are good cannot preach this gospel. However, a person who knows they were truly someone who had no choice but to die but was freely made alive, comes to preach this gospel out of that deep emotion.

Everyone, we do not need some great ability to preach this gospel. We just need to preach exactly as we received it, without adding or subtracting—the fact that Jesus took charge of the sins of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist,

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received all the judgment for those sins on the cross, and resurrected. It is said that one soul is more precious than the whole world. If one soul receives the removal of sins through our preaching of this gospel, how precious a work is that? Therefore, we willingly offer our time, material possessions, and lives to the work of preaching this gospel.

**7. To summarize**

We were fundamentally those who had nothing to present before God. We were those who were dead in trespasses and sins, and children of wrath. God looked upon such people as us with pity, clothed us with the grace of salvation with that great love, and made us children of God. The way of that salvation is precisely the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord took charge of our sins with the baptism He received from John the Baptist, and received all the judgment for those sins on our behalf with the blood of the cross.

In this salvation, there is not a single merit of ours. Because it is the gift of God from beginning to end, we have nothing to boast of and we only praise God. And that this truth is believed in the heart is exactly the evidence that we are children of God who have received the removal of sins.

Since such a person has received the great grace of salvation given by God, it is so very natural that the desire to preach this gospel to the whole world springs up. God also created us for good works to show the exceeding riches of His grace in the ages to come. Since we, who have nothing to put forward, received it freely, preaching this gospel of the water and the Spirit exactly as it is, without adding or subtracting, to those souls who also have nothing to put forward like us—this is the mission that we who are saved ought to uphold, and the most blessed and joyful life given to us.

**[Question] 12. As those who have first received the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord, we intend to preach this gospel to the whole world, that is, to both those who believe in Jesus and those who do not. This is not because we are better than them, but because the Lord is the one who came to this earth to save mankind from sin and eliminated all the sins of everyone with the baptism He received from John the Baptist and the blood of the cross. In some ways, I also feel sorry. It is because it seems as if we are treating them as sinners. However, the center of our hearts is never like that, and just as I myself was fallen in sin, they are still fallen in sin, so we only intend to deliver the Lord's compassion and mercy to them. Therefore, I hope that they do not misunderstand, do not put themselves forward before the Lord, acknowledge everything exactly as the Bible says, accept all the words the Lord speaks, and become those who enter the kingdom of God like us. If so, could you explain in detail how we should harbor this heart of desiring them to enter the kingdom of God together with us?**

This question contains the proper mindset that a person who preaches the gospel must have. I will explain in order why we preach the gospel, that it is not because we are better, and how we should view the apologetic feeling we get while preaching.

### 1. We do not preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit because we are better

The heart you asked about is truly proper. The reason we

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preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit is by no means because we are better or more righteous than other people. We too were originally those who were dead in trespasses and sins, and children of wrath who lived following Satan the devil. We had absolutely nothing to put forward before God.

If we think we are saved because we are somehow better or somehow righteous, that is arrogance that does not even qualify us to preach the gospel. However, we know that we ourselves were truly sinners who had no choice but to die. The Lord saved us, who were like that, for free. Therefore, our preaching of the gospel is not with the heart of "I am better than you," but with the heart of "I too was one who had no choice but to die like you, but the Lord saved me for free, so you too receive this grace."

**2. What we preach is not ours but the gospel the Lord has accomplished**

As you asked, the basis for us preaching this gospel does not lie in ourselves but in the Lord. The Lord came to this earth to save mankind from sin, and by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, He had all the sins of the world, that is, the sins of all people, transferred onto His body. Carrying those sins, He shed His blood and died on the cross, thereby receiving and eliminating all the judgment for those sins.

Everyone, whose sins are the sins the Lord took charge of? They are not just the sins of a few of us. It is called the *"in the world."* That is, He took charge of all the sins of all mankind, the sins of all people, whether they believe in Jesus or not. Therefore, this gospel we preach is not something we created, but the truth that the Lord has already accomplished for all people. We merely preach that accomplished truth exactly as it is. Because it is not our personal assertion but preaching what the Lord has done for all people, we boldly preach this gospel.

### 3. Feeling sorry is rather evidence of love

Everyone, feeling "sorry as if treating them as sinners" while preaching the gospel is rather evidence that there is love in that heart. A person who intends to despise or condemn the other person does not even feel such an apologetic heart. However, the center of the questioner's heart is not like that. Just as I myself was fallen in sin, they are still fallen in sin, so it is a heart of love intending to deliver the Lord's compassion and mercy to them.
Everyone, think about it like this. A person has caught a severe disease, but he himself does not know it. Is a person who knows the medicine to cure that disease saying to him, "You have caught a disease, so please take this medicine," despising that person? No. It is rather love intending to save that person. Likewise, sin is a terrifying disease that leads the soul to death, and delivering that medicine that saved us from that disease, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, to a person who is still fallen in sin is by no means treating him as a sinner, but a heart of compassion intending to save him.

### 4. We must not put ourselves forward when preaching the gospel

As you asked, what we must be most careful about when preaching the gospel is not putting ourselves forward. Ephesians 2:9 says, *"not of works, lest anyone should boast."* Because our salvation is not our merit but God's gift, we have absolutely nothing to boast about.
Therefore, even when preaching the gospel, the heart of "I am teaching you" or "I am better than you" must not enter. We are merely testifying that one who was a sinner among sinners was saved by the freely given grace of the Lord. If we put ourselves forward, people will look at us instead of the gospel, and then it

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will rather block the gospel. However, if we lower ourselves and exalt only the gospel the Lord has accomplished, people will come to see the Lord through us.

### 5. We must preach so that they acknowledge and accept everything exactly as the Bible says

That desire you asked about is truly precious. I mean the heart that hopes people do not put their own thoughts forward, but acknowledge everything exactly as the Bible says, and accept all the words the Lord speaks. This is exactly the proper way to preach the gospel.

Everyone, what we preach is not human doctrines or thoughts, but the truth that the Bible testifies to. The Bible clearly testifies that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and took charge of the sins of the world. Matthew 3:15 does so, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* in John 1:29 does so, and *"He that came by water and blood" -ASV* in 1 John 5:6 does so. Therefore, we do not add our thoughts, but preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit exactly as the Bible says. And when the listener also does not put his own thoughts forward, but acknowledges and accepts exactly what the Bible says, he receives the removal of sins.

### 6. Our desire is that they too enter the kingdom of God like us

Everyone, what is our ultimate desire in preaching the gospel? It is exactly as you asked. It is that they too receive the removal of sins like us, become children of God like us, and enter the kingdom of God together with us.

Ephesians 2:6 says the Lord "*made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*" We do not go to that kingdom

alone, but all who believe this gospel go to that kingdom together and live forever with Christ. Therefore, our preaching of the gospel comes from a heart of love desiring that even one more soul participates in this salvation and enters that kingdom together with us. Since it is said that one soul is more precious than the whole world, our earnest desire is that even one more person believes this gospel, becomes a member of God's household with us, and is built together into a temple where God dwells.

**7. To summarize**

The reason we preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole world is by no means because we are better or more righteous than other people. It is because we too were originally those who were fallen in sin and had no choice but to die, but the Lord saved us for free. What we preach is not ours, but the truth that the Lord has already eliminated all the sins of all people with the baptism He received from John the Baptist and the blood of the cross.

Feeling sorry as if treating the other person as a sinner while preaching the gospel is rather evidence that there is love in that heart. The center of our hearts is not to condemn them, but to deliver the Lord's compassion and mercy to them just as I myself was saved from sin. Just as recommending medicine to a person who has caught a severe disease is love, preaching the gospel that eliminates that sin to a soul fallen in sin is true love.

Therefore, when preaching the gospel, we must not put ourselves forward, but preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit exactly as the Bible testifies. And we hope that the listener also does not put his own thoughts forward, but acknowledges exactly what the Bible says and accepts all the words the Lord speaks. Thus, desiring that they too receive the removal of sins

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like us, become children of God like us, and enter the kingdom of God together with us—this is the love and earnest desire that we who have received the gospel first ought to harbor.

**[Question] 13. When I think of how much suffering and sacrifice the apostles of Jesus in the past endured to deliver this gospel of grace to us today, so that God might save those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit from sin, I am simply thankful. There is gratitude that cannot be fully expressed in words for how much sacrifice and suffering there was until they obeyed God's will and, through the Holy Spirit, recorded, preserved, and placed the New Testament we have now into our hands. Also, regarding the Old Testament, I am so thankful that God's servants upheld God's will, recorded and preserved the words of the Bible, and delivered them to us. Because they existed, we could know God's love today, and we could believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit through the words of the Bible. If so, could you explain in detail upon what kind of foundation this gospel we have received in this way is built, and with what kind of heart we should now preach this gospel to the next generation?**

This gratitude connects exactly with the word in Ephesians 2:20, *"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets."* If we trace back how we came to know this gospel, we realize it is because there was the Bible that the apostles and prophets recorded and preserved at the risk of their lives. I will

explain that precious work in order.

## 1. We are those built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets

The gratitude you asked about aligns exactly with the word of Ephesians 2:20. The Apostle Paul pointed to us and said, *"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets."* Everyone, our coming to believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit today did not suddenly fall from the sky. We are built upon the foundation of the truth that the prophets testified of in the past, and the apostles preached and recorded. Our faith is not something we thought up ourselves, but it stands upon the Bible that those servants recorded and preserved in obedience to God's will. Therefore, the gratitude you asked about is a truly proper gratitude. If we trace back the roots of how we came to know this gospel, there were the sacrifices and labors of countless servants of God who obeyed God's will, recorded, and delivered the word.

## 2. The prophets of the Old Testament testified in advance of the Savior who was to come

First, let us think about the servants of God in the Old Testament. They testified in advance that the Savior would come in the future. In the sacrificial law of Leviticus in the Old Testament, just as a person who sinned laid his hands on the head of an unblemished offering to transfer the sin, and received the removal of sins by that offering dying in his place, they foretold through that sacrificial law and prophecy that Jesus Christ would come in the future, take charge of the sins of the world, and accomplish true salvation by dying.

Everyone, Moses recording the law and the sacrificial law, and

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the prophets recording the promises about the Messiah, are precisely the foundation upon which we understand the gospel of the water and the Spirit today. The fact that we can know that Jesus taking charge of the sins of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist was the fulfillment of the law of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament, is because the servants of the Old Testament recorded and preserved that law for us. So how precious is their labor?

### 3. The apostles testified that the promise was fulfilled in Christ

Next, let us think about the apostles of the New Testament. They testified that all those promises of the Old Testament were fulfilled exactly as they were in Jesus Christ. The apostles testified and recorded exactly as they saw and heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit: that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist, had all the sins of the world passed onto His body, and carrying those sins, received all the judgment for those sins on the cross, shed His blood and died, and resurrected on the third day.

Everyone, if the Apostle John had not recorded in John 1:29, *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*, and if he had not recorded in 1 John 5:6, *"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood" -ASV* how could we have known this gospel of the water and the Spirit? If the Apostle Matthew had not recorded the event of Jesus receiving baptism, saying, *"it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.'"* in Matthew 3:15, how could we have known that truth? Because they recorded this truth by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we can believe through those words today.

### 4. They suffered much hardship and sacrifice for this word

As you asked, we do not know how much hardship and sacrifice there was until they recorded, preserved, and placed this word into our hands. The apostles were beaten, imprisoned, and ultimately gave up their lives while preaching this gospel. The Apostle Paul was beaten countless times and imprisoned for the gospel, and the other apostles also walked the path of martyrdom while testifying to this truth.

It was the same for the prophets of the Old Testament. Many were persecuted and killed while preaching the word of God. Because they obeyed God's will, recorded that word, and preserved it at the risk of their lives, that word has been passed down to our hands today over a long period of time. Everyone, when we think about the fact that this one volume of the Bible we are holding in our hands right now was delivered to us upon the blood and sacrifices of so many servants of God, how can we not be thankful?

### 5. Because of their labor, we came to know God's love and the gospel

The gratitude you asked about is truly deep. Because they existed, we could know God's love today, and we could believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit through the words of the Bible. It is truly so. If they had not recorded and preserved that word for us, we would not have been able to know at all how much God loved us, and how Jesus eliminated our sins through baptism and the cross.

Everyone, all those events of us being saved from sin were delivered to us through the words of the Bible. Romans 10:17 says, *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* Our coming to believe this gospel of the water and the

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Spirit is because there were the servants of God who recorded and delivered that word. Therefore, within our gratitude for the salvation we received, the gratitude for those servants who delivered that word to us is also contained.

### 6. We too must become those who preach this gospel to the next generation

Everyone, then what does this gratitude awaken in us? It is that we too, as those who have received this gospel, must preach this gospel to the next person. Just as the apostles and prophets braved hardships and sacrifices to deliver this gospel to us, we too must deliver this gospel of the water and the Spirit that we received to those who do not yet know it, and to the next generation.

In Ephesians 2:7, God said, *"that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace."* He desired that God's grace would not end with one generation but be delivered to all the ages to come. Just as the servants of old were used for that work, now we are being used. Preaching exactly as we received it, without adding or subtracting—the gospel that Jesus took charge of the sins of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, received all the judgment for those sins on the cross, and resurrected—and passing it on to the next generation is the rightful repayment for the grace we have received.

### 7. To summarize

Our coming to believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit today is because, according to the word of Ephesians 2:20, we are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The servants of God in the Old Testament testified in advance of the Savior who was to come through the sacrificial law and

prophecies, and the apostles of the New Testament recorded and delivered exactly as they saw and heard that the promise was fulfilled exactly as it was in Jesus Christ, that is, through baptism, the cross, and resurrection.

They suffered countless hardships and sacrifices until they recorded, preserved, and placed this word into our hands. Upon that blood and labor, this one volume of the Bible has been delivered to us today. Because they existed, we could know God's love, and through that word, we could believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, as you asked, gratitude that cannot be fully expressed in words is only right.

This gratitude awakens one thing in us. It is that we too must become those who preach this gospel exactly as we received it to the next generation. Since God intended to show that abundant grace to the many generations to come, just as the servants of old delivered it to us, we too pass it on by preaching this gospel of the water and the Spirit exactly as it is, without adding or subtracting. Thus, we too are built together upon that foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, and being used in the work of building the next person upon that foundation—this is the true gratitude and repayment for the grace received from those servants.

**[Question] 14. Today, there are many who labor to become the foundation for the preaching of this gospel. I give thanks to all those who labor and strive, serving as a foundation in their respective parts and positions to allow the gospel to be preached more. If it were not for them, the gospel preached in this world would not have spread so extensively. Because they also first met the gospel**

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**of the water and the Spirit, heard this gospel, and received the removal of sins in their hearts, they are becoming a handful of foundation for those who have not yet received salvation. Therefore, we must be thankful to all those who labor for the preaching of this gospel. First of all, we must give thanks to the Lord, and we must give thanks to God the Father and the Holy Spirit. We must also give thanks to our fellow believers, and we must give thanks to those who have preceded us in faith. I know that because of their labor, the gospel is now being preached to the whole world. Before the whole world becomes dark and the destruction of mankind approaches, this gospel must quickly be preached completely, and one of the methods for this is literature missions, audio missions, and e-book missions. Because we cannot preach this gospel to the whole world without these methods, we are taking these methods. With the heart of participating in this literature mission, I hope that all of us who have already received salvation will distribute books, introduce e-books, introduce audios, and also receive many books to distribute to many people. If so, could you explain in detail with what kind of heart all of us should participate in this work of preaching the gospel?**

This word shows how the truth of Ephesians 2:21-22, "*in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit*" is fulfilled in the field of gospel preaching today. I will explain in order the

gratitude towards those who labor by becoming a foundation, and the reasons why all of us must participate in this preaching of the gospel.

### 1. Preaching the gospel is a work accomplished together by being connected to one another

The heart you asked about perfectly aligns with the word in Ephesians 2:21, *"in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord."* Everyone, preaching the gospel is not a work accomplished by one person alone. It is a work accomplished together by those who are connected to one another in Christ.

Just as there are many members in one body and each has a different function, there are respective parts and positions in the work of preaching the gospel. There are those who preach the gospel directly at the front, and there are those who become the foundation behind them. As you asked, if there were no such people laboring as a foundation, the gospel preached in this world would not have spread so extensively. Therefore, we must be thankful to all those laboring people. Just as there is no unnecessary member, there is no unnecessary labor in the work of preaching the gospel.

### 2. Those who have received the removal of sins in their hearts are the ones who serve as the foundation for preaching the gospel

The insight you asked about is truly deep. Those who labor by becoming the foundation for preaching this gospel do so because they first met the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the removal of sins. Because Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist to take charge of their sins and eliminated

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all those sins by being judged for them on the cross, they were liberated from sin and became able to offer themselves to this good work.

Everyone, originally, we were beings who could not do good works even if we wanted to do them ourselves. However, as Ephesians 2:10 says, *"created in Christ Jesus for good works,"* we became able to do good works only because the Lord liberated us from sin and created us anew. Therefore, the labor of those who serve as a foundation is not done because they are great, but they offer themselves in gratitude for the grace they first received. That heart of trying to save other souls by becoming a handful of foundation is exactly the beautiful fruit that comes from those who have been saved.

### 3. We must give thanks to the members within the church

As you asked, we must give thanks to various subjects for the preaching of this gospel. First of all, we must give thanks to the Lord. We must give thanks to Jesus Christ, who received baptism from John the Baptist to take charge of our sins and saved us by receiving all the judgment for those sins on the cross; to God the Father, who planned that salvation before the foundation of the world; and to the Holy Spirit, who makes us believe that salvation in our hearts and dwells within us. This is because our salvation and the preaching of the gospel are all the work of the Triune God.

And we must give thanks to our fellow believers. Because we have those colleagues who are connected together in the same Christ and undertake this work together, we can go together without being lonely. Also, we must give thanks to those who have preceded us in faith. Because there was the labor of those predecessors who received this gospel before us, walked this path before us, and preached this gospel to us, we have come to

know this gospel today. Thus, it is proper to give thanks upward to God, sideways to our colleagues, and backward to our predecessors.

**4. This gospel must be preached quickly before destruction approaches**

The urgency you asked about is also truly right. Before the whole world becomes dark and the destruction of mankind approaches, this gospel must quickly be preached completely. In Ephesians 2:7, God said, *"that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace."* God wants this gospel to be preached to all generations in the whole world.

Everyone, even now in this world, there are so many people who say they believe in the cross but do not know the truth that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and took charge of our sins. They are still living without hope in the midst of sin. We must deliver this perfect gospel of the water and the Spirit to them. There is not much time. Therefore, we strive to preach this gospel quickly to even one more person and to even one more place.

**5. Literature, audio, and e-book missions are precious channels to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the whole world**

As you asked, one of the methods to preach this gospel completely to the whole world is literature missions, audio missions, and e-book missions. There is a limit to one person going around and preaching on foot. However, if we preach through books, audios, and e-books, this gospel can be delivered to places we cannot go directly and to people we cannot meet.

Everyone, as we looked at earlier, because the apostles and prophets recorded the Bible and delivered it to us, we have come

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to know this gospel today. Likewise, today, when this gospel of the water and the Spirit is recorded and delivered through books, audios, and e-books, those who read and listen to them receive the removal of sins. Because we cannot preach to the whole world without this method, we are taking these methods. This is exactly the precious channel that spreads the gospel extensively.

### 6. All of us who have been saved must participate in this work

The exhortation you asked about is truly precious. With the heart of participating in this literature mission, all of us who have already received salvation desire to distribute books, introduce e-books, introduce audios, and also receive many books to distribute to many people. Everyone, this is exactly how the word in Ephesians 2:22, *"being built together"* is fulfilled in our lives.

It does not have to be a grand task. Handing a book to one person, introducing one e-book, letting someone listen to one audio—these small things gather together to preach the gospel to the whole world. If we become a handful of foundation and even one soul comes to meet this gospel, how precious is that? It is said that one soul is more precious than the whole world. Therefore, each of us participates in preaching this gospel from our respective positions, using the methods we can.

### 7. To summarize

We ought to give thanks to all those who labor by becoming the foundation for preaching the gospel today. Without them, the gospel would not have spread so extensively in this world. Because they too first received the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they are serving as a handful

of foundation for those who have not yet been saved. This is exactly the image of Ephesians 2:21 and 22, being connected to one another in Christ and being built together into a temple.

We must give thanks upward to the Triune God, sideways to our fellow believers, and backward to our predecessors in faith. And before the whole world becomes dark and destruction approaches, we must quickly preach this gospel completely. That precious method is literature missions, audio missions, and e-book missions. All of us who have already been saved participate in this work, distributing books, introducing e-books and audios, and preaching this gospel of the water and the Spirit that we have received to even one more person.

All of this is work that pleases God. Since we were originally dead in sin but were saved for free, it is proper to faithfully participate in this work of preaching the gospel with a heart of gratitude for that grace. I sincerely hope that each of us will be used as a faithful worker, becoming a handful of foundation in our respective positions, being connected to one another, and building together the temple where God dwells. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 3

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Ephesians Chapter 3

# God's Dispensation Toward the Church is Revealed

**< Ephesians 3:1-21 >**

**"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.**

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**For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."**

## Paul, Who Became a Prisoner for the Gentiles, and the Dispensation of Grace Entrusted to Him

*"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you" (Ephesians 3:1-2).*

Ephesians chapter 3 begins with the phrase *"For this reason."* This conjunction receives and connects all the preceding words of the entire chapter 2, that the Gentiles, who were originally children of wrath and dead in trespasses and sins, have been brought near by the blood of Christ, and that Jews and Gentiles have been built into one new man in Christ, becoming members of God's household and a temple. Standing on the result of that amazing salvation, the Apostle Paul now reveals in what situation he is writing this letter.

Paul introduces himself, saying, *"I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ*

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*Jesus for you Gentiles—"* This letter is a prison epistle written when Paul was imprisoned in a Roman jail. However, Paul does not say that the reason for his imprisonment is due to the power of Rome or the framing of the Jews. He confesses that he is imprisoned *"the prisoner of Christ Jesus"* and *"for you Gentiles"* In other words, preaching the gospel of salvation to the Gentiles was the direct reason he was bound. To Paul, these bonds were not a shame but glorious marks received while carrying out the work of Christ.

Here, the fact that Paul was imprisoned for the Gentiles goes beyond simple personal devotion. We must remember what kind of people the Gentiles originally were. They were those who had no law, were strangers to the covenants of promise, had no hope, and were without God. How could such Gentiles become children of God exactly like the Jews? It is only because Jesus, by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, took upon Himself the sins of the whole world at once, whether the sins of the Jews or the sins of the Gentiles, shed His blood and died on the cross while bearing those sins, and resurrected on the third day. In other words, because the gospel of the water and the Spirit tore down the wall between Jews and Gentiles, Paul was able to preach this gospel toward the Gentiles, and even came to be imprisoned for that work.

Next, Paul calls the mission entrusted to him *"the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me." "Dispensation"* is a word meaning the office and administration that God entrusts to a steward in charge of a household. Paul did not choose or create the work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles himself, but received it as an office given by God through *"grace."* Considering that he was originally a persecutor of the church, entrusting the gospel to him was entirely God's one-sided grace. It was never something obtained by Paul's own learning, zeal,

or qualifications.

This passage exactly touches the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Just as salvation is by God's grace from beginning to end, even the office of preaching that salvation is given by God through grace. Paul did not try to establish his own righteousness but relied only on the righteousness and office freely given by God. This is the same attitude as Jacob, who acknowledged his own shortcomings and relied on the word of promise God spoke to him. If a person tries to add to salvation with their own efforts or religious acts, it becomes an act of rejecting God's righteousness, but one who completely relies on the received grace like Paul is used preciously according to the dispensation of that grace.

Lastly, Paul says, *"if indeed you have heard."* This is an expression premised on the fact that the Ephesian saints already heard and knew about this dispensation of grace through Paul. The gospel Paul preached was not secretly hidden to only one person, but was news of salvation open to all who hear. In other words, Paul is testifying through his bonds and office that even Gentiles, if they hear and believe this gospel of the water and the Spirit, whoever they are, become children of God, fellow heirs, and fellow partakers of the promise.

## The Mystery of Christ Made Known by the Revelation of God's Word

*"How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" (Ephesians 3:3-4).*

In the preceding verses, Paul stated that what was entrusted

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to him was *"the dispensation of the grace of God."* Now in verses 3 and 4, Paul explains what the content of that dispensation is and how he came to know it. Paul first says, *"by revelation He made known to me the mystery."* That is, he makes it clear that the truth he preaches is not something realized through human wisdom or research, but something made known by the *"revelation"* that God Himself uncovered and showed.

Here, *"mystery"* means a truth that was hidden and then revealed at God's appointed time. The mystery of Christ that Paul speaks of, as explained in the following verses, is the truth that the Gentiles, who were originally strangers, become fellow heirs, fellow members, and fellow partakers of the promise together with the Jews. How the Gentiles could become children of God equally with the Jews was a mystery hidden for long ages, but because Jesus took upon Himself the sins of all mankind by receiving baptism at the Jordan River, shed His blood and died on the cross, and resurrected, thereby tearing down that wall, now the Gentiles also have come to partake in the same salvation.

What is noteworthy is the channel through which Paul came to know this mystery. Paul was an intellectual of his time who learned Greek scholarship and studied the law under Gamaliel, but it was not because of such learning that he realized the mystery of Christ. The time when Paul met the Lord and preached the gospel was a time when the New Testament Bible had not yet been fully recorded. Paul came to know the salvation of Christ through the Old Testament Bible, that is, the sacrificial law of Leviticus. In the Old Testament, the sacrificial law where a sinner laid hands on the head of the sacrifice to pass their sins onto the sacrifice, and the wages of sin were paid by the sacrifice shedding blood and dying, was fulfilled exactly as it is in the New Testament by Jesus receiving baptism from John the Baptist to take upon Himself the sins of the whole world, and

shedding His blood and dying on the cross. In other words, Paul realized in advance the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus would accomplish, through the Old Testament law of the laying on of hands and the sacrifice of blood.

This point is distinct from our situation today. Because we live after both the Old and New Testament Bibles have been completed, we can clearly unfold and speak of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. However, Paul realized that mystery through the words of revelation and the Old Testament at a time when even the four Gospels had not yet been fully recorded. Therefore, Paul saying *"by revelation He made known to me the mystery"* is not an exaggeration at all, but a confession that God directly opened his eyes to let him see the salvation of Christ hidden within the Old Testament.

In verse 4, Paul says, *"by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ."* The mystery Paul realized was not the secret possession of that one person alone, but a truth transmitted equally to all who read the writings he recorded. In other words, by reading Paul's writings, the Ephesian saints also come to know together the mystery of Christ that he realized, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit that caused even the Gentiles to reach salvation. Truth was not recorded to be kept hidden, but to be read, realized, and believed.

However, God's will operates in realizing this mystery. Jesus Himself said that He reveals the gospel of truth to babes and hides it from those who are wise and prudent in the world. This is because if this truth is revealed too easily to those who oppose and despise God, they will abuse the truth. Therefore, the mystery of Christ is opened not to those who rely on their own wisdom, but to those who acknowledge their shortcomings and rely like children on the spoken word. Just as it was for Paul, the

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gospel of the water and the Spirit is a truth realized by those who lay down their own righteousness and submit to the word of revelation God has revealed.

## It is a Mystery Hidden in Other Generations but Now Revealed

*"Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel" (Ephesians 3:5-6).*

In the preceding verses, Paul stated that he came to know the mystery of Christ *"by revelation."* Now in verses 5 and 6, Paul clearly reveals what that mystery specifically is. First, Paul says of this mystery, *"which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men."* That is, this truth was a mystery that had been hidden for long ages without being fully known to people. Even in the Old Testament times, God partially shone His will of salvation toward the Gentiles, but that complete truth of the Gentiles becoming members of one body exactly like the Jews was veiled until the appointed time arrived.

But now it is different. Paul says that the mystery *"has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets."* The point in time when the hidden mystery was revealed is the time of the New Testament when Jesus came and accomplished salvation, and the channel that made it realized was not human wisdom but the *"Spirit."* In other words, this truth was not figured out by the apostles and prophets pondering on their own, but was realized by the Holy Spirit Himself revealing it. This is in the same context as Paul's confession in verse 4, *"by*

*revelation He made known to me the mystery."* The mystery of Christ is a truth that can only be known when God reveals it from beginning to end.

In Ephesians 3:6, Paul finally unfolds the content of that mystery. *"That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel."* It means that the Gentiles become *"fellow heirs,"* "fellow members," and *"partakers of His promise"* together with the Jews. The Gentiles, who originally had no law, were strangers to the promises of the covenants, and had no hope, have now become heirs of the kingdom of God, members of one body, and partakers enjoying God's promise together, equally with the Jews. This is the mystery of Christ that was hidden in other generations.

What must be firmly grasped here is the basis upon which the Gentiles came to partake in all these things. Paul clearly states that it was accomplished *"in Christ through the gospel."* It was not done by the lineage, deeds, or religious efforts of the Gentiles, but solely through the gospel of salvation accomplished by Jesus. The content of that gospel is clear. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the whole world at once, whether the sins of the Jews or the sins of the Gentiles, shed His blood and died on the cross while bearing those sins, and resurrected on the third day. Because this gospel of the water and the Spirit tore down the wall blocking the Jews and the Gentiles, the Gentiles could also become heirs, members, and partakers of the promise exactly like the Jews.

If Jesus only had the blood of the cross without taking on sins through baptism, how could the sins of the Gentiles have been transferred to Jesus? Just as in the Old Testament sacrificial law, the sacrifice shed blood and died only after the sinner laid hands on the head of the sacrifice to pass over the sins, Jesus also died

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on the cross bearing those sins after taking over the sins of all mankind through baptism. Therefore, the Gentiles becoming *"fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise"* has its basis in the entirety of the gospel of salvation consisting of baptism, the cross, and resurrection. A faith that holds only to the blood of the cross cannot fully explain this complete truth.
Ultimately, Ephesians 3:5-6 testifies to the universality and power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This gospel is not limited only to the Jews, but is God's power that equally saves all mankind, that is, even the Gentiles. Anyone who is not one who asserts their own righteousness or lineage, but one who acknowledges their shortcomings and relies like a child on the gospel God has revealed, becomes a partaker of this promise. Just as Paul laid down his own righteousness and relied on the freely given grace to become an apostle to the Gentiles, all who believe this gospel become members of God's household together and enjoy that abundant promise.

## The Office of a Minister Entrusted to the Least of All, and the Unsearchable Riches of Christ

*"Of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things" (Ephesians 3:7-9).*

In the preceding verses, Paul revealed the mystery that the Gentiles, through the gospel, become fellow heirs, members, and partakers of the promise together with the Jews. Now in verse 7,

Paul says that he himself became a *"minister"* of that very gospel. Paul states the reason he became a minister as *"according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power."* In other words, it is a confession that Paul becoming a minister of the gospel was not a position obtained by his own qualifications or efforts, but an office given as a gift of grace by God's power personally working.

Here, we must pay attention to the expression *"gift of the grace."* A gift is not something the receiver buys by paying a price, but something received for free. Paul saying that he received the office of preaching the gospel as a gift makes it clear that just as salvation is a freely given grace, even the office of preaching that salvation is entirely given for free by God. This exactly matches the essence of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If a person tries to add to salvation by their own deeds, it becomes an act of rejecting God's righteousness, but Paul acknowledged the received grace exactly as he received it and stood in the position of a minister relying on that gift.

In Ephesians 3:8, Paul's confession becomes even lower. He calls himself *"me, who am less than the least of all the saints."* He is not just small, but smaller than the smallest one. Paul was originally a persecutor of the church. Since God entrusted the unsearchable gospel to such a person, his lowering himself like this is never a pretense but a confession coming from a sincere heart. This lowering is like the appearance of Jacob, who acknowledged his shortcomings and clung to God's promise. Unlike Esau or Pharaoh who tried to establish their own righteousness, Paul, by acknowledging his worthlessness as it was, rather relied more deeply on God's grace.

The mission given to such a small person as Paul was to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles. The riches of

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Christ are so great that humans cannot fully fathom them. The grace of salvation—that Jesus took upon Himself the sins of all mankind by receiving baptism, paid all the wages of sin by shedding blood and dying on the cross, and guaranteed eternal righteousness by resurrecting—is unsearchably rich. Having him preach those riches even to the Gentiles, who were originally strangers, was the office entrusted to Paul. The reason God chose the smallest person to preach the greatest riches is to reveal that the work is done not by human power but solely by God's power.

In verse 9, Paul states his mission one more time. *"And to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things."* This mystery is the administration of salvation that God, who created all things, had hidden within Himself for long ages. In other words, God's will to save even the Gentiles had been determined from before the foundation of the world, but it was hidden until the appointed time arrived, and now through Paul, that hidden mystery has been brightly revealed.

One question remains here. If it is such an unsearchable gospel, why did He not brightly reveal it to everyone from the beginning? The Bible testifies that it is God's will to reveal this gospel of salvation, that is, the gospel of baptism, to babes, but to hide it from those who are wise and prudent in the world. This is because if this truth is revealed too easily to those who oppose and despise God, they will abuse the truth. Therefore, the dispensation of the hidden mystery is opened not to those who rely on their own wisdom, but to those who acknowledge their shortcomings and rely like children on the gospel God has revealed.

Ultimately, Ephesians 3:7 to 9 shows that the office of preaching the gospel originates from God's grace and power from

beginning to end. Paul was the smallest person, but God made him a minister as a gift of grace, and entrusted him with the glorious mission of revealing the unsearchable riches of Christ and the dispensation of the hidden mystery. This is proof that God preciously uses those who lay down their own righteousness and rely on the freely given grace, and it is God's method by which the gospel of the water and the Spirit is most abundantly propagated through the lowest person.

## It is the Wisdom of God Revealed Through the Church of God

*"To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:10-11).*

In the preceding verses, Paul revealed that he became a minister who preaches the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles and brings to light the dispensation of the mystery hidden in God who created all things. Now in verse 10, Paul explains one step deeper the channel and purpose through which God reveals that mystery. Paul says that this work is done *"known by the church."* In other words, the very tool through which God brightly reveals the hidden mystery of salvation is the church.

Here, the *"church"* does not point to a building or an organization, but means the gathering of people who have believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit, received the removal of sins, and become children of God. Those who believe the salvation accomplished by Jesus taking the sins of all mankind by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the

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Jordan River, shedding His blood and dying on the cross, and resurrecting, are the church. Since the Jews and Gentiles, who were originally strangers, became one body in this gospel and formed the church, the very existence of that church becomes the proof that God has accomplished the dispensation of the mystery.

The targets to whom God intends to make this known through the church are surprisingly *"the principalities and powers in the heavenly places."* Principalities and powers refer to spiritual beings and ruling authorities belonging to heaven. That is, God intends to make known the *"manifold wisdom of God"* through the church, not only to the people on earth but even to the spiritual beings in heaven. The administration of salvation where sinners, who were originally children of wrath and strangers, received the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, became children of God, and became members of one body, is indeed the unsearchable wisdom of God that even heavenly beings would marvel at.

Here, the expression *"manifold wisdom"* is important. The method by which God saves sinners was a wisdom that human minds could not fathom. Sinners could never solve the problem of sin through their own deeds or efforts, but God justified sinners by sending Jesus to take upon Himself their sins through baptism and to pay the full price of those sins on the cross. That is, making it known that Jesus Christ is our God and our Savior was God's wisdom, and it was also the purpose for which God created mankind. This complete administration of salvation, which cannot be fully explained by a faith that emphasizes only the blood of the cross, is revealed to heaven and earth through the church.

In Ephesians 3:11, Paul clearly states that all these things are not a coincidence or a temporary measure. *"According to the eternal*

*purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord."* This administration of revealing the manifold wisdom of God through the church was accomplished according to the purpose God purposed in Christ Jesus from eternity, that is, from before the foundation of the world. The Gentiles partaking in salvation, sinners forming one body to become the church, and God's wisdom being revealed even to heavenly beings through that church, were all within the plan God had set from the very beginning.

This point exactly touches the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Salvation is not something humans added to or created with their own righteousness, but is the result of God's sovereign decree from beginning to end. God determined the way to save sinners in Christ before eternity, sent Jesus at the appointed time to accomplish that salvation through baptism, the cross, and resurrection, and establishes those who believe that gospel as the church to reveal His wisdom to the whole world and even to heaven. Therefore, the one who partakes in this salvation has nothing to boast of himself, but only praises God who purposed it before eternity and called him by free grace.

Ultimately, Ephesians 3:10 and 11 show the glorious meaning of the existence of the church. The church, saved by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is not merely a gathering of people, but a channel that fulfills God's eternally purposed will on this earth and reveals His unsearchable wisdom even to the principalities and powers in heaven. Therefore, the one who has received this gospel must not bury the received grace only for himself, but must partake together in the work of preaching that abundant salvation to the whole world as a member of the church called within the eternal decree.

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## Approaching God Boldly Through Faith and Glory in Tribulations

*"In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory" (Ephesians 3:12-13).*

In the preceding verses, Paul revealed that the manifold wisdom of God is revealed even to the principalities and powers in heaven through the church, and that this was done according to the eternal purpose purposed in Christ Jesus. Now in verse 12, Paul condenses into one phrase the blessing enjoyed by the one who has entered that eternal decree. *"In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him."* That is, the one who believes in Him in Christ has become a person who can approach God boldly and confidently.

Originally, a sinner was one who could not approach the holy God. Because sin was blocking the way between God and man, a sinner standing before God was a matter of nothing but fear and condemnation. But how could a sinner come to approach God boldly? Paul says that it happened *"through faith in Him."* That is, by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit—that Jesus took the sins of all mankind at once by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, paid the full price of sin by shedding His blood and dying on the cross while bearing those sins, and resurrected on the third day—a sinner became a sinless righteous person and was able to stand confidently before God.

This boldness does not come from human qualifications or deeds. If it were based on one's own righteousness or efforts, boldness could never arise. No matter how hard a person tries, since they live with a sinful nature, as long as they rely on their own deeds,

they have no choice but to always remain in condemnation and fear. However, the one who believes that Jesus already took all sins and fully paid their price approaches God boldly based on the perfect righteousness accomplished by Christ, regardless of their own shortcomings. The basis of boldness is not in oneself, but in the gospel of salvation accomplished by Jesus.

There is a truth that must be deeply engraved here. He who has received the removal of sins by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, even if he commits sin again while living, does not become a sinner again because of it. He acknowledges that he has committed a sin, but because he believes that Jesus already took even that sin through baptism and dealt with it on the cross, he returns to the position of a righteous person who has received the removal of sins and follows the Lord. This is boldness. On the other hand, a person who remains in a religious faith, even after believing in Jesus, cannot lift his head whenever he commits a sin and sits down in condemnation saying, "I am a sinner." If one holds only to the blood of the cross and misses the truth that sins were passed over through baptism, one falls into guilt again every time they commit a sin and loses boldness. However, the one who fully believes the gospel of the water and the Spirit confesses that they have committed a sin, but does not become a sinner again because of it; rather, they return to the original position where the Lord has already made them clean, and live boldly pleasing God.

In Ephesians 3:13, Paul makes one request to the Ephesian saints upon this boldness. *"Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory."* Paul was in a situation of being imprisoned and suffering various tribulations while preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. Yet he tells them not to grieve over his sufferings, but rather says that the tribulation is *"your glory."* The reason Paul suffered tribulation was to

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preach the gospel of salvation to the Gentile saints, and that suffering was the very glorious channel through which they reached salvation.

This request is also deeply connected to the boldness in verse 12. The one who approaches God boldly in Christ does not view even tribulations for the gospel as a matter of shame or discouragement, but accepts them as glory. The one who relies on his own righteousness is shaken and discouraged in the face of suffering, but the one who relies on the salvation accomplished by Jesus does not lose boldness even in the midst of tribulations, knowing that the tribulation is a glory for the gospel. Just as Paul considered his bonds not a shame but a glory, the one who holds to the gospel of the water and the Spirit considers all labor and suffering for the gospel as glory and walks boldly to the end.

Ultimately, Ephesians 3:12 and 13 show the most blessed result that the gospel of the water and the Spirit brings to a sinner. The one who could not stand before God due to sin received the removal of sins by believing in Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection, and has now become a person who approaches God boldly and confidently. And that boldness is not shaken even in the midst of tribulations, and makes one accept even sufferings for the gospel as glory. This is exactly the blessing enjoyed by the one who lays down his own righteousness and fully relies on the freely given grace of salvation.

## Bowing the Knees Before the Father Who Gave a Name to Every Family in Heaven and on Earth

*"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth*

*is named" (Ephesians 3:14-15).*

Previously, Paul testified to the mystery that the Gentiles become fellow heirs with the Jews through the gospel, and that the manifold wisdom of God is revealed to heaven and earth through the church. Having fathomed that unsearchable grace of salvation, Paul now bows his knees before God the Father *"For this reason."* That is, from verse 14 onwards is Paul's earnest prayer offered for the Ephesian saints.

The object to whom Paul bowed his knees is *"the Father... from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."* It is an expression confessing that the source of the name and existence of whether beings in heaven or all families on earth lies in God the Father. The reason Paul bowed his knees calling God the Father of all things like this is because the grace of salvation that made even the Gentiles, who were originally strangers and had no hope and no God, into children of that Father is that great.

We must remember the situation in which Paul offered this prayer. He is currently imprisoned in a jail. When a person is bound while freely serving the gospel, their heart becomes closer to Christ, and that person comes to appreciate more deeply the grace of salvation God gave through Jesus Christ. In his imprisoned state, Paul rather felt even more desperately how great, deep, and wide the salvation given to him was, and with that gratitude, he bowed his knees before the Father of heaven and earth. The grace that washed him clean from sin through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, made him a child of God, and made him one who will sit together at the right hand of God's throne in the future, made Paul bow his knees.

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## Strengthening the Inner Man with Power Through the Holy Spirit

*"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man" (Ephesians 3:16).*

Paul's first prayer is for the *"inner man"* of the saints to become strong. He asks that this be accomplished not by human effort but *"according to the riches of His glory, to be."* That is, the strength of the inner man flows out from the riches of God's glory, and is a work that the Holy Spirit personally accomplishes. Here, the basis upon which the Holy Spirit strengthens the inner man is important. God poured out the Holy Spirit as a gift into the heart of anyone who believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit and became without sin. To the one who has received the removal of sins by believing that Jesus took sins at once by receiving baptism at the Jordan River and paid the price on the cross, the Holy Spirit indwells and strengthens that heart with power. Because the Holy Spirit comes upon a sinless heart, the strengthening of the inner man is a blessing given to the one who has received the removal of sins.

Even if one has received the removal of sins by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, when faith is young, the heart feels as if it is shaken. This is because the thoughts of the flesh and the thoughts of the Spirit clash and fight against each other. In human thoughts, doubts bite the tail of doubts, and if one tries to perfect their salvation legalistically, only emptiness and futility always remain. Doubts kill a person, and the thoughts of the Spirit give life to a person. However, the answer of salvation is simple and clear. When holding onto the fact that I have no sin because the Lord took all my sins at once by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, the Holy

Spirit strengthens the inner man. Strength is given not by complex speculation but by relying on the simple truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## Letting Christ Dwell in Your Hearts Through Faith and Being Rooted in Love

*"That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love" (Ephesians 3:17).*

Paul's second prayer is that Christ may dwell in the hearts of the saints. He clearly states that this happens *"through faith."* Without faith, Jesus Christ cannot dwell in our hearts. The human heart always commits sin and thus can always be bound by sin, but through faith believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, Christ can dwell in our hearts.

Here, "what you believe" is crucial. Namely, it is believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When the Lord reached thirty years of age after coming to this earth, He fulfilled all righteousness by receiving baptism from John the Baptist and taking our sins upon Himself once and for all, and He saved us from sin by being crucified and receiving the judgment for sin while bearing those sins. By believing this gospel, we can let Jesus Christ dwell in our hearts. Even if we have faith the size of a mustard seed in our hearts, if we hold onto the fact that the Lord received baptism to fulfill all righteousness, all the doubts in our hearts will melt away like snow and the eyes of faith will be opened.

Next, Paul prays that the saints may be rooted and grounded in love. Here, love is the love of God, that is, the love that so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. The love by which God the Father saved us through His Son Jesus Christ takes root

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in our hearts. When the fact that we are fully saved children of God despite our shortcomings takes root in our hearts, and when we hold onto God's word even more knowing that it is the truth, even faith the size of a mustard seed becomes firm, making us unshakable children of God.

## Realizing the Width and Length and Depth and Height of Christ's Love and Being Filled

*"May be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:18-19).*

Paul's prayer finally heads toward realizing the love of Christ and being filled with the fullness of God. He prays that the saints may be able to comprehend with all the saints the love of Christ which passes knowledge, to realize what is its width and length and depth and height. The love of Christ is a love so wide, long, high, and deep that it cannot be fully fathomed by human knowledge.

What must be realized here is that this love is not fully known all at once. Just because one hears the gospel once and receives salvation does not mean they know all the width, length, height, and depth of that love. When one receives the removal of sins, they only know it as much as a mustard seed, or even less. Because God's word says so, they simply hold onto it, and by that they receive salvation. Afterward, as they listen to the word and live their life of faith, their foundation becomes firm, and they come to know more deeply how long and high God's love is.

This realization deepens as we live. Our flesh is always lacking

with mixed, selfish, and negative thoughts, and there are many wrong parts in our actions as well. However, as we live, we come to realize more and more deeply the love of God who cleanly saved us, who are so lacking, with the gospel of the water and the Spirit and holds onto us to the end. In other words, the more we look back at our lacking selves, the more desperately we come to know how vast the love is by which Jesus took our sins through baptism and paid the full price on the cross.

Paul prays that they may realize that love and be filled with all the fullness of God. God, who eliminated the sins of the heart through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, made the Holy Spirit dwell in that heart, and made them a firm person by letting them know the width and depth of that love, fills the saints dwelling in Him with His fullness. Ultimately, the prayer from verses 14 to 19 is the apostle's earnest desire that the saints saved by the gospel of the water and the Spirit may have their inner man strengthened by the Holy Spirit, receive Christ into their hearts by faith, be rooted in love, realize the unsearchable love of Christ, and be filled with the fullness of God.

## To Him Who is Able to Do Exceedingly Abundantly Above All That We Ask, Be Glory Forever and Ever

*"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3:20-21).*

Paul's prayer, which continued from chapter 3 verse 14, now concludes with a doxology, a hymn giving glory to God. Previously, Paul prayed that the saints' inner man would be

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strengthened, that they would receive Christ into their hearts, be rooted in love, realize the unsearchable love of Christ, and be filled with the fullness of God. However, since the One who accomplishes all this is not us but God, Paul gives glory to God who is able to accomplish that work.

Paul first calls God *"Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Ephesians 3:20)*. God is the One who is able to accomplish exceedingly abundantly above what we ask or think. Human asking and thinking remain within their own shortcomings and limitations, but God works far beyond those limitations. When we could not even fully ask or think of being saved from sin, God already sent Jesus to accomplish perfect salvation through baptism, the cross, and resurrection. This is indeed God's power bestowed exceedingly abundantly beyond our asking and thinking.

We must pay attention to the expression *"the power that works in us"* here. God's power is not far away somewhere outside of us, but works even now within those who are saved by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All the works of the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts—strengthening the inner man, making faith firm, and making us realize the love of Christ more deeply—are the very power of God working in us. Therefore, our reaching salvation and growing within that salvation is not by our own strength, but the result of God's power working in us.

In Ephesians 3:21, Paul gives glory to that God. *"To Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."* Paul clarifies the two places where glory is given: *"In the church"* and *"in Christ Jesus."* The place where we come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit is right inside the church of God. God's working is accomplished within

the church, and outside the church, this truth cannot be known. Just as God saved us according to His purpose predestined in Christ from before eternity and revealed His manifold wisdom even to principalities and powers through the church, that glory is also revealed in the church and in Christ Jesus. The one who has received the removal of sins is nurtured in the church, comes to know the width and length and depth and height of God's love, and realizes the glory of God in Christ.

Paul's desire that the glory be *"to all generations, forever and ever"* contains a deep meaning. All the works of God loving us, saving us, and blessing us are not temporary but eternal. The moment we receive the removal of sins is not the end but the beginning. It is an endless love, an endless life, and an endless blessing. Because the salvation guaranteed by Jesus taking our sins once and for all through baptism, paying the full price on the cross, and resurrecting is eternally unchanging, the glory received through that salvation is also to all generations, forever and ever.

Ultimately, verses 20 and 21 conclude the entirety of chapter 3, and furthermore the entirety of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, with a hymn giving glory to God. To God who accomplishes salvation exceedingly abundantly beyond our asking and thinking, works with power within us, and reveals that glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, the only proper confession that can be given by one who lays down their own righteousness and relies on the freely given grace of salvation is this: To Him be glory to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

## The Core Message Conveyed by the Text

Ephesians chapter 3 flows as a single stream where the

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Apostle Paul becomes a prisoner for the Gentiles, testifies to the mystery of the gospel entrusted to him by grace, earnestly prays for those saved saints, and finally gives glory to God. At its center is the mystery of Christ that the Gentiles, who were originally strangers and had no hope, became fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and partakers of His promise together with the Jews. This mystery is not a truth realized by human wisdom but a truth that God personally revealed by revelation and by the Holy Spirit, and its foundation is the gospel of the water and the Spirit accomplished by Jesus taking the sins of all mankind through baptism, shedding His blood and dying on the cross, and resurrecting.

The one who believes this gospel receives the removal of sins and becomes one who approaches God boldly, accepts even tribulations for the gospel as glory, has their inner man strengthened by the Holy Spirit, realizes the unsearchable love of Christ, and is filled with the fullness of God. All this salvation and its growth do not originate from human righteousness or effort, but from God's sovereign decree predestined in Christ from before eternity and His power working within us.

Therefore, chapter 3 clearly teaches us one thing. Salvation is God's grace from beginning to end, and the one who has received that grace has nothing to boast of themselves and only gives glory to God in the church and in Christ Jesus. The one who lays down their own righteousness and relies like a child on the freely given gospel of the water and the Spirit becomes the one who partakes in that eternal and everlasting glory. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# The mystery of Christ, in the gospel the Gentiles also becoming fellow heirs the dispensation of grace

**< Ephesians 3:1-6 >**

**“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.”**

In Ephesians 3:1–6, the Apostle Paul explains the fact that the mystery of salvation, which God had hidden from long ago, has been revealed through Jesus Christ, and that this gospel has now been given equally to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Through this word, Paul reveals why he received the mission to preach the gospel for the Gentiles, and how amazing the plan of

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salvation accomplished by God is.

Paul first calls himself *"I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles" (Ephesians 3:1)*. This speaks of his situation of being imprisoned while preaching the gospel, but at the same time, it shows what the purpose of his life was. Paul was a person who dedicated his life to the mission of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. He did not view even the situation of being in prison as his misfortune. Rather, he understood it as a process of the mission through which God made him preach the gospel to the Gentiles.

Paul continues by saying that God entrusted him with the *"dispensation of the grace."* Here, the word dispensation means the plan of salvation that God established to save mankind. God knew that humans would fall into sin, but at the same time, He prepared a way of salvation to solve that sin problem. That plan of salvation was not discovered by humans themselves, but was made known by God through revelation. So Paul says, "by revelation He made known to me the mystery."

This mystery that Paul speaks of is the gospel of salvation that God accomplished through Jesus Christ. This gospel was not fully revealed in the Old Testament times. God gave the promise of salvation through the prophets, but the specific structure and complete meaning of that salvation were clearly revealed through the ministry of Jesus Christ. So Paul says that this mystery was not made known to the sons of men in other ages. However, now God has clearly revealed this mystery of salvation to His holy apostles and prophets through the Spirit.

From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached, at the center of this mystery is the redemptive ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ came to this earth, bore the sins of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and while bearing those sins, shed blood on the cross to receive the

judgment of sin. And by resurrecting from death, He confirmed the history of salvation accomplished by God. This gospel is not a religious method of solving sin through human deeds, but the perfect way of salvation accomplished by God through Jesus Christ.

Paul explains the core of this mystery very clearly. It is that the Gentiles, through the gospel, become fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. In the past, the Jews were considered the nation that received God's covenant and promise, and the Gentiles seemed like people outside that covenant. However, through the redemptive ministry of Jesus Christ, God did not distinguish between Jews and Gentiles and gave the same grace of salvation. So Paul says that the Gentiles became *"fellow heirs."* This means that the Jews and Gentiles have come to receive the inheritance of the kingdom of God together. Also, the phrase that they became *"fellow heirs, of the same body"* means that the Jews and Gentiles are not different communities, but have become one within one body, that is, the church. And the phrase that they became *"partakers of His promise"* shows the fact that the promise of salvation given by God through Jesus Christ is open to all people.

Therefore, Ephesians 3:1–6 is a word explaining the fact that the mystery of salvation accomplished by God through Jesus Christ has now been revealed to the whole world. This mystery of salvation is not given only to a specific nation but is open to all people, and that Jews and Gentiles equally form one community in Christ. Through this word, Paul is explaining the fact that the gospel he preaches is not a religion made by human thoughts, but the truth of salvation made known by God through revelation.

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## The Mission of the Gospel Entrusted to Preach the Riches of Christ and the Wisdom of God Revealed Through the Church

*"Of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory" (Ephesians 3:7-13).*

In Ephesians 3:7–13, the Apostle Paul explains how his mission to preach the gospel began, and in what great grace of God that mission was given. Through this word, Paul emphasizes the fact that his becoming an apostle who preaches the gospel was not due to his own ability or qualification, but because of the gift of grace given by God. Also, he explains why God revealed the gospel to the world, and what role the church plays in that plan of salvation.

Paul first says, *"of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power" (Ephesians 3:7).* Here, the gospel Paul speaks of means the gospel of salvation that God accomplished through Jesus Christ. From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached, Jesus Christ came to this earth, bore the

sins of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and while bearing those sins, shed blood on the cross to receive the judgment for sin, and completed the history of salvation by resurrecting from death. Paul was exactly the person called to preach this gospel to the world. He did not view his ministry as a human occupation or choice. Rather, he understood it as a gift of grace given by God.

Paul expresses himself as "less than the least of all the saints." This is not only a word expressing humility, but also a confession that comes out when thinking about Paul's own past. Paul was once a person who persecuted the church and persecuted the people who believed in Jesus Christ. The fact that such a person became an apostle who preaches the gospel was entirely due to God's grace. So Paul does not boast of the mission he received, but rather emphasizes God's grace.

The content of the mission Paul received was "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Here, the riches of Christ means the grace of salvation accomplished through Jesus Christ. The redemptive ministry of Jesus Christ, which solved the problem of human sin and restored the relationship between God and humans, is God's grace that cannot be fully measured by human knowledge or thoughts. Paul received the mission to preach this very gospel not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles.

Paul also says that God is revealing through him *"the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things" (Ephesians 3:9)*. Here, the phrase 'fellowship of the mystery' means the plan of salvation that God established from long ago. God prepared the way of salvation through Jesus Christ before the history of mankind began, and that plan of salvation was hidden for a long time without being fully revealed. However, now through the

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ministry of Jesus Christ, that mystery of salvation has been revealed.

Paul explains that this mystery of salvation is revealed to the world through the church. He says, *"to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10)*. This means that God is revealing His wisdom of salvation to the whole universe through the church. The church is not a simple religious organization, but a community where the history of salvation accomplished by God appears. The church, formed by the gathering of people who believe in the redemptive ministry of Jesus Christ, is a living evidence showing the wisdom of salvation that God has accomplished in the world.

Paul says that all these things were accomplished according to *"the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:11)*. God planned the salvation of mankind centering on Jesus Christ, and that plan was accurately accomplished in history. Therefore, the gospel is not a religious teaching made by human thoughts, but the history of salvation that God planned from before eternity.

So Paul says that the people who believe through Jesus Christ have obtained "boldness and access with confidence" to God. In the past, humans were beings who could not step forward to God due to sin. However, because the problem of sin was solved through the redemptive ministry of Jesus Christ, now the believers have become able to step forward to God without fear.

Lastly, Paul explains about his sufferings and exhorts the saints not to lose heart. He was imprisoned because of the work of preaching the gospel, but he did not consider it a shameful thing. Rather, he says that the suffering is for the saints and becomes their glory. For Paul, the mission of preaching the gospel was

more important than his own life.
Therefore, Ephesians 3:7–13 is a word showing in what great grace of God the mission of the gospel received by Paul was accomplished. God revealed the mystery of salvation accomplished through Jesus Christ to the world, and made the Jews and Gentiles into one community through that gospel. Through this word, Paul is explaining the fact that the church is a community that reveals God's wisdom of salvation, and that the mission of preaching the gospel is a mission of grace given by God.

## Tribulations for the Gospel and the Glory of the Saints

*"Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory" (Ephesians 3:13).*

In Ephesians 3:13, the Apostle Paul exhorts the saints of the Ephesian church not to lose heart because of the tribulations he is experiencing. Paul says, *"Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory."* This word is not simply a word of personal comfort, but an important word explaining what meaning the suffering experienced for the gospel has. Paul did not view his suffering as a failure or misfortune. Rather, he understood that it is a process that necessarily appears in the history of salvation being accomplished by God.
The reason Paul came to experience tribulations while preaching the gospel is because he boldly preached the gospel of salvation accomplished through Jesus Christ. The gospel Paul believed and preached was not a way of solving sin through human deeds or religious efforts, but the history of salvation already

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accomplished by God through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ bore the sins of the world by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and while bearing those sins, shed blood on the cross to receive the judgment for sin, and completed the history of salvation by resurrecting from death. Paul preached this very gospel to both Jews and Gentiles.

However, such a gospel gave a great challenge to the religious leaders of that time and the traditional religious system of Jewish society. Because many people thought they stepped forward to God through the law and religious deeds, the gospel that salvation was already accomplished through Jesus Christ was a message that shook their religious pride and authority. So Paul came to experience many persecutions and tribulations in the process of preaching the gospel. He was imprisoned, and received persecution in various places.

However, Paul did not consider these sufferings as shameful things. Rather, he viewed them as glorious things connected to the ministry of the gospel. So he tells the saints not to lose heart because of his tribulations. It was because Paul's suffering was not a personal failure, but something that appeared in the process of the gospel being preached to the Gentiles. Because Paul preached the gospel, the Gentiles also came to know the way to step forward to God through Jesus Christ, and became able to receive God's grace of salvation.

Therefore, Paul calls his tribulations *"your glory."* This has a very deep meaning. The suffering Paul experiences was not simply personal pain, but something that appeared in the process of the gospel being preached in the world and God's plan of salvation being accomplished. It was because Paul preached the gospel that the Gentiles came to hear the gospel of salvation and became able to participate in the grace of salvation prepared by God.

The mystery of Christ, in the gospel the Gentiles
also becoming fellow heirs the dispensation of grace

What Paul emphasizes when explaining this word as one who believes in the gospel of water and the Spirit is the fact that resistance and suffering can necessarily follow when the gospel is preached in the world. However, that suffering is not in vain, but a process included in the history of salvation being accomplished by God. In the process of the gospel being preached to people and them returning to God, the people who preach the gospel sometimes experience difficulties, but those sufferings eventually become a channel to accomplish God's plan of salvation.

Therefore, Ephesians 3:13 is a word showing the meaning of the suffering experienced for the gospel. Paul did not view his tribulations as shameful things, but rather explains that they are glorious things that appeared in the process of the gospel being preached to the saints. He hoped that the saints would not lose heart seeing his suffering, and wanted them to realize the fact that the history of salvation being accomplished by God is continuously progressing even within that suffering. This word is a word showing the fact that although the mission of preaching the gospel can sometimes be accompanied by suffering, that suffering eventually plays a meaningful role in the history of salvation being accomplished by God.

## Paul's Prayer for Realizing the Love of Christ and Reaching the Fullness of God

*"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;*

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*that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:14-19).*

In Ephesians 3:14–19, the Apostle Paul records the content of the prayer he offers to God for the saints of the Ephesian church. This prayer is not a simple prayer of blessing, but a very important prayer that shows how those who believe the gospel should grow spiritually. Paul earnestly asks that the saints do not remain at the level of merely hearing the gospel and living a life of faith, but deeply realize the love of salvation that God accomplished through Jesus Christ and live a full life within that love.

Paul first says that he bows his knees and prays before the Father, who gave a name to every family in heaven and on earth. Here, Paul describes God as the Father of all humanity. God is not the God of a specific nation or group, but the One who created all families of heaven and earth and the One who becomes the source of all humanity. Paul bows his knees and prays before such a God. The expression of bowing the knees is an expression that represents deep reverence and humility toward God. When thinking of the grace of salvation that God accomplished, Paul had no choice but to pray humbly before Him.

What Paul asks first is that God, through the Holy Spirit, would strengthen the inner man of the saints with power. The inner man means the spiritual inner side of a human. A person may look strong on the outside, but if the spiritual inner side is weak, they will be shaken in their relationship with God. Therefore, Paul prays that the Holy Spirit would strengthen the inner side of the saints so that they may have an unshakable faith in God. From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached,

the Holy Spirit is God's gift given to those who believe in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, and the power that enables them to live within God.

Paul subsequently prays, *"that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:17)*. This is a prayer hoping that Jesus Christ becomes the center of the saints' lives. At the center of the gospel Paul preached is always the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ took upon Himself the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist, received the judgment for sins by shedding blood on the cross, and completed the history of salvation through resurrection. Paul prays that Christ would live in the hearts of those who believe this gospel and lead their lives.

Paul also prays that the saints would be rooted and grounded in love. Here, love does not mean a simple emotional love, but the love of salvation that God showed through Jesus Christ. Paul wanted the faith of the saints not to be shaken according to temporary emotions or situations, but to take deep root upon the love of God. Just as a tree must take deep root to not be shaken, the lives of the saints must also stand firmly upon the love of God.

Paul then makes a very important prayer. He prays that the saints would come to know *"the love of Christ which passes knowledge" (Ephesians 3:19)*. This means a love that cannot be fully understood by human knowledge. The love that God showed through Jesus Christ is a love that surpasses human thoughts. The fact that the Son of God came to this earth to save humans who are in sin, took charge of the sins of humanity, and died on the cross is a love that cannot be fully explained by human knowledge.

Therefore, Paul prays that the saints would come to realize what is the width and length and height and depth. This is a phrase

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expressing how great, vast, and deep the love of Christ is. The love of salvation that God accomplished through Jesus Christ is not a love limited only to specific people, but a love toward all humanity, and an eternal love that transcends time and space.
Paul's prayer finally concludes by asking *"that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19).* This is a prayer hoping that the saints would live within a deep relationship with God and come to enjoy the spiritual fullness that God gives. The fullness that God gives is different from worldly success or material abundance. It is the fullness of spiritual life and grace enjoyed within the relationship with God.
Therefore, Ephesians 3:14–19 is the word that records the deep spiritual prayer Paul offered for the saints. Paul wanted the saints not to remain merely as people who hear the gospel, but for their inner man to be strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit and to deeply realize the love of Christ. He earnestly prayed that the saints would realize how great and amazing the love of salvation that God accomplished through Jesus Christ is, and live a life enjoying the fullness of God within that love.

## God's Power Working Among Us and the Eternal Glory Revealed Within the Church

*"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3:20-21).*

Ephesians 3:20–21 is the word that concludes with a praise giving glory to God, summarizing God's plan of salvation and grace that Paul has explained from Ephesians chapters 1 to 3. Paul gives glory to God while thinking about how great and

amazing the history of salvation that God accomplished through Jesus Christ is. This word shows the power of salvation that God accomplishes and how that power appears among the church.

Paul first expresses God as *"Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Ephesians 3:20)*. This means that God is the One who has power that transcends human limits. Humans can only look at the future within their own thoughts and experiences, but God is the One who accomplishes things that surpass human thoughts. The power Paul speaks of here does not merely mean the power to perform miracles, but points to the power by which God accomplished the salvation of humanity.

From the perspective of the gospel that Paul believed and preached, the greatest power God manifested is the history of salvation accomplished through Jesus Christ. God solved the problem of sin, which humans could not solve themselves, through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ took upon Himself the sins of the world by being baptized by John the Baptist, and while bearing those sins, shed blood on the cross to receive the judgment for sins, and completed the history of salvation by resurrecting from death. This is God's plan of salvation that cannot be imagined by human thoughts, and Paul calls this very history of salvation the power of God.

Paul also says that this power "works in us." This means that the power of salvation God accomplished did not simply end as a past event, but is working even now among those who believe. Those who believe in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ gain new life within that power of salvation and come to live within a relationship with God. The grace of salvation God accomplished continues to work in the lives of the saints and becomes the power that changes their lives.

Paul subsequently says that glory to God appears *"in the church*

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*by Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 3:21)*. Here, the church is not a simple religious organization, but a community formed by the gathering of people who believe in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. God reveals the history of salvation accomplished through Jesus Christ to the world through the church. The church is a community where the grace and love of salvation God accomplished appear, and the place where God works.

Paul says he desires the glory God will receive to be *"to all generations, forever and ever."* This shows that the history of salvation God accomplished is not a temporary event but has an eternal meaning. The grace of salvation God accomplished through Jesus Christ is not applied only to a specific era, but will continue to be passed down across all generations and all eras. Therefore, Paul praises that God may receive glory forever in the church and in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, Ephesians 3:20–21 is the word praising the power of salvation God accomplished through Jesus Christ. God accomplished a plan of salvation that surpasses human thoughts, and that power is working even now among the saints. And God manifests His grace of salvation to the world through the church. Through this word, Paul is confessing with praise how great the history of salvation God accomplished is, and the fact that all that glory must return to God. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# By Believing in the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit, We Have Obtained Boldness to Approach God

**< Ephesians 3:1-13 >**

**"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the**

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**principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory."**

## Paul Became a Worker Who Realized the Mystery of Christ

The Apostle Paul became a worker of the Lord. In Ephesians 3:1-4, it is said, *"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)."*

At that time, when the Apostle Paul met the Lord, it was a period when the New Testament had not yet been written. The Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of Luke, and the Gospel of John—these four Gospels were also not all completed at that time. They were recorded one after another amidst persecution after Jesus ascended to heaven.

Through the Old Testament, the Apostle Paul came to know by revelation the fact that 'Jesus Christ will remove our sins through such and such works,' and he also came to know it through the testimonies of apostles like Peter and John, who became seniors in faith before him, by meeting them.

The sacrificial law of passing over sins through the laying on of hands and shedding blood in the Book of Leviticus in the Old Testament is a prophecy in advance of how Jesus of the New

Testament would come and save us. Therefore, through these words, the Apostle Paul clearly came to know the fact, 'Ah, the Lord was baptized like this, took charge of our sins, hung on the cross, and resurrected from death to save us.'

## The Gospel of the Apostle Paul Seen Through Galatians and Romans

The fact that the Apostle Paul is by no means a person who does not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit is clearly revealed in other epistles he wrote. In Galatians 3:25-27, it is said, *"But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* Also, in Galatians 1:1, saying, *"Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),"* he strongly nailed down that if anyone preaches a gospel other than the gospel he preached, even an angel would be cursed. That was because the gospel of the water and the Spirit was being clouded because of the Jews who came into the Galatian church and insisted on circumcision and the law.

In Romans 6:3, it is said, *"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?"* The word "into," which conveys union with Christ, means that one has become a believer who unites in heart with the fact that our sins were passed over to Jesus when He was baptized by John the Baptist. It is a word that means that for those who unite in heart and believe that the sins of the world of humanity were passed over to Jesus, and by the faith believing that fact, Jesus took charge of our sins, died on the cross, and

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resurrected to save us, it is exactly the same as having received baptism.

In Romans 6:4, it is said, "*Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*" The Apostle Paul is teaching by tying together Jesus' baptism and His death on the cross like this. Therefore, the Apostle Paul is not a person who only believes in the cross, but he became an apostle by the faith that believes in Jesus' baptism and the cross exactly like us, and he fulfilled the role of an apostle.

## The Limitations of the Nicene Creed and Calvin's Five Points of Doctrine

However, among those who believe in Jesus today, since the Nicene Creed, many people have emerged who say their sins have been washed away by the faith that only believes in Jesus who hung on the cross. If you look at the fruits of these people, you can know the tree.

These days, I frequently ask about the five points of Calvinism, which created the theology of 13 Christian denominations. I ask pastors who believe in Presbyterian doctrine, 'How do you process the sins committed after believing in Jesus?' They only believe that Jesus saved us by hanging on the cross; Calvin also does not speak about the part where Jesus took charge of our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist. In fact, they are people who do not know how to speak of it.

Constantine also did not know this part well. Yet, even though this is clearly in the Bible, he took it out. When Constantine said to the believers of the early church, 'Tell me what you believe,'

they gave a confession of faith saying, 'Jesus came to this earth as the Savior, and in order to remove our sins, He took charge of our sins by being baptized by John the Baptist, received the judgment for our sins on the cross, and became our Savior.' However, Constantine and his leaders took out one of the two, namely the baptism part. Then, the process of sins passing over disappears, and even the meaning of the cross becomes invalidated.

Calvin brought the part of the Nicene Creed exactly as it is, 'He suffered under Pilate and saved us by hanging on the cross,' and made his five points of doctrine. Therefore, for those who believe in Calvin's doctrine, if you ask how they process the problem of sin when a pastor commits a sin, they teach that when one believed in Jesus, the original sin was removed, and the sins committed from then on are processed through prayers of repentance. Therefore, they say that there is still sin even up to the moment of death. Saying that the sinful nature is carried until the moment of death, they teach that at the end when dying, one becomes sanctified, becomes a righteous person, and goes to the kingdom of heaven.

## Processing of Sins by Those Who Believe in the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

However, how people who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit process sins is completely different. We believe that Jesus took charge of all our sins by being baptized by John, received judgment on the cross, and resurrected from death to save us. By believing in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, we received the removal of sins once and for all.

After that, even when we commit sins while living our lives, just

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because we committed a sin does not mean we become sinners again. We are still righteous, people without sin, and God's people. Rather than becoming distant or disconnected from God, we acknowledge that we have committed a sin and stand again in the original position where our sins were blotted out and follow the Lord. Therefore, the salvation received once is eternal. It does not disappear eternally.

Methodist pastors are also exactly the same. They think that after believing only in Jesus' cross and receiving the blotting out of sins, self-committed sins still remain, and they teach that one must reach sanctification by praying prayers of repentance until death to receive salvation at the end. However, the theological doctrines made by these people, the reformers Calvin, Martin Luther, John Knox, etc., are different from the teachings of the Bible.

## The Structure of Jesus' Salvation — Birth, Baptism, Cross, Resurrection

The structure by which Jesus saves us is that He was born, was baptized by John, hung on the cross, died, and resurrected to save us. This structure is extremely important.

Everyone, if we want to cook rice, we must first put the raw rice in a bowl and wash it with water. Then we must put it in the rice cooker, pour water, and press the electric switch for it to become cooked rice. Just because there is raw rice does not mean it immediately becomes cooked rice. Until the raw rice becomes cooked rice and enters our mouths, there must be a set structure and process. We cannot ignore that structure and eat raw rice.

In John 8:32, it is said, *"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* It means there is a truth. It means

there is a true word. The Lord did not merely say, “I hung on the cross and saved you.” It means the Lord came as our Savior, and when He became thirty years old, He went to the Jordan River, was baptized by John the Baptist, the representative of humanity, had all the sins of humanity passed over to Him, hung on the cross, died, and resurrected to become our eternal Savior. If we ignore this structure and believe, our conscience does not become clean.

## The Receipt Given by the Lord

Let us think about the problem of conscience. There is a person suffering because of debt, and his rich friend. Even if the friend says, “I will give you the money, so pay it off,” that person does not accept it because of his pride. The friend, having no other choice, personally goes to the person pressing for the debt, asks, “I am this person’s friend, how much is the debt?” and pays off all that debt with his own money. And he gets a receipt not in his own name but in that friend’s name and brings it to the friend. He hands over that receipt saying, “Hey, do not let your pride be hurt and take this. Do not suffer the embarrassment of being pressed for debt ever again.” Then, how would that friend feel when he sees the receipt showing that the debt has been completely processed in his own name? It would be the heart of a person who has paid off all his debt.

Jesus has become exactly such a friend to us. Jesus knows everything about you and me committing sins, and He even knows everything about us committing them because we are weak. As the Father commanded, He was born on this earth borrowing the body of Mary, went to John the Baptist at the age of thirty, took charge of our sins by being baptized, went to the

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cross, died, and resurrected to become our Savior. He gave us the eternal removal of sins.
And He brought that receipt to us as the Bible. He is saying, “If you look at this Word, I was born, was baptized, took charge of sins, hung on the cross, received the judgment for sins, died, and resurrected to become your Savior. Since I have accomplished the eternal blotting out of sins for you, believe this and do not be tormented by Satan the devil ever again.”

## Even in Shortcomings, the Righteous is Eternally Righteous

Everyone, while living during the past week, we believed in Jesus and did many works of God, but there must have been quite a few things we did wrong as well. If the other person harasses us, we might have bad thoughts saying, ‘That kind of human...’, and we might also say it in words. All of that is also sin.
However, a wrong is a wrong, but because Jesus took charge of even those sins through the baptism He received from John, we acknowledge that fact, stand again in the position of having received the eternal removal of sins, and continue to live righteously. We have obtained the boldness to live according to the will that the Lord desires. We have received such a blessing. We who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are not sinners even if we are lacking. It is a saved person who did wrong. It is a person who became God’s people who did wrong. Therefore, the righteous is eternally righteous. Because those who only believe in the cross are consequently believing incorrectly, even if they believe until they die, they will go before God in a state of having sin.

## The Last Era — There is No More Time

This era now is the 21st century. Even scientists have doubts about whether this world can be maintained before the next 100 years pass. The climate is worsening, and the ice in the Antarctic and the Arctic is all melting, so around the years 2050 to 2070, the sea level will rise by about 1 meter. The sea level rising by 1 meter is not just a small change. When waves normally hit at 2-3 meters, it will affect up to 5 meters, and when a typhoon blows, it will affect close to 10 meters. Gimpo Airport will be submerged, Busan's Haeundae will be submerged, and everything humanity has built on the coast so far will all be submerged. Also, when the ice melts, the microorganisms that were inside it will come back to life, causing sea fish to die and bacterial infections to occur in people who eat them.
The reason I am telling you these words is not to give you fear, but to tell you that the time for Jesus to return is almost here. However, people who believe in Jesus only believe in the cross and are unable to enjoy freedom or peace because they are praying prayers of repentance every day. That is why there are no people in churches these days. It is a situation where true believers in Jesus are all giving up.

## Return from the Nicene Creed to the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

I am telling you as well, but in the last days of this era, I am crying out one thing to the people who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and also to the 2 billion souls who do not yet believe. Namely, it is the cry to 'Return from the Nicene Creed to the gospel of the water and the Spirit.' There is

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something the Nicene Creed did well. Accurately organizing the doctrine of the Trinity is a very excellent thing. However, taking out the baptism of Jesus is a very, very wrong thing. Therefore, while acknowledging what was done well, I intend to clearly point out what is wrong.

Now there is no more time. It means you must not believe only in the cross like that. Since the Apostle Paul also believed this gospel, if we say we believe in Jesus, we must unconditionally believe together in the baptism Jesus received from John. We must not take out this structure, and we must absolutely believe it. So, by becoming a person who has received the eternal blotting out of sins once and for all, we must praise God and live as the Lord desires before meeting the Lord. To preach this gospel, I am doing ministry like this even now. By all means, I hope that many souls will return through this gospel we preach, and I also believe that they will absolutely return. I conclude the message. ✉

Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

# A Life Rooted in the Unfathomable Love of Christ by Realizing the Mystery of the Gospel

**< Ephesians 3:1-21 >**

**"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the**

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**principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."**

## Did God meet us through His providence for those who receive the removal of sins?

The words of Ephesians 3 strongly testify that our meeting with the Lord was not an accidental event, but by God's meticulous and majestic dispensation of grace. Based on the words of Ephesians 3, how God met us through His providence can be summarized as follows.

## Meeting through the Dispensation of the Mystery

God had a plan to save us Gentiles from before eternity, but He kept it hidden as a mystery for a while. It was God's providence to transcend the fence of being Jews and make all of humanity become fellow heirs and members together in Christ through the gospel. God revealed this mystery of the gospel of the water and the Spirit to apostles like Paul through revelation, and through those recorded words, He has met us personally today. In other words, the very fact that we heard and realized the gospel is the result of God's massive providence at work.

## Meeting through the Manifold Wisdom of God

God met us to prove how outstanding His wisdom is before the forces of Satan the devil. By seeing Gentiles, who were by nature children of wrath, being washed by the blood of Christ and becoming the church, which is God's temple, He made the spiritual beings in the heavenly places realize the manifold wisdom of God. Our meeting with the Lord is not merely for personal happiness. God called us in His providence to make us a showroom displaying God's wisdom.

## Meeting through Eternal Predestination

The fact that we met the Lord and obtained the blotting out of sins is not based on temporary moods or emotions, but on an eternal legal foundation. Ephesians 3:11 proclaims that this was done according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. Those who believe in this providence

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no longer hide out of guilt but obtain boldness and confident access to God. God has been waiting since before the creation of the world for the moment we stand as confident children before Him.

To summarize, the word God's providence contains the meaning of foreseeing and preparing. God knew that humans would be deceived by Satan and wander in sin, and He prepared the gospel of the water and the Spirit to resolve that sin, and made that news be heard at the appropriate time. And at this very moment, He moves our hearts to confirm that truth.

All of this is God's providence. We met the Lord not because we sought God, but because God made a plan from before eternity to meet us and came into our lives. This majestic providence of God makes our lives very valuable and safe. We are currently walking with the Lord right in the middle of that providence of love.

## Then, what is God's dispensation toward us?

Synthesizing the flow of Ephesians 3, God's dispensation toward us can be defined as a massive administration that fills us completely with all the fullness of God. The Apostle Paul explains the specific details of this dispensation in three dimensions, showing God's master plan for us.

## The Dispensation of 'Together': Making Us Heirs

God's dispensation moves thoroughly toward the purpose of union. It is God's providence that we, who were Gentiles having nothing to do with God in the past, become fellow heirs, fellow

members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God did not leave us simply as a single saved believer, but established us as cosmic heirs who will inherit all of God's legacy. This is God's first administrative plan for us.

## The Dispensation of Abundance: Making Us Enjoy the Unfathomable Riches of Christ

God does not leave us in a state where we merely do not commit sins, but He intends to fill our lives with the inexhaustible treasures that are in Christ. Ephesians 3:8 records that He made him preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ. The dispensation of God that we must enjoy after receiving the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit is a life of being supplied with and enjoying Christ's love, peace, wisdom, and power every day. God wants our daily lives to become a showroom filled with the abundance of Christ.

## The Dispensation of Glory: Revealing God's Wisdom through the Church

This dispensation goes beyond personal salvation and has a cosmic purpose. Verses 10 and 11 of the text reveal that it is to make known the manifold wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places through the church. Before Satan and evil spirits, God shows the church, which is the gathering of born-again saints, and proclaims how glorious a child the sinner ruined by Satan has become through God's wisdom and the gospel. In other words, our lives themselves

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becoming a flag proclaiming God's victory is God's massive administration.

To summarize, God's dispensation toward us is accomplished in very precise stages. It goes through the preparation stage of predestining us in Christ from before eternity, and passes through the execution stage of blotting out all sins and making us His children through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Then, it passes through the fulfillment stage of strengthening the inner man and filling us with all the fullness of God, and eventually advances to the completion stage of making God's glory be praised forever and ever through us.

Because the Apostle Paul realized this great dispensation, he could exhort them not to lose heart even in the situation of being imprisoned, and could cry out that this is rather a glory. God's administration toward us never fails. Even the tribulations or weaknesses we currently experience are merely a process of creating unfathomable glory within God's massive plan. Anticipating how this perfect dispensation of the Lord toward me will appear in my life today, we must confidently continue the race of faith within God's master plan.

## Has God's dispensation through Jesus Christ been fulfilled in us now?

According to the proclamation of Ephesians 3, God's massive dispensation is not a vague promise of the distant future, but has already become a reality within those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit now. Even in the physical confinement of a prison, the Apostle Paul confidently proclaims through three evidences that God's dispensation has already been fulfilled in us.

## Boldness and Confidence are the Evidence

The most certain indicator to know whether God's dispensation has been fulfilled in me is the state of my heart toward God. Ephesians 3:12 says that in Him and through faith in Him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. In the past, we were beings who feared and avoided God due to sin, but now, those who have received the extinction of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit can confidently approach before God as children without any hesitation. Such spiritual confidence is indeed powerful evidence that God's dispensation has fully come upon one's life.

## The Status of Becoming Fellow Heirs is the Evidence

Dispensation means the actual execution of God's plan. Verse 6 reveals that we, who were Gentiles, have now become fellow heirs and fellow members of the body in Christ. This is not a simple forecast that it will be so in the future, but it means that our status has already changed by the application of the legal effect accomplished by Jesus Christ through water and blood. If we are now called the family of God, God's dispensation has already been legally fulfilled in us.

## The Work Toward the Strengthening of the Inner Man is the Evidence

God's dispensation does not stop at merely changing our status, but is an actual process of filling our inner selves with

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God's rule. Verses 16 and 17 of the text pray that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. If Christ establishes His dwelling place in our hearts and resides as the Master, His administration to fill us with all the fullness of God is actively moving in every corner of our lives even at this moment.

To summarize, God's dispensation is not swayed by personal feelings or emotional fluctuations. When the Bible declares that it has been fulfilled, it is an unchanging fact. The moment we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we enter into God's eternal timetable. The reason the Apostle Paul did not lose heart even in prison was because he knew that God's dispensation operating within him would surely triumph, regardless of his circumstances.

Rather than still remaining in one's own shortcomings and sighing, we must stand on the fact of the Word that God's perfect dispensation is holding me and has already achieved victory. God's dispensation is alive and moving within us even at this moment. A born-again saint is the living evidence itself that God's glorious plan has become a reality. This conviction will lighten our footsteps today and provide unshakable peace. ✉

Sermon 4 by Paul C. Jong

# Filled in the Unfathomable Love of Christ

**< Ephesians 3:1-21 >**

**"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Therefore I ask that you do**

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**not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."**

## He who knows the love of Christ is not bound by circumstances

Beloved saints, the word we will share together today is the word of Ephesians 3. In particular, this word shows how great and deep the love of Christ is, into which the saints who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit have entered, through the prayer and praise that the Apostle Paul offered in prison.
Paul is currently imprisoned. In the eyes of the people of the world, he might look like a failed person. He could not move around freely, and he was bound while preaching the gospel. However, Paul's heart was not confined in prison. His body was bound, but his soul was free in the love of Christ. So he did not resent. He did not complain. Instead, he knelt and prayed for the saints, and gave glory to God.

When a person is in difficult circumstances, what is in their heart is revealed. If there is no gospel in the heart, resentment comes out even when circumstances become slightly difficult. If God's love is not deeply rooted in the heart, one is shaken by even small tribulations. However, a person who has received the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and whose heart is full of the love of Christ, is not bound by circumstances. Paul was like that. The prison confined his body, but it could not take away the love of Christ.

We too must have this kind of faith. If we give thanks only when situations are good, and resent God when situations are difficult, we are still practicing a faith that is dragged around by circumstances. However, if we hold onto the fact that in any situation, Jesus was baptized for me, died on the cross, and resurrected to eliminate all my sins, our hearts will not be shaken. A person rooted in the love of Christ lives by the gospel, not by circumstances.

## The Dispensation of Grace Entrusted to Paul

Paul says, *"I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles" (Ephesians 3:1).* He did not view the reason for his imprisonment merely as people's framing or the power of Rome. He confessed that he was imprisoned for the work of Christ Jesus, for the sake of the Gentiles. This is the eye of faith.

What was entrusted to Paul was *"the dispensation of the grace of God."* Dispensation refers to the plan and providence of salvation determined by God. God established the plan of salvation in Christ Jesus from before eternity. And when the time came, Christ came to this earth and fulfilled that plan through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

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What is the mystery of this gospel? It is that the Gentiles, through the gospel, become fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. Originally, the Gentiles were outside the law, aliens from the covenants of promise, and those who had no God and no hope. However, by Jesus Christ receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, He took upon Himself not only the sins of the Jews but also the sins of the Gentiles, all the sins of the whole world. And He received the judgment for those sins on the cross, and resurrected from death. Whoever believes in this gospel becomes a child of God.

Therefore, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a gospel only for the Jews. It is not a gospel for any specific nation or class either. It is the gospel for all humanity. In the baptism, cross, and resurrection of Jesus, the sins of all sinners are blotted out, and anyone who believes becomes a member of God's household. This is the dispensation of the mystery that was hidden in God.

## Boldly Approaching God through the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit

Paul said, *"in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him" (Ephesians 3:12).* This is the amazing blessing given to those who believe in the gospel.

A sinner cannot boldly approach God. A person with sin in their heart cannot be bold before God. No matter how much religious zeal one has, if sin remains in the heart, that person has no choice but to have fear before God. Sin blocks the way between God and man.

However, the one who believes in the gospel of the water and

the Spirit is bold. Why is that? Because Jesus completely took charge of our sins. When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, all our sins were passed onto Jesus. And by Jesus bleeding and dying on the cross, He completely paid the price for those sins. By resurrecting, He testified that our salvation is an eternal salvation.

Therefore, we can boldly approach God. This is not because our deeds are perfect. It is not because we are good. It is because the righteousness accomplished by Jesus is perfect. We do not become bold by looking at ourselves, but we become bold by looking at the baptism, cross, and resurrection of Jesus.

Satan tries to condemn us. He accuses, "How are you righteous when you are so lacking? How can you approach God when you made a mistake again?" At that time, we must answer with the gospel. "My sins were already completely taken on by Jesus through baptism. He paid the full price on the cross. Therefore, no sin remains in me before God." This is faith. This faith gives us boldness.

## Faith that Kneels Before the Father of All Creation

Paul prays, *"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Ephesians 3:14-15)*. God is the Father who gave names to every family in heaven and on earth. All beings came from God, and all things belong to God. That God has called us as His own children.

The fact that we can call God our Father is by no means a small thing. A sinner cannot call God Father. If there is sin, one is in a state of enmity with God. However, because Jesus washed away all our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we are

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now able to call God Father.

Kneeling is not just a posture of the body. It is a posture of the heart. “I am nothing without God’s grace. I am not saved by my own merit. I live because God had mercy on me, and Jesus Christ fulfilled all righteousness for me.” This kind of heart is a kneeling heart.

Paul said that he was less than the least of all the saints. He was one who persecuted the church. However, God called such a person and made him a worker of the gospel. So Paul knew grace. A person who knows grace kneels before God. A person who establishes their own righteousness cannot kneel. However, a person who knows the freely given salvation through the gospel of the water and the Spirit humbly bows down before God.

## The Inner Man is Strengthened by the Spirit

Paul’s first prayer is, *“you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man” (Ephesians 3:16)*. Paul did not pray for the outer man of the saints to prosper first. He prayed for the inner man to become strong.

We often pray for the outer man. We pray to be healthy, we pray for things to go well, and we pray for our circumstances to improve. Of course, such prayers are also necessary. But what is more important is the inner man. If the inner man is weak, no matter how good the outer circumstances are, faith is shaken. Conversely, if the inner man is strong, one can sing praises even inside a prison. Paul is the evidence of that.

How does the inner man become strong? It becomes strong through the Holy Spirit. And upon what kind of heart does the Holy Spirit descend? He descends upon a clean heart that has

received the extinction of sins. The holy Spirit cannot dwell in a heart where sin remains. First, the sin of the heart must be washed away by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When one receives the blotting out of sins by believing the fact that Jesus took on my sins through baptism and was judged for those sins on the cross, the Holy Spirit comes to that heart and strengthens the inner man.

Therefore, the strengthening of the inner man does not happen by one's own determination. It does not happen merely by religious training either. One must stand firmly on the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Whenever our hearts are shaken, we must return to the gospel again. "The Lord took on all my sins. The Lord paid the full price for my sins. I am a child of God who has received the removal of sins." When we stand on this faith, the Holy Spirit holds us with power.

## Christ Dwells in Our Hearts Through Faith

Paul subsequently prays, *"that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:17).* Christ dwelling in our hearts happens through faith. But the faith here is not a vague faith. It is the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Simply believing in Jesus as a great person does not make the sin in the heart disappear. If one only knows the cross and does not know the baptism of Jesus, one cannot know how the sins were passed onto Jesus. One must believe this gospel that Jesus took on all our sins by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, died on the cross carrying those sins, and saved us by resurrecting.

When this faith is present, Christ dwells in our hearts. The Lord

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resides as the Master in the heart where sins have been washed away. He does not stay briefly like a guest, but dwells within us as our Lord and Shepherd. A person who has Christ in their heart is no longer a slave to sin and death. They are a person belonging to the Lord.

Our hearts were originally full of sin and mixed thoughts. However, through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, sins were washed away, and Christ came to dwell in that heart. What a great grace is this? We must hold onto this faith anew every day. The Lord is in me not because my flesh is perfect, but because the Lord has eliminated all my sins.

## Being Rooted and Established in Love

Paul prayed that the saints would be rooted and established in love. Faith is like a root. If the root is not deep, the tree falls when the wind blows. If the foundation is weak, the building collapses. Likewise, if God's love does not take deep root in our hearts, our faith is shaken.

What kind of love is this love? It is the love by which God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to save us. It is the love by which Jesus received baptism to take on our sins, died on the cross, and resurrected. This is God's love manifested through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The faith of a newly saved person might be small. It might be as small as a mustard seed. However, when that faith takes root in God's love, it grows. At first, there are many things one does not know well, and doubts may also arise. Thoughts may occur, "Have all my sins really disappeared? How am I righteous when I am so lacking?" However, every time that happens, one must return to the gospel. One must hold onto the fact that the Lord

took on my sins through baptism and received all the judgment on the cross. Then the foundation of faith becomes firm.
When we see our shortcomings, we should not lose heart. Rather, through those shortcomings, we come to know the Lord's love more deeply. We come to realize, "Even though I am this lacking, the Lord has already taken on even these sins; He knew even this weakness and saved me." Therefore, the righteous do not despair through their shortcomings, but come to know the depth of Christ's love more.

## The Width, Length, Height, and Depth of Christ's Love

Paul prayed that, together with all the saints, they would know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, and realize what its width, length, height, and depth are. The love of Christ cannot be fully measured by human knowledge. It is too wide, too long, too high, and too deep.
The width of that love is wide enough to embrace all sinners in the whole world. Whether Jew or Gentile, male or female, educated or uneducated, no matter what sin a person has committed, if they come into the baptism, cross, and resurrection of Jesus, they can receive the removal of sins. Christ's love is not a narrow love that stays only with a certain nation or a certain class.
The length of that love is eternal. God planned us in Christ from before the foundation of the world, saved us in Jesus, and will make us live together with Him in the eternal kingdom of God in the future. This love is not a love that exists for a moment and disappears. It is a love that goes to the very end.
The height of that love is high enough to make us participate in

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the glory of God's throne. We were originally sinners, but now we have become children of God. We, who were children of wrath, have become heirs of the kingdom of heaven. This is the height to which Christ's love has pulled us up.

The depth of that love is a love that came down to the place of the lowest sinner. Although Jesus is God, He put on a human body and came to this earth. The sinless One came down to the place of a sinner, received baptism, and died on the cross. He came down to the place of the deepest despair and judgment and rescued us.

We cannot know all of this love at once. When we are saved, we only know a little. However, as we listen to the Word, live a life of faith within the church, experience our own weaknesses, and confirm the Lord's grace again, we come to know it more and more deeply. The life of faith is the path to knowing this love more deeply.

## Being Filled with All the Fullness of God

Finally, Paul asked, *"that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19)*. This is the climax of Paul's prayer. God washes away the sins of our hearts with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, strengthens our inner man with the Holy Spirit, makes Christ dwell in our hearts, and makes us take root in God's love. And finally, He fills us with God's fullness.

To be filled, one must first be emptied. God's fullness cannot enter a heart full of sin. So God first emptied our sins with the baptism and cross of Jesus. After washing away the sins and making it clean, He fills that heart with the Holy Spirit, God's love, peace, and joy.

If you try to fill your heart with worldly things, there is no end.

Even if you fill it with money, it is still lacking; even if you fill it with honor, it feels empty; even if you fill it with human love, it is not eternal. However, a heart filled with God's fullness is different. One can sing praises even inside a prison, and give thanks even in difficult circumstances. The world can neither give nor take away that fullness.

We must yearn for this fullness. We should not only seek the prosperity of the flesh, but seek for the inner man to become strong. We must seek to realize the love of Christ more deeply. We must seek for our hearts to be filled with the fullness of God. This is the prayer Paul offered for the saints, and it is the prayer we need today as well.

## God Who Does Exceedingly Abundantly Above All That We Ask

At the end of his prayer, Paul praises God. He said, *"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Ephesians 3:20).*

God is the One who does exceedingly abundantly above what we ask. He is the One who accomplishes things greater and more perfectly than we imagine. The clearest evidence is our salvation. We did not even know how to resolve our sins. We did not even know what we should ask for. However, God prepared salvation in Jesus Christ from before the foundation of the world, and completely eliminated all our sins through the baptism, cross, and resurrection of Jesus.

God prepared even what we could not yet ask for. God accomplished the perfect way of salvation that we could not even imagine. This is God's grace. Therefore, we must give

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glory to God.

God's power is not far away. It is *"to the power that works in us."* The Holy Spirit is working within the hearts of us who believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the extinction of sins. He makes us understand the Word, strengthens our inner man, makes us know the love of Christ more deeply, and makes us serve the gospel within the church. All of this is God's power.

If our faith depended on our own strength, we would have no choice but to be always anxious. However, the One who saves us and makes us grow is God. The One who started it is God, and the One who accomplishes it is also God. Therefore, we can be at peace. God's grace is greater than our shortcomings. Christ's love is deeper than our weaknesses.

## Giving Glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus

Paul praised, *"to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever" (Ephesians 3:21).* God's glory is revealed within the church. The church is not simply a place where people gather. It is a place where the gospel of the water and the Spirit is preached, where the saints who received the blotting out of sins are nurtured by the Word, and where we come to know the love of Christ together.

Paul asked to know the love of Christ *"comprehend with all the saints."* Faith is not something done alone. We listen to the Word together, serve the gospel together, and grow together within God's church. Alone, one cannot fully know the width, length, height, and depth of Christ's love. As we share the Word and serve together with brothers and sisters within the church, we realize that love more and more deeply.

Also, all glory is revealed in Christ Jesus. If Jesus had not taken on our sins through baptism, if He had not paid the price of sin on the cross, if He had not given us new life through resurrection, we could not give glory to God. Our salvation, our life of faith, and our hope are all in Christ Jesus.
Therefore, we must give glory to God in the church and in Christ Jesus. We should not boast of ourselves, nor put forward our own deeds, but only praise the grace God has given us in Jesus Christ.

## Let Us Be Filled in the Unfathomable Love

Beloved saints, today we have seen Paul's prayer and praise through the Word of Ephesians 3. Paul was in prison, but his heart was filled with the love of Christ. He knelt before the Father of all creation and prayed that the inner man of the saints would be strengthened by the Holy Spirit. He prayed that Christ would dwell in their hearts through faith. He prayed that, being rooted and established in love, they would realize the width, length, height, and depth of Christ's love together with all the saints. And he asked to be filled with all the fullness of God.
All these graces are given to us in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Jesus took on all our sins through baptism, received the judgment for those sins on the cross, and gave us new life by resurrecting. We who believe in this gospel received the removal of sins, received the Holy Spirit, came to call God our Father, and became filled in the love of Christ.
Therefore, let us not be discouraged by seeing our shortcomings. Christ's love is greater than our shortcomings. Our sins were deep, but Christ's love was deeper. Our weaknesses are many, but God's grace is more abundant. We must return to this gospel

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every day. Every day, we must confirm the fact that Jesus completely took on my sins. And we must listen to the Word within the church, serve the gospel, and come to know the love of Christ more deeply.

God is the One who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think. That God is working within us. Therefore, I hope that we all become saints whose inner man is strengthened, whose hearts have Christ dwelling in them, who are rooted in love, and who are filled with the fullness of God.

To God, who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever. Amen. ✉

# Questions and Answers on Ephesians Chapter 3

## [Question] 1. What is the process by which Jesus Christ appeared and worked in him during the process of Paul becoming the apostle to the Gentiles?

In Ephesians chapter 3, Paul saying, *"if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you" (Ephesians 3:2),* is premised on the fact that the Ephesian saints had already heard and knew how he met the Lord and became a worker. Based on the recorded words of the Bible, let us examine that process in the order that Jesus Christ appeared and worked in Paul.

### 1. Paul was originally a persecutor of Christians

Before meeting Jesus, Paul was called *"Saul,"* and he was a person who persecuted those who believed in Jesus. He was on his way to Damascus to arrest Christians there and put them in prison. In fact, when Deacon Stephen was martyred, he was the one who approved and consented to his death. That is, Paul was someone who had no qualification or righteousness to become an apostle, but rather was an adversary of the church. This fact shows that his later confession of himself as *"To me, who am less than the least of all the saints" (Ephesians 3:8)* was by no means a mere formality.

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**2. The resurrected Jesus personally appeared on the road to Damascus**

On Paul's way to Damascus, Jesus Christ personally appeared from heaven and worked. A voice was heard from heaven saying, *"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4)*, and when Paul asked, *"Who are You, Lord?"*, a voice was heard saying, *"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."* On that spot, after seeing a bright light and hearing the voice, Paul fell from his horse, collapsed, and became blind.

The crucial thing here is the fact that the Jesus Paul met was not someone who had died and disappeared, but One who is alive. That Jesus did not die and disappear, but is living even now, and appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus. That is, through that encounter, Paul came to directly confirm that Jesus took on the sins of all mankind through baptism, shed His blood and died on the cross, and then resurrected and exists eternally.

**3. He made him open his eyes through God's servant Ananias**

Jesus did not leave Paul abandoned as a blind man, but prepared His servant to restore him. God prepared that servant Ananias, made him stay at his house, and had him inherit that faith, and as a result, Paul opened his eyes and became a servant who preaches Christ exactly according to God's plan. That is, Jesus did not stop at personally appearing and calling him, but guided Paul through His own person to establish his faith and receive his mission.

**4. Paul, who was well-versed in the Old Testament, came to realize the mystery of Christ**

Paul was originally a person well-versed in the Old

Testament Scriptures. He became *"Paul"* after meeting Jesus, and the name *"Paul"* means a very small person. He, who was bright in the Old Testament, realized that the person named Jesus whom he met on the road to Damascus was the very Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament, that is, the Savior who came to fulfill God's will by receiving the anointing.

That is, Paul came to realize, "The person named Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the Savior, and He came to this earth, received baptism, hung on the cross, and resurrected from the dead to save us." This is exactly the realization he spoke of saying, *"how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery" (Ephesians 3:3)*. It was not through human learning, but through the encounter with the living Jesus and the revelation of the Old Testament that he realized the mystery of Christ.

### 5. He became the apostle to the Gentiles through the removal of sin and the Holy Spirit

Paul becoming an apostle is not based on his own effort but entirely on the salvation accomplished by Jesus. Although he was the one who did the work of catching and killing those who believed in Jesus and stood as a guarantor to kill Deacon Stephen, he received the removal of sin by knowing and believing that Christ took charge of all those sins and received all the judgment for them. Upon receiving the removal of sin in that way, the Holy Spirit came to dwell in his heart, and being filled with the Holy Spirit, he came to live for the propagation of the gospel.

This is exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By believing in that salvation—that Jesus received baptism at the Jordan River to bear the sins of all mankind, fully paid the price of those sins on the cross, and resurrected—Paul received the removal of sin. That he, who was a persecutor, was established

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as the apostle to the Gentiles was not because of his qualifications, but because of the freely given grace of salvation and God's decree toward him. After meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus, he became the apostle to the Gentiles.

**6. To summarize:**

The process of Paul becoming the apostle to the Gentiles is the result of Jesus Christ personally appearing and working from beginning to end. The living Jesus appeared to the persecutor Saul on the road to Damascus with a bright light and a voice, made him blind, then made him open his eyes through Ananias, and caused him, who was well-versed in the Old Testament, to realize that Jesus is the very Messiah who accomplished salvation through baptism, the cross, and resurrection. By believing in that gospel of the water and the Spirit, Paul received the removal of sin and was filled with the Holy Spirit, becoming a worker who preaches the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles. That is, Paul's apostleship was not something he created himself, but a freely given gift of grace from the living Jesus.

## [Question] 2. What year was Paul imprisoned in the Roman prison, and what was his purpose for wanting to go to the Roman church?

This question is divided into two parts. One is the year of imprisonment, which is not recorded as a year in the Bible, so we must rely on the estimation of external sources; the other is the purpose of visiting Rome, which Paul directly revealed in the Book of Romans, so we can answer based on the recorded words. Let us examine the two parts separately.

### 1. The year Paul was imprisoned in the Roman prison — It is not recorded as a year in the Bible

First, to make it clear, nowhere in the Bible is the year Paul was imprisoned in the Roman prison recorded as a number. The Bible conveys that period not by a date, but by circumstances. By recording, *"Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him" (Acts 28:30)*, it shows that Paul stayed in a state of detention in Rome for about two years. At this time, it was a relatively free state of house arrest, and he was able to meet people and write. The Prison Epistles, including Ephesians, were written exactly during this period.

Regarding the year, according to commonly accepted estimates, Paul's first imprisonment in Rome is seen as lasting for about two years starting roughly around AD 60 or 62. However, this is not a fact directly revealed by the biblical text but a chronological estimation by scholars, and there is a difference of a year or two depending on the source. Therefore, it is safe to understand that Ephesians was written in the early AD 60s when Paul was imprisoned in Rome, but one must clearly know that this year is an estimation, not recorded in the Bible.

### 2. Paul's purpose for wanting to go to the Roman church — To be mutually comforted by each other's faith

On the other hand, Paul's purpose for wanting to go to Rome is clearly recorded in the Bible. Paul directly revealed the reason while writing the Book of Romans. *"For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established— that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me" (Romans 1:11-12).*

That is, Paul's first purpose for wanting to go to Rome was to

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impart spiritual gifts to the Roman saints to establish their faith, and also to be mutually comforted by each other's faith. It was not to teach unilaterally, but to become steadfast together in faith.

### 3. He had the purpose of bearing the fruit of the gospel among the Gentiles

Paul revealed that his visit to Rome was directly connected to his apostleship, that is, his mission toward the Gentiles. He says, *"Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles" (Romans 1:13)*. That is, just as he had borne the fruit of the gospel among other Gentiles, he wanted to bear that fruit among the Gentiles in Rome as well.

This exactly aligns with the mission Paul mentioned in Ephesians chapter 3, saying, *"that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8)*. Whether it was Paul becoming a prisoner for the Gentiles or earnestly desiring to go to Rome, both came from the single mission of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the Gentiles.

### 4. He had a plan to go forward to Spain by way of Rome

Paul's visit to Rome was not to end with staying there, but it was also a passageway to preach the gospel to places further away. He says, *"But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you, whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while" (Romans 15:23-24)*.

That is, Paul considered Rome not as the final destination of preaching the gospel, but as a gateway to go forward to Spain. After having fellowship and sharing comfort with the Roman saints, he intended to receive their support and dispatch to go forward to a farther land where the gospel had not yet been preached. This, too, was a purpose fitting for the apostle to the Gentiles, intending not to bury the received gospel for himself alone but to preach it to the end.

**5. To summarize:**

The exact year Paul was imprisoned in the Roman prison is not recorded as a number in the Bible, and the Bible only conveys that he stayed in a state of detention in a rented house for about two years. According to external estimates, it is seen as roughly the early AD 60s, but this is an estimation, not a fact directly revealed by the Bible. On the other hand, Paul's purpose for wanting to go to Rome is clearly recorded in the Bible. That is, it was to impart spiritual gifts to the Roman saints to establish their faith and receive mutual comfort, to bear the fruit of the gospel among the Gentiles, and furthermore, to preach the gospel as far as Spain by way of Rome. Ultimately, Paul's journey to Rome did not stem from his own comfort, but from the apostolic mission to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles.

## [Question] 3. What is the dispensation that God intends to do toward Paul?

The word *"dispensation"* is a core word in Ephesians chapter 3, appearing twice in the text: *"The dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me" (Ephesians 3:2)* and *"the*

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*beginning of the ages has been hidden in God" (Ephesians 3:9).* Based on the recorded words, let us examine what the dispensation is that God intended to do toward Paul.

### 1. *"Dispensation"* is an office and a great plan entrusted by God to a steward

First, we must point out the meaning of the word *"dispensation."* Dispensation originally means the office and administration entrusted by a master to a steward in charge of household affairs. Therefore, *"the dispensation of the grace of God"* points to the office and mission God entrusted to Paul by grace. At the same time, the *"dispensation of the mystery-ASV"* in verse 9 means the great plan that was hidden in the heart of God who created all things. That is, the dispensation is the office God entrusted to the single person Paul, and at the same time, it is also the great plan of salvation toward all mankind that He intended to accomplish through that office.

### 2. God's dispensation is making him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles

The first content of the dispensation God intended to do toward Paul was to make him preach the gospel of salvation to the Gentiles through him. He reveals, *"saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8).* Preaching the unsearchable salvation of Christ to the Gentiles—who originally had no law, were aliens to the promises of the covenant, and had no hope—was the dispensation entrusted to Paul.

Those riches of Christ are the gospel of the water and the Spirit, guaranteed by Jesus receiving baptism at the Jordan River to bear the sins of all mankind, paying the full price of sin by

shedding blood and dying on the cross, and resurrecting. God made Paul the conduit so that this gospel would not remain only with the Jews but be preached even to the Gentiles.

### 3. It is making him reveal the dispensation of the mystery that had been hidden

The second content of the dispensation God intended to do toward Paul was to reveal through him the mystery that had been hidden for long ages. He says, *"and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things" (Ephesians 3:9).* This dispensation of the mystery was a great plan established by God the Father from before the foundation of the world to save all mankind from sin through His Son. This plan was in the heart of God who created all things, and was hidden until the appointed time came. However, reaching the time of the New Testament, God made clearly revealed through Paul that hidden plan, that is, His will to save even the Gentiles.

### 4. It is making the Gentiles become fellow heirs together in Christ

The specific content of that dispensation of the mystery was that the Gentiles become equal with the Jews. He reveals, *"that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel" (Ephesians 3:6).* The dispensation God intended to do toward Paul did not stop at merely letting the Gentiles hear the gospel, but was making them become heirs of the kingdom of God, members of the one body, and partakers of the promise exactly like the Jews. That is, the purpose of that dispensation was to make the Gentiles children of God through the gospel of the

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water and the Spirit and have them partake in the glory of the kingdom of God.

### 5. It is making the manifold wisdom of God revealed through the church

God's dispensation goes beyond the salvation of one individual and leads to a greater purpose through the church. He says, *"to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10)*. By Paul preaching the gospel, Gentiles and Jews came to form the church of one body, and through that church, God reveals His unsearchable wisdom not only to the people on earth but even to the principalities and powers in heaven. That is, the dispensation entrusted to Paul went beyond the mission of that one person, reaching the point of manifesting God's wisdom to the whole universe through the church.

### 6. All these dispensations are the purpose predestined in Christ from before eternity

Lastly, the dispensation God intended to do toward Paul was not a coincidence or impromptu, but a purpose decreed from before eternity. He clearly reveals, *"according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:11)*. That Paul went from being a persecutor to the apostle to the Gentiles, and that the dispensation of the mystery was revealed through him, were all within the plan God had set in Christ from before the foundation of the world.

This touches the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Salvation, and the office of preaching that salvation, are from beginning to end the result of God's sovereign decree. Paul did

not obtain that dispensation by his own qualification or effort, but received God's will which was decreed from before eternity and entrusted freely by grace.

**7. To summarize:**

The dispensation God intended to do toward Paul was to make him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, to the Gentiles, and to reveal through him the mystery of salvation that had been hidden for long ages. That mystery is that the Gentiles become fellow heirs, members of the body, and partakers of the promise together with the Jews in Christ, and furthermore, to make the manifold wisdom of God revealed to heaven and earth through the church. And all these dispensations were God's purpose predestined in Christ Jesus from before eternity. That is, the dispensation God entrusted to Paul was an eternal and great plan of salvation to save all mankind, especially the Gentiles, by making a persecutor a worker through His freely given grace.

## [Question] 4. What is the revelation that God revealed and showed to Paul?

Paul says in Ephesians 3:3, *"how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery."* That is, it is a confession that the truth he preached was not realized through human research or learning, but became known through the *"revelation"* that God Himself revealed and showed. Based on the recorded words, let us examine what that revelation was that God revealed and showed to Paul.

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**1. Revelation is God Himself revealing and showing a truth that a person cannot know on their own**

First, we must point out the meaning of the word *"revelation."* Revelation means God Himself opening and showing a truth that is hidden and can never be known by a person on their own. By saying, *"how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery" (Ephesians 3:3)*, Paul made it clear that the mystery of Christ he realized did not come from his own wisdom. He was an intellectual of his time who learned Greek studies and was well-versed in the law, but he did not realize the mystery of Christ through that learning; rather, he came to know it because God revealed it.

**2. God revealed and showed the salvation of Christ through the Old Testament Scriptures**

The channel of the revelation Paul received was the Old Testament Scriptures. The time when Paul met the Lord and preached the gospel was a time when the New Testament Scriptures had not yet all been recorded. Therefore, his saying *"how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery"* means that he came to know how Jesus Christ would accomplish the removal of our sins through the Old Testament Scriptures. That is, God opened the words of the Old Testament and revealed and showed to Paul the salvation of Christ who was to come.

In this regard, Paul's situation is different from ours today. Because we live after both the Old and New Testament Scriptures are completed, we can clearly unfold and speak the gospel of the water and the Spirit. However, Paul realized that mystery through the words of revelation, that is, the Old Testament, at a time when even the four Gospels were not all recorded.

### 3. The core of the revelation God revealed is the gospel of the water and the Spirit hidden in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament

The core of the truth God revealed and showed to Paul through the Old Testament was the salvation of Christ hidden within the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. The sacrificial system in the Old Testament—where a sinner laid hands on the head of a sacrificial offering to pass his sins to the offering, and the price of sin was paid by that offering shedding blood and dying—was exactly fulfilled in the New Testament by Jesus receiving baptism from John the Baptist to bear the sins of the whole world, and shedding blood and dying on the cross.
That is, the revelation God revealed to Paul was the truth that Jesus Christ would accomplish the removal of our sins, in other words, the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This gospel was the plan established by God the Father from before the foundation of the world to save all mankind from sin through His Son, and it was the dispensation of the mystery hidden in the heart of God who created all things. God revealed and showed that hidden plan to Paul.

### 4. The revelation God revealed was the mystery of making even the Gentiles partake in salvation

Another content of the revelation God revealed to Paul was the mystery of making even the Gentiles reach salvation. He reveals that mystery saying, *"that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel" (Ephesians 3:6).*
How the Gentiles, who originally had no law and were aliens to the promises of the covenant, could become children of God equally with the Jews was a mystery hidden in other ages. God

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revealed and showed that mystery to Paul, making him know that through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Gentiles also become heirs of the kingdom of God exactly like the Jews and become partakers in that glory.

**5. This revelation was manifested to the apostles and prophets by the Spirit**

The revelation God revealed to Paul did not come upon the single person Paul alone, but was manifested to the holy apostles and prophets through the Holy Spirit. He says, *"as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets" (Ephesians 3:5)*. That is, this truth was not figured out by human pondering, but was realized by the Holy Spirit Himself manifesting it.

Actually, this gospel of the water and the Spirit was not Paul's realization alone. The Apostle John testified that Jesus Christ came to us by water, blood, and the Holy Spirit, and the Apostle Peter preached that water is the antitype which now saves us, namely baptism. Paul also said that those who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. That is, the gospel that the apostles consistently preached during the early church period was the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and this was the one revelation God revealed and showed to them by the Holy Spirit.

**6. To summarize:**

The revelation God revealed and showed to Paul was the mystery of Christ that could never be known by human learning or research. God opened the Old Testament Scriptures and showed Paul the gospel of the water and the Spirit hidden in the sacrificial system of the laying on of hands and blood within it—that is, the salvation Jesus would accomplish by bearing the sins

of all mankind through baptism, paying that price on the cross, and resurrecting. Also, through that gospel, He revealed the mystery of even the Gentiles becoming fellow heirs together with the Jews. This revelation was identically manifested to the apostles and prophets through the Holy Spirit, and was a great plan of salvation hidden in the heart of God from before the foundation of the world. That is, the revelation God revealed to Paul was from beginning to end the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that one truth of salvation.

## [Question] 5. What is the reason God specially made Paul the apostle to the Gentiles?

In Ephesians 3, Paul reveals that he was called to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:8). Let us examine, based on the recorded Word, why God chose Paul—of all people, the one who had been a persecutor—to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

### 1. It is to make him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles

The first reason God made Paul the apostle to the Gentiles was to make him preach the gospel of salvation to the Gentiles through him. He clearly reveals, *"saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8)*. That is, the very purpose of entrusting the apostleship to Paul was in preaching the gospel toward the Gentiles.

It was Paul's mission to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit—accomplished by Jesus bearing the sins of all mankind through baptism, shedding blood and dying on the cross, and

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resurrecting—to the Gentiles, who originally had no law, were aliens to the promises of the covenant, and had no hope. God made Paul the conduit toward the Gentiles so that the unsearchable riches of that salvation would not remain only with the Jews.

**2. It is to reveal that the work is God's power by choosing the least of all**

The second reason God made Paul the apostle to the Gentiles was to reveal that the salvation is not of human power but of God's power by choosing the least of all. Paul confesses himself as *"me, who am less than the least of all the saints" (Ephesians 3:8)*. It means he is not merely a small person, but one smaller than the least.

God called him, the least among the saints, and made him preach the grace of His own great and abundant mercy. Choosing the least to preach the greatest riches was to reveal that the work is not done by human qualification or power, but solely by God's power. As he reveals, *"of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power" (Ephesians 3:7)*, the apostleship was the result of God's power personally working.

**3. It is to testify to the freely given grace by saving him who was a persecutor**

When we remember what kind of person Paul originally was, the meaning of this calling deepens even more. He participated in arresting those who believed in Jesus, putting them in prison, and killing them, and indeed, he was one who had no qualification at all to become an apostle, but rather was one who opposed the church. However, God bestowed grace upon such a

persecutor, saved him, and later established him as the apostle to the Gentiles, who, while preaching the gospel, was instead persecuted, misunderstood, and imprisoned.

That God gave the unsearchable grace of salvation to such a persecutor and made him the apostle to the Gentiles was to testify that salvation is not obtained by human righteousness or deeds, but is entirely the freely given grace of God. Paul himself was the clearest example of that freely given grace. Since the greatest sinner received the greatest grace and became an apostle, his life testifies to the fact that whoever believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can receive the removal of sin and become God's worker.

**4. It is to reveal the mystery of Christ through him who was well-versed in the Old Testament**

The fact that he was well-versed in the Old Testament Scriptures also played a role in God choosing Paul. Because Paul was bright in the law and the Old Testament, when God revealed and showed him the salvation of Christ hidden in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, he could deeply realize that mystery. That is, Paul came to know clearly that the Old Testament sacrificial system of the laying on of hands and blood was fulfilled in the New Testament by Jesus' baptism and the cross.

Because it was a truth realized in such a way, he could reveal and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ and the dispensation of the hidden mystery to the Gentiles. God used him, who was well-versed in the Old Testament, as an instrument to make the mystery of salvation, which had been hidden from before the foundation of the world, revealed to the whole world.

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**5. It is because of God's sovereign decree predestined from before eternity**

Lastly, the most fundamental reason God made Paul the apostle to the Gentiles lies in His sovereign decree. He clearly reveals, "*according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:11)*. That Paul went from being a persecutor to the apostle to the Gentiles was not a coincidence or his merit, but was within the plan God had set in Christ from before the foundation of the world.
This touches the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Salvation, and the office of preaching that salvation, are from beginning to end the result of God's sovereign decree. Paul did not obtain the apostleship by his own righteousness, but received God's will which was decreed from before eternity and called him freely by grace. Therefore, he had nothing to boast of himself and only gave glory to God who called him.

**6. To summarize:**

The reason God specially made Paul the apostle to the Gentiles was to make him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, to the Gentiles through him. By choosing the least among the saints, and one who originally persecuted the church at that, God revealed that the salvation is not by human power but by God's power, and is freely given grace from beginning to end. Also, through him who was well-versed in the Old Testament, He made the hidden mystery of Christ clearly revealed. And all this calling originated from God's sovereign decree predestined in Christ Jesus from before eternity. That is, Paul's apostleship was not his qualification, but the fruit of God's grace and eternal plan to preach the most abundant salvation through the lowest person.

## [Question] 6. What is the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Paul knows?

Although Paul did not specifically and in detail unfold and write the gospel of Jesus receiving baptism from John and going to the cross in Ephesians, the fact that he accurately knew and believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit is clearly shown in his other epistles. Based on the words he directly recorded, let us examine what the gospel of the water and the Spirit was that Paul knew.

### 1. Paul was one who knew and believed that Jesus bore the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John

The first element of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Paul knew is that Jesus bore the sins of all mankind by receiving baptism from John the Baptist. Paul says, *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27).*

Here, *"as were baptized into Christ"* means having the faith that unites in heart to believe that our sins were passed onto Him when Jesus received baptism from John. That is, one who believes the fact that the sins of the world were passed onto His body through the baptism Jesus received from John, and believes that He went to the cross, has put on Christ and become God's people. Paul was thus one who had the faith believing in the baptism Jesus received from John and the blood of the cross.

The second element of the gospel Paul knew is that Jesus, who bore our sins, received the judgment for those sins on the cross and died. He says, *"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" (Romans 6:3).*

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Because Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist and took over our sins, our sins were washed away, and Jesus, who bore those sins, was crucified and put to death. Paul expressed this as being baptized into His death. That is, since our sins that Jesus received through baptism were judged on the cross and dealt with by death, our old man died together in that death.

**2. Paul knew that we obtained new life through Jesus' resurrection**

The third element of the gospel Paul knew is that the dead Jesus resurrected, thereby saving us and making us new creations. He says, *"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).*

That is, through the baptism Jesus received from John, the sins of the world were transferred to Jesus' body, and He bore those sins, died on the cross, and resurrected to save us. United with Jesus' baptism, we too are baptized and washed of our sins; united with the cross, the old man dies; and united with the resurrection, we become a new person. Thus, Paul clearly knew baptism, the cross, and the resurrection as one package.

**3. Paul testified to the truth of the baptism Jesus received from John and the cross**

The gospel Paul knew is clearly distinguished from a faith that emphasizes only the blood of the cross. In Galatians, he sternly said that if anyone preaches any other gospel besides the gospel I have preached, even if it is an angel, let him be accursed. He warned against this because at that time in the Galatian church, there were those who insisted on circumcision and

keeping the law, thereby muddying the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

If one believes only in the death on the cross while leaving out the truth that sins were passed over through Jesus' baptism, one cannot explain how the sinner's sins were transferred to Jesus. Just as in the Old Testament sacrificial system the offering shed blood and died only after the sinner laid hands on the head of the offering to pass the sins, Jesus also was crucified, shed blood, and died after taking over the sins of all mankind through the baptism He received from John. Because Paul accurately knew the truth of this gospel, he rejected false gospels.

### 4. Paul knew the gospel of being baptized together with Christ and resurrecting from the cross

The power of the gospel Paul knew was that the one who believes this truth receives the eternal removal of sin once and for all. Through His life of being born, receiving baptism from John, dying on the cross, and resurrecting, Jesus resolved our sins eternally once and for all. Therefore, the one who believes this gospel of the water and the Spirit receives the eternal removal of sin once and for all and becomes a righteous person. In this regard, Paul also gained great power in living by the faith he believed. Those who have received the removal of sin by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit do not become sinners again. Though acknowledging that we commit sins, because we believed as our Savior the Lord who had the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, was crucified, shed blood, and resurrected from death, we can follow the Lord. That is, the gospel Paul knew and believed was a gospel that establishes a sinner as an eternal righteous person once and for all.

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**5. To summarize:**

The gospel of the water and the Spirit that Paul knew was the gospel that Jesus had the sins of the whole world transferred to Him once and for all through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, and saved us who believe by being crucified bearing all those sins and resurrecting from death. Paul clearly testified to this baptism, cross, and resurrection as one package in Galatians 3:27 and Romans 6:3-4, and he rejected the faith that believes only in the cross while leaving out baptism, calling it another gospel. And he knew and preached the fact that the one who believes this gospel receives the eternal removal of sin once and for all and becomes a righteous person. That is, the gospel Paul believed was the same single truth as the gospel preached by Peter and John, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## [Question] 7. How deeply did the Apostle Paul know about the words of the Old Testament Scriptures?

At the foundation of Paul being able to say in Ephesians 3:3, *"how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery"* lies the fact that he was deeply well-versed in the Old Testament Scriptures. Based on the recorded words, let us examine how much Paul knew the words of the Old Testament.

**1. Paul was one who deeply learned the law under Gamaliel**

How well-versed Paul was in the Old Testament is revealed in his history of learning. As a Jew, Paul was one who deeply learned the law under Gamaliel. Gamaliel was the greatest teacher of the law of his time, so Paul, who mastered the law

under him, was one who had mastered the law and words of the Old Testament. In addition to this, he even learned Greek studies, making him a very outstanding intellectual in today's terms. That is, Paul was not one who merely knew the Old Testament Scriptures vaguely, but one who professionally and deeply studied and mastered them.

**2. Paul accurately knew the meaning of the Old Testament sacrificial system, that is, the laying on of hands and blood**

That Paul was well-versed in the Old Testament becomes clear from the fact that he accurately knew the meaning of the Old Testament sacrificial system. The Jews knew the Old Testament sacrificial system well, knowing well that they must bring a sacrifice and that when the high priest laid his hands on it, the sins were passed onto the sacrifice. Paul was also well-versed in this sacrificial system.

That is, Paul clearly knew the law in the sacrificial system of Leviticus where the sinner laid hands on the head of the sacrifice to pass the sins, and the price of sin was paid by that sacrifice shedding blood and dying. Therefore, he could realize that this Old Testament sacrificial system prophesied that in the New Testament, Jesus would come, bear sins through baptism, and save us by shedding blood and dying on the cross.

**3. Paul realized the depth of Christ's salvation through the Old Testament**

The conduit through which Paul realized the mystery of Christ was precisely his knowledge of the Old Testament. The time when Paul met the Lord and preached the gospel was when the Old and New Testament Scriptures were not yet fully recorded. The four Gospels were not completed, and Paul's own

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epistles were before being bound into a Bible book.
Therefore, Paul came to know the truth that Jesus Christ would eliminate our sins through the Old Testament Scriptures. That is, through the words including the Leviticus sacrificial system of the Old Testament, he realized that the Lord received baptism to bear sins, was crucified and died, and resurrected to save us. We can clearly speak the gospel of the water and the Spirit after the Old and New Testament Scriptures are all completed, but Paul realized that mystery through the words of revelation, that is, the Old Testament.

**4. Paul's knowledge of the Old Testament became the power to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit**

However, Paul realizing the mystery of Christ was not done by his Old Testament knowledge alone. He first met apostles like Peter and John, his seniors in faith, and came to know by hearing from them, and also realized through the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. That is, upon Paul's deep knowledge of the Old Testament, the illumination of the water and the Spirit was together, enabling him to fully realize the salvation of Christ.
One thing to clearly know here is that the Old Testament knowledge itself does not give salvation. The same Jews also knew the Old Testament but insisted on circumcision and keeping the law, muddying the gospel of the water and the Spirit. What made Paul different was that his deep Old Testament knowledge was correctly opened toward the salvation of Christ by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**5. Paul's deep Old Testament knowledge allowed him to be used as a worker preaching Christ**

Paul's Old Testament knowledge became a precious

foundation for him to be used as a worker preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. Because he was well-versed in the Old Testament, he could clearly unfold the salvation of Christ hidden in the Old Testament sacrificial system, and reveal and preach the dispensation of the hidden mystery. Just as Deacon Philip unfolded and preached the salvation of Jesus Christ starting from the Old Testament to the Ethiopian eunuch who could not understand Isaiah 53, Paul also became a worker testifying to Christ through the words of the Old Testament. God used Paul, well-versed in the Old Testament, as an instrument to reveal the mystery of salvation, hidden from before the foundation of the world, to the whole world.

**6. To summarize:**

The Apostle Paul was an intellectual of his time who mastered the Old Testament Scriptures, deeply learning the law under Gamaliel and even mastering Greek studies. Because he accurately knew the meaning of the Old Testament sacrificial system, that is, the law where a sinner lays hands on a sacrifice to pass sins and that sacrifice sheds blood and dies, he could realize that it would be fulfilled in the New Testament by Jesus having the sins of the world transferred to Him through the baptism He received from John, being crucified, shedding blood, and resurrecting from death. Upon his deep Old Testament knowledge, the testimony of his seniors in faith and the illumination of the Holy Spirit were together, making Paul a worker who fully realized and testified to the mystery of Christ, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That is, Paul's Old Testament knowledge did not remain as mere academic knowledge but was used as a precious conduit to reveal the salvation of Christ.

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## [Question] 8. What is the 'dispensation of the mystery of salvation planned from eternity' testified by Paul?

Paul reveals in Ephesians 3:9 that his mission is *"Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things."* That is, what he revealed was the great plan that God, who created all things, had hidden within Himself from before eternity. Based on the recorded words, let us examine what the dispensation of the mystery Paul knew was.

### 1. The dispensation of the mystery is the plan that was in the heart of God who created all things

First, we must point out the expression of the text, *"of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things."* This dispensation is the plan that God had harbored in His heart from before He created all things, that is, from before eternity. The dispensation of the mystery Paul knew was not newly established at a certain point, but was a great will that had been situated from the beginning in the heart of the Creator God who made all things.

The reason this dispensation is called a *"mystery"* is because it had been hidden without being fully revealed to people until the appointed time came. Because God revealed and showed that hidden plan to him, Paul now became a worker who reveals it to the whole world.

### 2. The core of that dispensation is the salvation of mankind through Jesus Christ

The core content of the dispensation of the mystery Paul knew was God's plan to save all mankind from sin through His

Son Jesus Christ. This plan was established by God the Father from before the foundation of the world to save our mankind from sin through His Son, and according to that plan, at the appointed time, Jesus Christ came to this earth and saved us.
That is, that dispensation was not a vague will but contained a clear method of salvation. It was the content that Jesus bore the sins of all mankind through the baptism He received from John at the Jordan River, paid the full price of those sins by shedding blood and dying on the cross, and saved us by resurrecting from death. Paul was realizing and revealing this plan of salvation that had been in God's heart from before eternity.

### 3. This dispensation was a plan to make even the Gentiles partake in salvation

The dispensation of the mystery Paul knew was a plan that was not limited only to the Jews but embraced even the Gentiles. Reaching the time of the New Testament, God the Father saved even the Gentiles, who were originally not the people of Israel, with the gospel of the water and the Spirit through Jesus Christ. Thus, the Gentiles also became God's children by faith, became the people of the kingdom of God, and became partakers in the glory of the kingdom of God.
This is precisely the mystery that had been hidden in other ages and was revealed in the time of the New Testament. That the Gentiles, who were originally aliens and had no hope, become fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and partakers of His promise together with the Jews—that plan of salvation toward all mankind was the dispensation that had been in God's heart from before eternity.

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### 4. This dispensation of salvation was appointed to be revealed through the church

The dispensation of the mystery Paul knew was decreed to be revealed through the church of God. God manifested this plan of salvation through prophets in the old Old Testament times, through apostles in the New Testament times, and through the church of God. When Paul preached the gospel, those who heard it believed, received salvation, and formed the church of God, and through that church of God, God revealed His great plan to the whole world. That is, the dispensation hidden from before eternity was clearly revealed through the church, making known the fact that God the Father loved mankind, saved them, and delivered them from sin and destruction through His Son. Those who believe in such a way obtain salvation and eternal life, and Jesus Christ comes to dwell in their hearts by faith.

### 5. The one who realizes this dispensation of God boldly approaches God

The dispensation of the mystery Paul knew does not merely end in realization, but gives boldness to approach before God to the one who believes it. He continues to say, *"in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him" (Ephesians 3:12)*. That is, by believing that salvation planned in Jesus Christ from before eternity, the one who has received the removal of sin confidently approaches before God.

There are many religions in the world, but their objects are not the true God but merely the deification of creatures made by man. The only person who can confidently approach the holy God is the one who has received the removal of sin by believing in the heart the salvation through Jesus Christ. Only the one who has realized and believed that dispensation from before eternity can

stand boldly before God.

**6. To summarize:**

The dispensation of the mystery Paul knew, which God had hidden within Himself from eternity before creating all things, was the great plan to save all mankind from sin through His Son Jesus Christ. The method of that salvation is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, where Jesus bore the sins of the world through baptism by John, was crucified, shed blood, died, and resurrected, and that salvation was a plan to make not only the Jews but also the Gentiles God's children. This dispensation had been hidden until the appointed time came, and was revealed through the church of God in the time of the New Testament. Paul realized that eternal and vast plan and made it revealed to the whole world. Today, the one who believes that dispensation of God receives the removal of sin in the heart and becomes one who boldly approaches before God.

## [Question] 9. Is the dispensation of God revealed through the church of God?

Paul says in Ephesians 3:10, "*to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.*" That is, the dispensation that God had hidden is revealed through nothing else but the church. Based on the recorded words, let us examine how that dispensation is indeed revealed through the church of God.

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**1. It is a clear fact that the dispensation of God is revealed through the church of God**

First, the answer to the question must be made clear. Yes. The dispensation of God is revealed through the church of God. It clearly states, *"to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10)*. That is, the conduit through which God brightly reveals the dispensation of the mystery hidden from before eternity is precisely the church. This is not what Paul guessed, but the truth directly stated by the text.

**2. Here, the church of God is the gathering of those who have received the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit**

When saying that the dispensation is revealed through the church, one must clearly know what the church of God is as those who do what. Here, the church of God is not a building or an organization, but the gathering of people who have become God's children by receiving the removal of sin by believing in the heart through the preaching of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When Paul preached the gospel in the church of God, those who heard it believed and received salvation, and those who were thus saved gathered to become the church of God, and soon became the kingdom of God.

That is, the very fact that the Gentiles, who were originally aliens and had no hope, and the Jews became one body and formed the church by believing in Jesus' baptism, cross, and resurrection, is the evidence that God has fulfilled the dispensation of the mystery. The very existence of the church shows that God's plan of salvation has been actually fulfilled.

### 3. Inside the church, one comes to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit and the love of God

That the dispensation of God is revealed through the church of God also means that a person comes to know the truth of that salvation inside the church. Where do we come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit? It is precisely inside the church of God. God's working is accomplished inside the church, and outside the church, this truth cannot be known.

The one who has received the removal of sin is nurtured inside the church of God, and comes to know what the width, length, height, and depth of that love by which God saved us are. And one realizes the glory of God in Christ. That is, one finally comes to fully know inside the church that dispensation by which God saved us and bestowed love according to the will predestined in Christ from before eternity.

### 4. Through the church of God, the wisdom of God is revealed even to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places

The dispensation revealed through the church of God is not limited only to the people of the earth. The text reveals its targets as the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. That is, God makes His manifold wisdom known through the church not only to the people of the earth but even to the spiritual beings belonging to heaven.

The very administration of salvation where sinners, who were originally children of wrath and aliens, received the removal of sin by the gospel of the water and the Spirit to become God's children and form the church of one body, is God's unfathomable wisdom that even heavenly beings would marvel at. That method of justifying sinners was a wisdom that cannot be

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fathomed by human minds, and that wisdom is revealed to the whole universe through the church.

### 5. The members of the church of God participate in the work of revealing that dispensation as priests of all believers

That the dispensation is revealed through the church of God also means that each member of the church directly participates in that work. Because anyone who has received the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit can approach before God and pray, the saints of the New Testament era are all priests. This is called the priesthood of all believers. In the Old Testament, only the appointed priests handled that duty, but in the New Testament, all those who have received the removal of sin have become priests.

A priest is one who serves that work by offering oneself to God. Just as not only Paul preached the gospel but also the saints and his coworkers preached the gospel all together, each member of the church makes known to the whole world the fact that God the Father loved mankind, saved them, and delivered them from sin and destruction through His Son by offering themselves to preach the gospel. That is, the members of the church handle the duty of priests and participate together in the work of revealing the dispensation of God.

### 6. To summarize:

The dispensation of God is clearly revealed through the church of God. The plan of salvation that had been hidden in God’s heart from before eternity, that is, the dispensation of the mystery to save even the Gentiles with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is brightly revealed through the church that has

formed one body by believing that gospel. A person comes to know that gospel and God's love inside the church, and through that church, God's unfathomable wisdom is revealed even to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. And each member of the church who has received the removal of sin participates together in the work of revealing that dispensation by offering themselves to preach the gospel as priests of all believers. Therefore, the church is not merely a gathering of people, but a holy conduit through which God fulfills and reveals the eternal dispensation.

## [Question] 10. What is the qualification to become a member of the church of God?

Paul says in Ephesians 3:6 that the Gentiles *"should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of."* That is, there is one clear qualification to become a member of the church. Based on the recorded words, let us examine what that qualification is.

### 1. The qualification to become a member of the church is solely receiving the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit

First, the conclusion must be made clear. The qualification to become a member of the church of God is only one: receiving the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The text reveals that the Gentiles become fellow members in Christ Jesus *"through the gospel."* That is, the conduit to become a member is not lineage or deeds, but faith believing the gospel.

The content of that gospel is clear. It is that our sins were passed

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onto Jesus by Him receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, and that He saved us by being crucified, receiving judgment, dying, and resurrecting while bearing those sins. The one who unites in heart and believes the fact that my sins were passed over when Jesus received baptism is clothed with Christ and becomes God's people. This is the only qualification to become a member of the church.

**2. Lineage, circumcision, or keeping the law cannot be qualifications**

There are things that people commonly put forward as qualifications to become a member of the church, but they cannot be true qualifications. The Jews who entered the Galatian church insisted that one must receive circumcision, keep the law, and distinguish between what to eat and what not to eat to become God's people. However, Paul firmly rejected this, saying that such assertions eliminate the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and that if anyone preaches any other gospel besides the gospel I have preached, let him be accursed even if he were an angel.

That is, neither the lineage of being a Jew, nor the ritual of circumcision, nor the deed of keeping the law is a qualification to become a member of the church. If such things were qualifications, the Gentiles, who were originally aliens, could never have become members. However, just as the text reveals that the Gentiles also become fellow members, that qualification lies solely in the faith believing the gospel, beyond lineage or deeds.

### 3. Even Gentiles, if anyone believes the gospel of the water and the Spirit, become fellow members

Because the qualification to become a member of the church is solely faith, even Gentiles, who originally had no qualification at all, can become members if anyone believes that gospel. The Gentiles, who originally had no law, were aliens from the covenants of promise, and had no hope, became God's children, the people of the kingdom of God, and partakers in the glory of the kingdom of God by believing the salvation through Jesus Christ with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

That is, when Paul preached the gospel, those who heard it believed and received salvation, becoming the church of God. Those who had no qualification became qualified ones, that is, members of the church, by believing the gospel. Therefore, becoming a member of the church is not because of something one has equipped oneself with, but because one has received the freely given grace of salvation by faith.

### 4. The one who has received the removal of sin has Christ dwelling in the heart and becomes a priest

There is a clear mark for the one who has become a member of the church and received the removal of sin. Jesus Christ dwells in that heart by faith, and he becomes a priest before God. Because anyone who has received the removal of sin can approach before God and pray, they are called priests, and this is called the priesthood of all believers. In the Old Testament, only the appointed priests handled that duty, but in the New Testament, all those who have received the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit have become priests. That is, becoming a member of the church is not merely putting one's name on a list, but becoming a priest who boldly

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approaches before God with Christ in the heart by receiving the removal of sin. This is a status established upon the clear event of the removal of sin.

**5. The one who has become a member, even if they sin due to weakness, returns again to the position of having received the removal of sin**

Because becoming a member of the church is based on faith and not deeds, the one who has become a member does not lose that status even if they commit sin while living. The one who has received the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit does not become a sinner again because of it even when they commit sin again while living. Because they believe that Jesus has already borne even that sin through baptism, they acknowledge having committed the sin but return again to the position of the righteous who has received the removal of sin and follow the Lord.

This shows that becoming a member of the church is based not on the flawless deeds of a person but on the perfect salvation fulfilled by Jesus. If the qualification were in deeds, one would have fallen away from being a member every time they sinned, but because that qualification is in faith, the one who has become a member keeps that position without wavering.

**6. To summarize:**

The qualification to become a member of the church of God is not lineage, circumcision, or the deed of keeping the law, but solely receiving the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Anyone, even a Gentile, who believes in the heart the salvation fulfilled by Jesus bearing our sins through the baptism received from John, shedding blood and dying on the

cross, and resurrecting, becomes a fellow member in Christ. The one who has thus received the removal of sin becomes a priest who approaches before God with Christ in the heart, and even if they commit sin while living, they return again to the position of having received the removal of sin and keep that status. That is, becoming a member of the church is not because of the qualifications one has equipped oneself with, but the result of receiving the freely given grace of salvation by faith.

## [Question] 11. Is Paul a model in doing missions to the Gentiles?

Paul reveals in Ephesians 3 that he is *"Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—" (Ephesians 3:1)* and a worker appointed *"that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8).* Based on the recorded words, let us examine how Paul becomes our model in Gentile missions.

### 1. He is a model in that he relied on the freely received grace, not his own righteousness

The first aspect in which Paul becomes a model for Gentile missions is that he relied entirely on the freely received grace, not on his own qualifications or righteousness. Paul was originally one who persecuted the church, and he confessed himself as *"less than the least of all the saints" (Ephesians 3:8).* The reason such a person became an apostle to the Gentiles was not because of his own efforts or learning, but because God made him a worker as a gift of grace.

This point becomes a model for all who preach the gospel. Missions are not done because the one preaching is righteous or

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qualified, but it is a work done with a heart indebted to that grace by one who has freely received the grace of salvation. Paul's attitude of acknowledging his own shortcomings and relying only on the received grace becomes an example for all who seek to preach the gospel.

### 2. He is a model in that he did not keep the gospel he believed only for himself but preached it to the Gentiles

The second aspect in which Paul becomes a model is that he did not bury the received grace of salvation only for himself but preached it to the Gentiles. The very purpose for which God gave Paul the unsearchable riches of Christ was *"that I should preach among the Gentiles" (Ephesians 3:8)*. Following that mission, Paul dedicated his life to preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the Gentiles who were originally aliens and had no hope.

This is an example that all who have been saved must follow. The received gospel should not be merely enjoyed by oneself and end there, but must be preached to those who have not yet heard it. Just as Paul flowed the grace he received to the Gentiles, the one who has received the removal of sin must step forward together in the work of preaching that gospel to other souls.

### 3. He is a model in that he served by offering himself as a living sacrifice

The third aspect in which Paul becomes a model is that he did not stop merely at teaching but served by offering himself. Paul was a priest. A priest is one who stands between the people and God, not merely pointing out the sins of others, but doing the work of saving those who are dying because of those sins. For that work, a priest offers his body and mind, that is, himself,

to the right work.
Paul was not merely a teacher conveying knowledge of the gospel, but a priest who served by offering himself as a living sacrifice. Anyone can do the work of merely reading books and teaching, but the duty of a priest who saves souls can only be handled by offering oneself. Just as Paul offered a living sacrifice by giving himself daily to the Lord's work, the one who preaches the gospel must go beyond the conveyance of knowledge and become one who serves souls by offering oneself. In this regard, Paul is a model for all who do missions.

### 4. He is a model in that he considered tribulations for the gospel as glory

The fourth aspect in which Paul becomes a model is that he considered sufferings for the gospel not as a shame but as glory. For the sole reason of preaching the gospel, Paul was misunderstood as a rioter, and was caught like a slave and a prisoner, even going to prison. However, he did not consider those bonds as a shame, but said to the Ephesian saints, *"Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory" (Ephesians 3:13).*
Because Paul suffered tribulations in order to preach the gospel of salvation to the Gentiles, those sufferings were the glorious conduit through which they reached salvation. For one who preaches the gospel, sufferings are inevitable, but the attitude of accepting those sufferings as glory like Paul becomes an example for all who do missions.

### 5. He is a model in that he fulfilled his duty to the end without resting

The fifth aspect in which Paul becomes a model is that he handled the duty of a priest to the end without resting or stopping.

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In the teaching positions of the world, there are sabbatical years to rest, but in the duty of a priest who saves souls, there is no such rest. This is because if a priest rests for a year, countless souls will die during that time. Therefore, that work of offering oneself to the Lord is something that must be offered today and tomorrow, this month and next month, daily.
As a servant of God, Paul did not rest from his duty. If one stops that duty for a long time, the heart strays from God's work and goes out into the world, making it difficult to return. The aspect of faithfully fulfilling the duty to the end without stopping like Paul is the model that the one who preaches the gospel must follow.

**6. To summarize:**

Paul becomes our model in doing missions to the Gentiles in many ways. He relied on the freely received grace, not his own righteousness; he did not keep the received gospel only for himself but preached it to the Gentiles; and he did not stop at teaching but served souls by offering himself as a living sacrifice. Also, he considered tribulations for the gospel not as a shame but as glory, and fulfilled the duty of a priest to the end without resting. All these aspects are examples showing how the one who has received the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit should live. That is, Paul is a model of Gentile missions that must be followed not only by himself but by all priests who have received the removal of sin.

## [Question] 12. Is Paul's ministry closer to the ministry of a pastor? Or is it closer to the ministry of a missionary?

This question is to discern the nature of Paul's ministry. However, since the Bible does not directly define Paul with today's titles of pastor or missionary, I will answer by discerning based on Paul's recorded acts and the aspects of his ministry shown in the text of Ephesians.

### 1. Paul was originally called as an evangelist of the gospel toward the Gentiles

First, we must look at what kind of calling Paul received. Paul was originally appointed as an evangelist of the gospel toward the Gentiles. The text calls him *"Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—" (Ephesians 3:1)* and reveals his mission as *"that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8).*
That is, Paul's calling was not in taking charge of and caring for a flock of sheep that had already received the gospel, but in going out to the Gentiles who had not yet heard the gospel and preaching the gospel of salvation. In this regard, his ministry is closer in nature to the ministry of a missionary.

### 2. Paul did the work of going to places where there was no gospel and establishing churches

The core of Paul's ministry was in going to lands where the gospel had not been preached, preaching the gospel, and establishing new churches with those who believed that gospel. When Paul preached the gospel, those who heard it believed and received salvation, becoming the church of God. That is, Paul

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did not stay in already established churches, but did the ministry of causing churches to emerge in places where there were none by preaching the gospel.

In today's terms, this is the typical ministry of a missionary. Rather than settling in one place and caring for one church for a long time, Paul traveled to various regions, preached the gospel, planted churches, and then moved on to the next place. Ephesians itself was nurtured not because Paul continuously stayed in that region, but through a letter from a distant prison after he had left.

### 3. He had an orientation to go further to more distant places

That Paul's ministry is closer to the nature of a missionary is also revealed in that he always aimed for more distant places. He was not satisfied with staying in Rome, but had an orientation to go through Rome even to Spain, where the gospel had not yet been preached. That is, his gaze was always directed toward new lands where the gospel had not reached. Unlike the ministry of a pastor who settles in one place and cares for one flock for a lifetime, Paul was one who constantly expanded the boundaries of the gospel.

### 4. However, he also possessed the aspect of pastoral care, taking care of the churches he established to the end

This does not mean, however, that there were no pastoral aspects in Paul's ministry at all. Paul did not stop at preaching the gospel and leaving, but he kept the churches he established in his heart and cared for them to the end. His epistles, including Ephesians, are the very evidence of this. Even while imprisoned far away, he earnestly prayed that the inner man of the Ephesian saints would be strengthened, that they would welcome Christ

into their hearts, and that they would realize that love. He also comforted the saints, saying, *"Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you" (Ephesians 3:13).*
That is, Paul was a missionary who preached the gospel, while at the same time possessing a pastoral heart that took responsibility for and nurtured the souls of the churches he established to the end. However, even that pastoral care was not in the form of staying in one place, but in the method of caring for multiple churches from afar through letters and prayers.

**5. In essence, all ministries are integrated into the single duty of a priest**

There is one more thing to look at deeply here. Paul himself did not view his ministry by dividing it into whether it was of a pastor or a missionary, but viewed it as the duty of a priest that one who has received the removal of sin ought to handle. Anyone who has received the removal of sin by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit is a priest, and a priest is one who offers himself to the work of eliminating the sins of the people, that is, the preaching of the gospel that saves souls.
Viewed from this essence, whether going to a place without the gospel to preach or caring for established churches, all those works are the single duty of a priest who saves souls. That Paul preached the gospel in the form of a missionary and cared for the churches with the heart of a shepherd was, in the end, a single ministry of serving souls by offering himself as a priest who has received the removal of sin.

**6. To summarize:**

By its nature, Paul's ministry is closer to the ministry of a missionary than that of a pastor. This is because he was not one

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who cared for an already established flock in one place for a lifetime, but one who went out to the Gentiles who had not yet heard the gospel, preached the gospel, established churches where there were none, and constantly moved forward toward more distant lands. However, he also possessed a pastoral heart that kept the churches he established in his heart to the end and nurtured them with letters and prayers. Yet, looking at the deepest essence, before being divided into pastor and missionary, Paul's ministry was a single duty of saving souls by offering himself as a priest who has received the removal of sin through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## [Question] 13. Paul sent a word of a higher dimension specifically in his letter to the Ephesian church; was the reason for this because the level of the Ephesian church members' faith was high?

Ephesians is full of words of a deep and high dimension dealing with God's eternal plan and unsearchable abundant blessings. Then, whether the reason Paul sent such abundant words was because the level of faith of the Ephesian church members was exceptionally high, let us examine and discern based on the recorded words.

### 1. The reason is not because the level of the church members' faith was high, but because their faith was built upon the correct truth

First, the conclusion must be made clear. The reason Paul sent abundant and high-dimensional words to the Ephesian church was not because their level of faith was higher or more mature than other churches. The reason is that their faith was

built upon the correct truth, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Paul, while writing to the Ephesian saints, said that their faith was built upon the gospel of the water and the Spirit, upon the word of truth manifested in the Old and New Testaments. That is, because the foundation of their faith was laid upon the correct gospel, Paul was able to add the depth of abundant grace upon it. The core was not the height of faith but the foundation of faith.

### 2. To those built upon the correct gospel, the depth of abundant grace can be made known

The reason Paul could give a word of a higher dimension to the Ephesian saints was because they were already standing on the correct foundation called the removal of sin. For those standing on the correct foundation, a house can be built high upon it. Paul said to them that they had come to receive abundant grace and unspeakable blessings, and that he wanted them to know it.

That is, to them who became God's people by receiving the removal of sin, Paul intended to let them know more deeply how abundant and great that salvation is. The word, *"to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19)* is exactly that. The abundant word was not a prize given to those with a high level of faith, but it was intended to let those standing on the correct gospel know the depth of that grace more.

### 3. It is God's will that the truth is revealed to those who are like little children

Rather, the Bible teaches that the truth is revealed not to those who are said to be smart and intelligent in the world, but to those

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who are like little children. Jesus Himself said that it is God's will to reveal the gospel of truth to those like little children and to hide it from those who are said to be wise and intelligent in the world. This is because if this truth is revealed too easily to those who oppose and despise God, they will misuse it.

In light of this principle, receiving the abundant and high truth is not because one's wisdom or level is high, but because one acknowledges one's own shortcomings like a little child and relies on the heard word. That is, it can be said that the reason the Ephesian saints received the abundant word was not because they were smart, but because they accepted the correct gospel like little children.

**4. Even those standing on the correct gospel were still ones with many shortcomings**

The point that the Ephesian saints did not receive the abundant word because their level of faith was high is also confirmed by the fact that they too were still ones with many shortcomings. God perfectly made them sinless children of God by washing away their sins at once with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but as they lived in this world, they were ones lacking in many things in their flesh, actions, or hearts.

That is, even those who received the abundant word were ones living with their own weaknesses and shortcomings. The reason Paul asked for them to know the width and length and height and depth of Christ's love was precisely to let those lacking ones realize God's vast love more deeply as they live. The abundant word was not a reward for a completed level, but was given so that the lacking ones could grow further.

### 5. The real reason Paul gave the abundant word is to establish them firmly

The real purpose for which Paul sent the word of a higher dimension was to establish the Ephesian saints more firmly in faith. From prison, Paul exhorted that their inner man be strengthened, that they welcome Christ into their hearts by faith, that they be rooted in love, and that they abide in it and become faithful people.

That is, the abundant word was not given to boast, but was given so that they would know how great and amazing the salvation they received is, and stand firmly without wavering in it. Because Paul himself deeply realized the greatness of that salvation even in prison, he intended to share that realization with the Ephesian saints as well to establish them firmly.

### 6. To summarize:

The reason Paul sent the word of a higher dimension and abundance to the Ephesian church was not because the level of faith of its members was higher than other churches. The reason is that their faith was built upon the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is, the correct word of truth. To those standing on the correct foundation, the depth of abundant grace can be made known more upon it. The Bible teaches that the truth is revealed not to smart ones but to those like little children, and the Ephesian saints too were still ones with many shortcomings. The real reason Paul gave them the abundant word was to let them realize the greatness of the salvation they received and stand more firmly in faith. That is, the abundant word was not a reward for a high level, but grace intended to make those standing on the correct gospel grow deeper.

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## [Question] 14. What is the reason God established and permitted God's church on this earth for the righteous?

The entirety of Ephesians 3 begins with the dispensation of grace Paul received, leading to the mystery of Christ, the wisdom of God revealed through the church, the prayer for the saints, and the doxology. In the midst of that flow is the church. What the reason is that God established and permitted the church on this earth for the righteous who have received the removal of sin, let us examine based on the recorded words.

### 1. It is to have the gospel of the water and the Spirit preached through the church

The first reason God established the church was to have the gospel of salvation preached to the whole world through the church. It reveals, *"to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10).*

God did not make everyone receive the grace of salvation automatically, but manifested this truth through the prophets in the old Old Testament era, and through the apostles and the church in the New Testament era. When Paul preached the gospel, those who heard it believed and received salvation to become God's church, and those who became members of that church preached the gospel again. That is, the church was established as a conduit through which the unsearchable riches of Christ, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is preached to all nations.

### 2. It is to nurture those who have received the removal of sin within God's church

The second reason God established the church was to nurture the righteous who have received the removal of sin within the church. The place where a person comes to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit is precisely inside God's church. God's working is accomplished within the church, and outside the church, this truth cannot be fully known.

After making them receive the removal of sin, God provided nurturing within the church, so that they would know what the width and length and height and depth of the love with which He saved us is. When one has received the removal of sin, one knows only as much as a mustard seed, but while listening to the word and living a life of faith within the church, the foundation becomes firm and one comes to know that love more deeply. That is, the church is a place where the newly saved righteous are nurtured to grow into firm children of God.

### 3. It is to make known the love of Christ and the glory of God within God's church

The third reason God established the church was to make the righteous realize the love of Christ and the glory of God within the church. What Paul prayed in the text, *"to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19),* is exactly that.

Within the church, God strengthens the inner man of the righteous with the Holy Spirit, makes Christ dwell in their hearts, and roots them in love, so that they realize the unsearchable love of Christ and become filled with the fullness of God. That is, the church is the place where the righteous come to know God's vast love and become firm and filled ones.

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**4. It is to reveal the manifold wisdom of God in heaven and on earth through God's church**

The fourth reason God established the church was to reveal His unsearchable wisdom to the whole universe through the church. The text reveals the target of that revelation as *"the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10).*

The very administration of salvation—in which sinners, who were originally children of wrath and aliens, receive the removal of sin through the gospel of the water and the Spirit to become God's children and form the church of one body—is the wisdom of God that even the spiritual beings of heaven would marvel at. That is, through the very existence of the church, which is the gathering of the righteous, God reveals His unsearchable wisdom of justifying sinners not only to the people of the earth but even to heaven.

**5. It is to have eternal glory ascribed to God within God's church**

The fifth reason God established the church was to have the righteous ascribe eternal glory to God within the church. The text concludes with, *"to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3:21).*

The glory for all those things in which God saved us and bestowed love according to the will He predestined in Christ from before eternity, is revealed not in other places but within the church by Christ Jesus. That is, the church was established as a holy place where the righteous who have received the removal of sin realize the greatness of the salvation they received, and ascribe glory to God who bestowed that grace to

all generations, forever and ever.

**6. It is to have the righteous enjoy the ruling authority in heaven in the future**

In God establishing the church, even the eternal future of the righteous is contained. What is referred to as *"the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10)* in the text shows that the righteous who are born again by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit will live an authoritative life of ruling in heaven in the future. Jesus delivered us from all sins and judgment with the gospel of the water and the Spirit and gave us new life, and those who have obtained that new life will not die again but live in heaven forever.

That is, God saved and nurtured the righteous within the church, so that it does not end on this earth, but they become ones who enjoy eternal glory and authority in the kingdom of God in the future. The church is the gathering of the righteous who live looking toward that eternal kingdom.

**7. To summarize:**

The reasons God established and permitted the church on this earth for the righteous come together in various ways. He had the gospel of the water and the Spirit preached to the whole world through the church, nurtured those who have received the removal of sin within the church, and made them realize the love of Christ and the glory of God within it. Also, He revealed His unsearchable wisdom in heaven and on earth through the church, had the righteous ascribe eternal glory to God within it, and had them enjoy the ruling authority in heaven in the future. All of this was God's will predestined in Christ Jesus from before eternity. That is, God establishing the church was a great plan of

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love to preach that gospel through the righteous who received the freely given grace of salvation, to nurture and make them firm, and ultimately to have them ascribe eternal glory to Him.

## [Question] 15. What kind of gospel is the gospel that the church must keep?

As Ephesians is a book that speaks about God's church, what that church must hold onto and keep is a very important question. Just as Paul himself sternly said that if anyone preaches a gospel other than the gospel I preached, even if it is an angel, let him be accursed, there is a gospel that the church must absolutely keep. What kind of gospel that gospel is, let us examine based on the recorded words.

### 1. The gospel that the church must keep is the gospel of the water and the Spirit

First, the conclusion must be made clear. The gospel that the church must keep is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is, the gospel that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist at the Jordan River to take on the sins of all mankind, paid all the wages of sin by shedding blood and dying on the cross while bearing those sins, and saved us by resurrecting in three days. This is the gospel that Paul preached, and it is the same single truth as the gospel that Peter and John preached. Paul said, *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27)*, and the Apostle John said that Jesus Christ came to us by water and blood and the Spirit, and Peter preached that water is the antitype which now saves us, that is, baptism. In other words, the gospel that the apostles consistently kept and preached during the early church was the gospel of the water and

the Spirit, in which baptism, the cross, and resurrection are bundled together.

### 2. We must keep the complete gospel fully equipped with baptism, the cross, and resurrection

The gospel that the church must keep is the complete gospel without any single part missing. The part where Jesus took on our sins through baptism, the part where He paid the wages of those sins on the cross, and the part where He resurrected must all be together.

If one leaves out the truth of sins being passed over through baptism and holds only to the death on the cross, one cannot explain how the sins of sinners were transferred to Jesus. Just as in the sacrificial law of the Old Testament, the offering shed blood and died only after the sinner laid hands on the head of the offering to pass over the sins, Jesus also died on the cross after taking over the sins of all mankind through baptism. Therefore, the church must completely keep not only the blood of the cross but also the baptism of Jesus, which is the foundation of that blood.

### 3. We must reject another gospel, that is, a corrupted gospel

That the church keeps the correct gospel also means, at the same time, that it sternly rejects another gospel. When strange people entered the Galatian church and asserted absurd things, Paul clearly stated that if anyone preaches a gospel other than the gospel I preached, even if it is an angel, let him be accursed. At that time, the Jews who entered the Galatian church claimed that one must be circumcised, keep the law, and distinguish between what to eat and what not to eat to become God's people. However, when such claims enter, the gospel of the water and the Spirit becomes clouded and disappears. In other words,

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teachings that try to add deeds, rituals, or the law to salvation are another gospel, and are things the church must never accept.

**4. A faith that believes only in the cross is not the complete gospel that God's church should hold onto**

A representative corruption that God's church must be wary of is a faith that leaves out the baptism of Jesus and believes only in the cross. Today, among those who believe in Jesus, many have appeared who say they have washed their sins with a faith that believes only in Jesus hanging on the cross. However, if one leaves out the truth of sins being passed over through baptism, one misses the way to receive the eternal removal of sin once and for all.

Those who believe only in the cross temporarily escape through prayers of repentance whenever they commit a sin while living, but when they sin again, they end up becoming sinners again. So, without becoming righteous until the moment of death, they always go before God repenting that they are sinners. However, those who keep and believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit receive the eternal removal of sin once and for all to become righteous, and even if they commit a sin, they return to the position of the righteous by believing that Jesus has already taken on even that sin through baptism. In other words, because a faith that believes only in the cross cannot reach the eternal removal of sin once and for all, it cannot be the complete gospel that the church should hold onto.

**5. When keeping this gospel of the water and the Spirit in the heart, the church becomes the light of the world.**

Only when God's church keeps the gospel of the water and the Spirit does it enjoy the blessing spoken of in the text. The text says, "*in whom we have boldness and access with*

*confidence through faith in Him" (Ephesians 3:12)*. That is, only those who keep and believe the correct gospel can receive the removal of sin and boldly go before God.

Also, the text concludes by asking for glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. When the church keeps this complete gospel, the righteous within it realize the greatness of salvation and ascribe eternal glory to God. Conversely, if the gospel is corrupted, the church loses that boldness and glory, and ends up degrading into a religious group that stays in guilt. Therefore, for the church to keep this gospel is precisely the work of keeping the life and glory of the church.

**6. To summarize:**

The gospel that God's church must keep is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is, the complete gospel that Jesus took on the sins of all mankind through the baptism He received from John, paid the wages on the cross, and saved us by resurrecting from death. This is a gospel in which not a single part of the baptism Jesus received, the cross, and the resurrection is missing, and it is the single truth that Paul, Peter, and John consistently preached. God's church must keep this gospel, but must sternly reject another gospel that tries to add circumcision, the law, or deeds, and a corrupted faith that leaves out baptism and believes only in the cross. Only when the church keeps this complete gospel can the righteous receive the removal of sin and boldly go before God, and ascribe eternal glory to God within it. In other words, keeping the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the life and mission of the church. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 4

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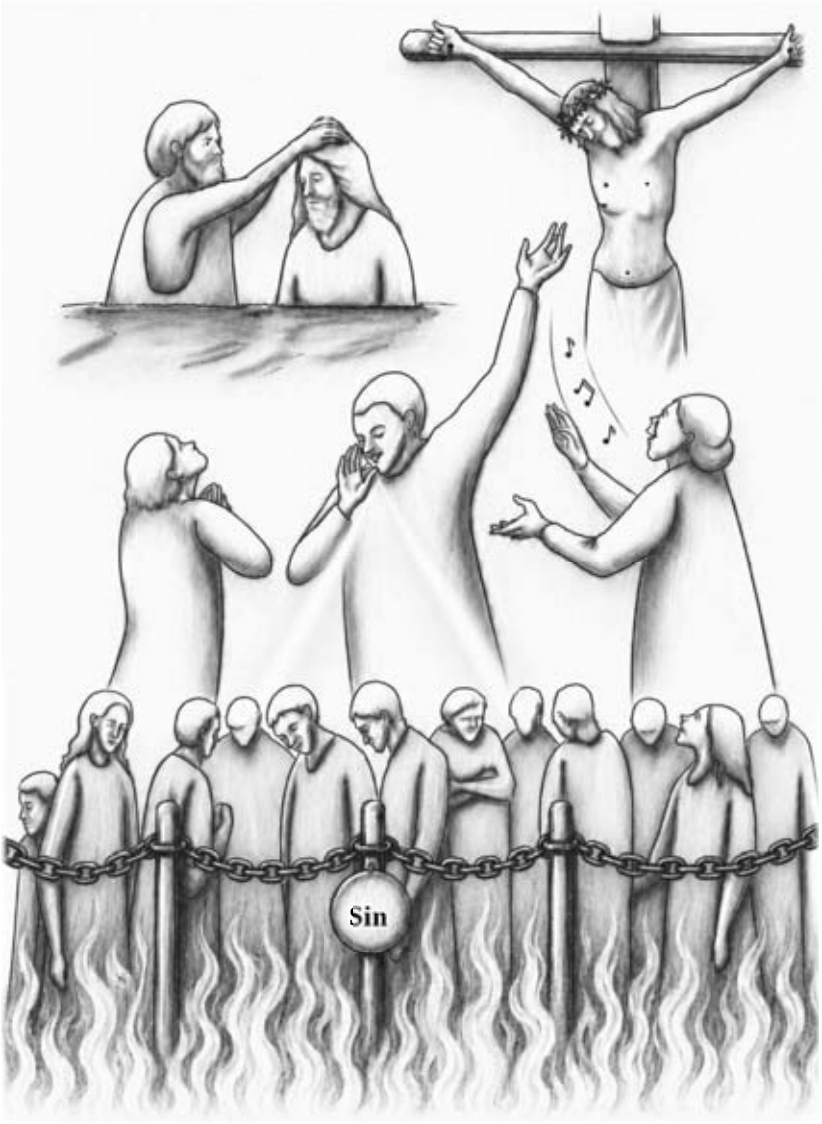


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Ephesians Chapter 4

# The Church United in the Lord and the Life of the Saints

**< Ephesians 4:1-32 >**

**"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: 'When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.' (Now this, 'He ascended'—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be**

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**children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another. 'Be angry, and do not sin': do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with**

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**all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."**

## The Word of Exhortation to Walk Worthy of the Calling

*"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1-2).*

Ephesians 4 begins with the word *"therefore."* This conjunction is a word that receives all the contents from the preceding chapters 1 to 3 and draws their conclusion. Apostle Paul conveyed in the previous chapters that although we were originally dead in trespasses and sins, God made us alive with His abundant mercy, gave us spiritual blessings in Christ, and made us children of God. Only after fully explaining that grace of salvation does he exhort, "therefore walk worthy." That is, it is not a word to obtain salvation by doing something, but a word that those who have already been freely saved should live fittingly for that salvation. The order is that salvation comes first, and life follows after it.

The expression *"the prisoner of the Lord"* shows that Apostle Paul is writing this letter in a state of being imprisoned. He was not imprisoned for doing bad things, but was imprisoned while preaching the gospel. Even in such a situation, rather than appealing his own circumstances, he was concerned about how the leaders and saints of the Ephesian church should live preaching the gospel by faith, and exhorted them through a letter.

The core of the word *"walk worthy of the calling with which you were called" (Ephesians 4:1)* is the fact that there is a purpose

in God's calling. God saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but He did not call us to stop at the elimination of sins of just us as individuals. After saving us, He called us as workers to make us preach this gospel to many people around us who have not yet been saved. Therefore, the word *"walk worthy of the calling"* points to a life lived preaching the received gospel. Apostle Paul himself was also a persecutor of those who believed in Jesus, but he was called on the road to Damascus, was saved, and became a worker of the gospel. Regardless of what circumstances we were in before meeting the Lord, God calls and saves us, and uses us in the work of calling other people. The word *"with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2)* is the specific attitude of that worthy life. Even among people who believed the same gospel of the water and the Spirit and were saved, their environments of upbringing, personalities, and hobbies are all different. For such different people to gather in one church and serve God together, lowliness, gentleness, and longsuffering are absolutely necessary. You must wait a long time until the other person follows by faith, so that they can learn faith within the church, grow, and later become one who leads those who come after as a senior in faith. The exhortation to bear with one another is not simple endurance, but a calling to embrace with love so that the members saved by one gospel can grow together.

## It is the word to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit

*"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3).*

This verse reveals what the preceding lowliness, gentleness,

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and longsuffering are ultimately for. It is exactly to keep *"the unity of the Spirit."* What must be clearly noted here is the fact that the One who made us one is not ourselves, but the Holy Spirit. The text says, *"the unity of the Spirit."* Oneness is not something created by human effort, but a fact already accomplished by the Holy Spirit, and we have received the command to *"endeavoring to keep"* that accomplished oneness. The expression *"endeavoring to keep"* premises that the oneness can be broken. This is because in a place where different people gather, clashes can easily occur due to differences in personality and environment. Therefore, it means to use peace as a binding cord, that is, to protect that oneness as if tying it tightly with a string of peace.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, what the foundation of this oneness is is clearly revealed in the immediately following verses 4 to 6. It is the word, *"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all."* Here, the part *"one baptism"* is especially important. This baptism points to the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, that is, the baptism in which He shouldered the sins of all mankind at once according to the law of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament. We all equally believed in that baptism Jesus received and the blood He shed on the cross, and received the removal of sins. Because we stand together upon the same God, the same Lord, the same faith, and the same baptism, we are originally one. Our oneness did not come from human intimacy or effort, but has its roots in the one gospel we all equally received, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Therefore, the command *"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit" (Ephesians 4:3)* is an exhortation to always remember

that we are one body saved by the same gospel, and to embrace one another with lowliness, gentleness, and longsuffering so that the oneness is not broken due to human differences.

## We must believe within one body, one hope, one faith, and one baptism

*"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:4-5).*

In verse 3, after exhorting to *"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit"* Apostle Paul immediately reveals what the basis of that oneness is in seven ways across verses 4 to 6. They are one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God. The reason we must form one is because we originally stand upon one foundation.

The word *"There is one body"* points out that God's church is one body of Christ. The place where people who believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the elimination of sins gather is God's church, and they are members of one body with Christ as the head. The word *"and one Spirit"* means that one Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of the saints who have received the removal of sins. Even if we are different people, because the same Holy Spirit is within us, we are one.

The word *"just as you were called in one hope of your calling" (Ephesians 4:4)* shows that the calling we received contains the same hope. This hope points to the glorious life we will enjoy as God's children in the kingdom of God in the future. We were not only saved from sin but became God's family, and because we look at that promised glory together, we can also endure the sufferings on this earth.

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The word *"one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5)* emphasizes that all our salvation came from the same one faith. *"One Lord"* points out that our Savior is only the one Christ. Christ becomes our Creator, our Savior, and our God. *"One faith"* means that the belief that believes the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the same for all saints. If someone speaks of salvation with different verses, and someone else in yet another way, that is not the same faith. The belief that Christ came to this earth, received baptism to take charge of our sins, hung and died on the cross, and resurrected from death to save us is the only true one faith.

There is a clear reason why Apostle Paul specifically pointed out the part *"one baptism"* in particular. It is because baptism is directly connected to the washing away of sins. The baptism spoken of here does not point to a ceremony of pouring water on a person's head, but points to the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. By receiving baptism from John the Baptist through the law of the laying on of hands, Jesus shouldered the sins of all mankind at once, and because He bore those sins, He could go to the cross and die in our place, and by living again, He could completely save us. The baptism we receive is exactly the confession of faith that we believe this fact. Therefore, the true baptism is not two or three, but only one, and we all believed this one baptism and received the elimination of sins.

## We must know and believe the one God who becomes the Father of all

*"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:6).*

The last of the sevenfold oneness is *"one God."* This word is not simply counting the number of God, but emphasizing that the God we believe in is all the same one Being. God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit exist, but to us They become one God, and those who have become God's people all serve this same God with the same faith.

The word *"and Father of all"* points out that this God is the One who created all things. The visible world and the invisible world, all creatures came from God. That Creator God saved us from sin and became our Father, our Savior, and our Shepherd.

The three expressions that follow sequentially show what kind of Being that God is. The word *"who is above all"* means that God is above all creatures and rules over all of them. God is not One bound under the creaturely world, but the One who dominates all of it. The word *"and through all"* [literally: unifies all] points to our salvation. It means that He made us, who were originally mere creatures, into the same status as God, that is, His children, so that we became one family with God. The word *"and in you all."* means that there is no place where God is not present. However, this word by no means points to pantheism, which says everything is god. It means that God created and rules all things, but especially dwells together as the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the saints who have received the removal of sins, making us His people.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the fact becomes clear that we were saved by believing in the righteousness of Christ within the plan of salvation established by this one God. The Father of Christ who delivered us from sin created the whole universe, and that God did not leave us merely as creatures but made us one family and one kingdom with Him. Therefore, the faith of those who believed in such a God and received the elimination of sins is all identical, and we must

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never lose this faith and must endeavor to keep it.

## We must cherish the grace of salvation given according to the measure of Christ's gift

*"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: 'When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men'" (Ephesians 4:7-8).*

In the preceding verses 1 to 6, Apostle Paul emphasized that all saints are one in one body, one Spirit, one faith, and one baptism. Verse 7 moves on to the fact that even within that oneness, what is given to each person is different. We believed in the same gospel of the water and the Spirit and became one body, but Christ gave grace to each person according to the measure of His gift. That is, He distributed grace and talents not in the exact same measure to everyone, but in a measure fitting for each individual.

Here, *"grace"* and *"gift"* do not point only to the salvation we received. Christ not only saved us from sin, but He also distributed all the spiritual blessings of heaven that He possesses to us. The ability to preach the gospel, the ability to teach, wisdom, understanding, faith, and the various offices within the church are all gifts bestowed by Christ. All the talents we have are God's gifts, and God accomplishes His kingdom through these different gifts.

The word, *"When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." (Ephesians 4:8)* is a quote from Psalm 68:18. It means that Christ ascended on high as a victor and distributed gifts to His people. We, who have been delivered from sin by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, are precisely

the ones who have received those gifts.

## It is Christ who descended to the lower parts and ascended to the higher parts

*"Now this, 'He ascended'—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:9-10).*

Receiving the word in verse 8 that Christ "ascended on high," Apostle Paul reveals that prior to that ascending, there was first a "descending." The word, *"Now this, 'He ascended'—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?" (Ephesians 4:9)* points out that the One who ascended on high is originally the One who had descended to the lowest parts.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this descending and ascending is a word that compresses the entirety of Christ's salvation ministry. Christ, who is God, put on human flesh and came down low to this earth, shouldered the sins of all mankind by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, and descended to the lowest place, that is, the dwelling place of death, by hanging and dying on the cross while bearing those sins. And in three days, He resurrected from death and ascended above all the heavens. The word, *"He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens" (Ephesians 4:10)* testifies that the very One who descended to the lowest place to save us is the One who ascended to the highest position ruling over all things.

The word, *"that He might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10)* reveals the purpose of that descending and ascending. To fill all

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things means to construct and expand the kingdom of God. It is Christ coming upon each person, making them God's people, and gradually expanding the kingdom of God where those people gather. That is, each and every person receiving the elimination of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, thereby causing the kingdom of God to grow, is the work of *"fill all things."* This is exactly the reason why we do not stop at having received the elimination of sins, but preach the received gospel and serve.

## It is the equipping of the saints to build up the body of Christ

*"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12).*

Previously, from verses 7 to 10, Apostle Paul conveyed that Christ descended to the lower parts and ascended to the higher parts, distributing gifts to each person. Verse 11 reveals what those gifts specifically are. Namely, they are the various offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Christ established these offices within the church.

What is important here is the fact that He did not merely give the offices, but He gave the abilities fitting for those offices together with them. God first gives the ability and then establishes that person as an office-bearer. He not only gives salvation to those who have received the removal of sins, but He gives the ability to teach to some, the ability to work well to some, and wisdom to some, so that each can handle God's work. All these talents are the gifts and endowments bestowed by Christ.

The word, *"for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12)* clearly reveals the purpose for which those offices were established. The offices are not for someone's elevation, but for equipping the saints, doing the work of ministry, and building up the body of Christ. Here, the *"body of Christ"* is precisely the church, and building up the church points to expanding the kingdom of God.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the reason God gave offices and gifts is ultimately to make this gospel preached more widely. We have received the elimination of sins through the same gospel of the water and the Spirit, but if we stop at being saved, it is difficult to fully handle the life of faith. Therefore, God established leaders, servants, and teachers within the church to teach and lead one another, and in doing so, allowed the saints to be equipped and handle the work of ministry so that the kingdom of God may grow.

## We must become one in believing and knowing, to reach the measure of stature

*"Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).*

Verse 13 reveals what the goal is of building up the body of Christ through offices and ministry mentioned in verses 11 and 12. Namely, it is that we all *"come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God"* to reach the measure of the stature of Christ. The final destination of offices and ministry lies in each and every saint growing in faith and becoming a perfect man.

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Here, Apostle Paul shows two ways in which faith grows. First is *"the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God" (Ephesians 4:13)*. We come to believe as much as we know Jesus Christ, and we come to act as much as we believe. The more we come to know who Christ is and how He saved us—that is, the fact that He came in human flesh, took charge of our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to save us—our faith grows. If we do not know Christ, our faith can never grow. Our faith grows exactly as much as we come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit more deeply.

Second is growing within love. Faith does not grow alone. Just as the text says *"come to the unity of the faith,"* we grow by being joined and knit together within the church. Those who are ahead care for and lead those who come after with love, and through that love, the saints directly experience God's love. In the midst of giving and receiving help like that, faith grows and forms a *"perfect man."*

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, reaching *"to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13)* does not mean ending with having received the removal of sins once, but points to a growth in which one always ruminates on that received salvation in the heart and comes to know and believe Christ more deeply. Salvation is received at once, but faith grows by repeatedly confirming the righteous deeds Christ performed amidst our shortcomings. When we thus become one in believing and knowing, the church is built up as the perfect body of Christ that is not shaken by the trickery of men and cunning deceit.

## We must not remain as children, shaken by every wind of doctrine.

*"That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting" (Ephesians 4:14).*

In the preceding verse 13, Apostle Paul said that we become one in believing and knowing, reaching the measure of the stature of Christ. Verse 14 shows the reason why we must grow like that. Namely, it is so that we no longer remain as children. Those who remain as children in faith are easy to be shaken, *"carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting."*

Since the early church era, false people would enter the church and scatter the saints. So Apostle Paul was greatly concerned about this. If people do not firmly hold onto this truth—that Christ came to this earth to establish a good relationship with us, received baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to save us—they are easily swept away by all kinds of false teachings.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the way to "not be shaken" lies in clearly knowing and firmly holding onto this gospel. Some speak of salvation with other verses, and some in other different ways, but a faith that does not believe the fact that Christ took charge of our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to save us, is shaken and pushed by the winds of doctrine. Only when we grow in faith and become mature can we protect this community of the gospel from being broken, even if false ones come in and hinder it.

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## We must grow up to Christ, who is the head, in love

*"But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:15-16).*

In contrast to the image of remaining as a child and being shaken in verse 14, verse 15 shows the path we ought to grow in. It is precisely to *"the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him."* Just as the Lord came to this earth and saved us by doing good works for us, our faith must also grow like that in love.

The word, *"Him who is the head—Christ,"* clarifies that the head of the church is Christ. Christ becomes the head, and we are the members of that body. Just as the head and neck are connected, the chest and limbs are connected, and all joints are joined together, the saints also communicate, join together, and grow together. As the text says, *"joined and knit together by what every joint supplies" (Ephesians 4:16),* faith never grows alone. Faith grows while fellowshipping with those ahead of oneself, receiving teaching, giving help, and supporting each other's weaknesses.

The word, *"according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body" (Ephesians 4:16),* means that the entire body of Christ grows only when each person handles their role according to the measure they received. Not a single member is useless, and when each serves according to the gift they received, the church is firmly built up. And the foundation of all this growth is *"love."* The church of God cannot become perfect without love. When unity is achieved

upon the truth of knowing Christ, upon the faith that truly believes in Him, and upon the love that embraces one another, we can smoothly handle God's work.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the result of this growth ultimately leads to the work of preaching the gospel. Because when faith grows, God makes us do that work. To grow up to Christ, who is the head, means that we come to know the gospel of the water and the Spirit we received more deeply, build each other up in love, and finally become perfect as those who expand the kingdom of God by preaching that gospel.

## We must not follow the futile walk of the Gentiles

*"This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:17-18).*

Ephesians chapter 4 moves to a new paragraph in verse 17. While verses 1 to 16 dealt with keeping unity worthy of the calling and growing as the body of Christ, from verse 17, it exhorts how born-again people should actually live in their real lives. The first word is, *"you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind."* Here, the Gentiles refer to those who do not yet know God and live according to the ways of the world. Apostle Paul exhorts us, who are born again, not to follow the direction of living only for perishable things and momentary pleasures like the people of the world.

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The word, *"having their understanding darkened" (Ephesians 4:18)*, shows the condition of the Gentiles. Those who live pursuing futile things have their hearts hardened and their understanding darkened, becoming unable to discern what is right and wrong. The mind should be clear and clean to discern reason, but if one leaves oneself to sin and pleasure, one loses such discernment. The word, *"being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:18)*, shows that as a result of such a hardened heart, one becomes distant from the life of God. If one becomes a person with a dull heart, one cannot follow God and cannot know God's deep will.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this exhortation touches upon the homework that born-again people must solve. We believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, were washed from all sins, and became sinless. However, precisely because of that sinlessness, there is a danger of leaving oneself to dissipation. Because there is no sin in the heart, one might leave one's flesh to flow as it wants. But that is not God's will, and the Holy Spirit is not pleased. This is the reason why Apostle Paul confessed, *"I die daily" (1 Corinthians 15:31)*. Even a person who has received the removal of sins has flesh, so there are times when thoughts of sin arise; whenever that happens, if one puts oneself to death and serves only God, one can live a righteous life daily. Therefore, the reason we can avoid following the futile walk of the Gentiles is not by the power of our resolution or effort. Only when we believe the fact that Christ completely eliminated our sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and made us new people, and offer ourselves to God daily, can our understanding not be darkened and we remain in the life of God.

## We must not abandon ourselves to dissipation

*"Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ" (Ephesians 4:19-20).*

Verse 19 shows where the condition of the Gentiles depicted in verses 17 and 18 ultimately leads. Those whose hearts are hardened and understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, finally become *"past feeling"*. Becoming past feeling means no longer feeling shame or hesitation regarding sin. The conscience has become dull, losing the sense to distinguish right from wrong.

The word, *"have given themselves over to lewdness" (Ephesians 4:19),* is the core of this paragraph. Giving oneself over means leaving oneself as is. It is throwing oneself and not stopping oneself as the flesh desires and as the sins of the flesh lead. If one leaves oneself to flow like that, one comes to work all uncleanness with greediness. Endlessly committing sin as greed leads, yet feeling no hesitation whatsoever about it, is the image of the Gentiles.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this word becomes a deep warning to us who are born again. We believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, were washed from all sins, and became sinless. However, using that sinlessness as an excuse, there is a danger of abandoning oneself to dissipation. Since there is no sin, one might leave the flesh to flow as it wants. But if throwing oneself into sin piles up for a day or two, eventually the understanding becomes darkened and the heart hardens, and even the desire to live for God completely disappears. Therefore, "do not abandon yourself to dissipation" is not a simple exhortation but God's command.

In Ephesians 4:20, Apostle Paul clearly separates the born-again

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ones from the Gentiles. The word, *"But you have not so learned Christ,"* is exactly that. Namely, what we learned from Christ is completely different from the dissipated life of the Gentiles. Christ taught us to live for the salvation of other people's souls, told us to pursue peace, and told us to live serving a righteous life. The Christ we learned is the One who came in human flesh, took charge of our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to create us as new, sinless people; He is not the One who taught us to live dissipatedly following greed.

## We must put off the old man and put on the new man

*"If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:21-24).*

Following the word in verse 20, *"But you have not so learned Christ,"* verse 21 reveals what we have learned from Christ. The word *"as the truth is in Jesus"* indicates that the true truth is in none other than Jesus Christ. We are the ones who have heard the truth that is in that very Jesus and have been taught in Him. The first exhortation given to those who have thus learned the truth is to *"put off… the old man."* The text describes the old man as one *"which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."* The old man refers to the flesh that was dragged around by our lusts, that is, the old way of life living as greed led us. If one has learned the truth, they must now put off that corrupting old habit of life.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the exhortation to put off the old man is based on the salvation we have already received. Because Christ took our sins upon Himself through His baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to cleanse us from all sins, the old man has already passed away with Christ. Therefore, putting off the old man is not a merit we achieve by overcoming lusts on our own, but rather believing in the salvation Christ has accomplished and living according to that received fact. Because we are sinless, we can put off that old habit and live newly whenever we make up our minds. This is because Jesus Christ has already taken away all sins.

The exhortation to put off the old man in Ephesians 4:22 continues with the exhortation to put on the new man in verses 23 and 24. That way is exactly to *"be renewed in the spirit of your mind."* The renewing of the spirit is not making our minds new by firming our resolutions or accumulating efforts. It happens only when we believe the fact that Jesus took away all our sins, that is, the truth of salvation that the Lord cleansed us from all sins. Because the Lord took charge of our sins, washed them away, and judged them through the gospel of the water and the Spirit to make us sinless, the heart that believes that fact is the renewed spirit.

The word, *"and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)*, refers to the life lived with such a renewed spirit. The new man is not something we create, but what God has created in true righteousness and holiness. We simply need to put on that created new man by faith. This is exactly the life filled with the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is not speaking in tongues or having a special experience, but thinking about, believing, and being thankful for the fact that the Lord saved us from all sins and made us sinless, and living for

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the work of desiring this gospel of the water and the Spirit to be preached to the whole world.

## We must put away lying and speak what is true

*"Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another" (Ephesians 4:25).*

Receiving the previous exhortation from Ephesians 4:22 to 24 to put off the old man and put on the new man, from verse 25 it unfolds one by one what the life of the new man specifically looks like. The first of these is *"putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor.'"* The very first thing one who has put off the old man must discard is falsehood, and what must be newly put on is true speech.

The text reveals the reason as *"for we are members of one another."* Because we are members of one body with Christ as the head, one member speaking a lie to another member is exactly like deceiving one's own body. Therefore, speaking the truth to one another is not simple morality, but a rightful duty to be kept as members of one body.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the truest word we must preach is the truth of salvation. It is to preach this true word—that Christ took our sins through His baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to make us sinless—to one another and to the whole world without falsehood. False words fail to deliver the light and instead end up being used by Satan the devil, but true words impart grace to the listener and let the gospel flow. One who has put on the new man lives truly testifying to the received truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## We must not sin even if we are angry, and must not give place to the devil

*"'Be angry, and do not sin': do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27).*

The second exhortation regarding the life of the new man is about controlling anger. The text says, *"Be angry, and do not sin" (Ephesians 4:26).* This is not an unconditional prohibition of anger itself, but an exhortation that even if one gets angry, it should not lead to sin. There can be anger toward unrighteous things, but that anger must be controlled so it does not become a sin.

The word *"do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26)* means not to keep that anger in the heart for long. This is because if you drag out time while harboring anger, that heart grows into hatred and malice. So it continues to exhort, *"nor give place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:27).* Anger harbored in the heart becomes a gap for the devil to squeeze into. One must quickly release the anger to not give place to the devil and to keep the peace among the members who have become one body.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the foundation upon which we can control our anger lies in the pardon we have received. Because God has forgiven and eliminated all our sins in Christ, we too can have compassion on and forgive one another. The new man who has received the removal of sins, instead of harboring anger and giving place to the devil, forgives the brother according to the received pardon and maintains peace.

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## We must not steal, but labor to give to those in need

*"Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need" (Ephesians 4:28).*

The third exhortation regarding the life of the new man is about stealing. The text says, *"Let him who stole steal no longer."* One who used to steal according to old habits must cut off that habit. However, the Apostle Paul's exhortation does not stop merely at *"steal no longer."* He tells us to actively fill that place with goodness.

The word *"but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need"* is exactly that. Putting off the old man does not stop at ceasing evil, but advances to the point of putting on goodness in its place. It means to work diligently and truthfully with one's own hands, not just to feed oneself, but to prepare something to share with the poor. The hand that used to take now becomes a hand that gives.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this exhortation is exactly following the way of life Christ showed us. The Lord came to serve us, sacrificed Himself to make us sinless, and blessed us. We who have received that love must also live a life of laboring and sharing for those who have not yet entered the gospel, and for our needy neighbors. Not stopping at enjoying the salvation received, but laboring with one's own hands to benefit others and serve the gospel is the rightful appearance of the new man.

## We must speak good words that edify instead of corrupt words

*"Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29).*

Following the exhortation in Ephesians 4:25 to put away lying and speak what is true, verse 29 shows one step more specifically what the words of the new man should be like. That is, let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth. Here, corrupt words refer to words that harm the listener and defile the mind, such as obscene talk, evil words, or words that kill a person. It does not prohibit even light jokes or humor intended to soften the heart, but it means not to even utter evil and corrupt words out of your mouth at all.

The text does not stop there, but exhorts, *"but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers."* It means not stopping at ceasing corrupt words, but filling that place with good words that edify. It means the words we speak must bring benefit and become grace to the listener. If one continues to speak evil words, blackmailing words, or words that exaggerate oneself, no matter how born again one is, they cannot deliver the light and instead end up being used by Satan the devil. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the greatest word of grace we must preach with our mouths is the truth of salvation. This gospel—that Christ took our sins upon Himself through His baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to make us sinless—is the very word that imparts the greatest grace to the hearers. One who has put on the new man, instead of hurting people with corrupt words, builds up neighbors with true and good words and preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit, letting the grace of salvation flow to

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other souls.

## We must not grieve the Holy Spirit of God

*"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30).*

The Apostle Paul, who exhorted to put away lying, anger, stealing, and corrupt words from verses 25 to 29, gives a word that binds all these exhortations together in verse 30. That is, *"do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God."* When we abandon the life of the new man and return to the appearance of the old man, that itself becomes the act of grieving the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

The flow of the text clearly shows what it means to grieve the Holy Spirit. It is for the righteous to live like sinners, that is, living by committing sins and pursuing the purposes of the world like worldly people, even while knowing they have become sinless by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Just as a parent's heart is hurt and worried when a child forsakes the parent's will and does things the parent does not want, the Spirit of God is grieved when a child of God lives like a worldly person.

The word, *"by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption"* is the foundation of the reason why we must not grieve the Holy Spirit. We have been sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption, that is, the day our salvation is fully completed. Being sealed is the evidence that we have been confirmed as God's possession. The Holy Spirit dwells together within us, who have received the removal of sins, through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and guarantees us as God's people.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this word demands us to draw a clear line in our hearts. We are

not worldly people, and at the very least, we are those who have been saved from sin. Therefore, even if we are lacking, we must live doing the things that please the Lord, and we must not live pursuing sin like worldly people. When we receive the circumcision of the heart that cuts off the old habits and evil thoughts from before being born again, we can live thanking the grace of the Lord who eliminated our sins, without grieving the Holy Spirit who is within us.

## We must put away bitterness and forgive one another just as God forgave us

*"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:31-32).*

Receiving the exhortation not to grieve the Holy Spirit in verse 30, verses 31 and 32 divide its specific contents into what must be put away and what must be put on. First, what must be put away is *"all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking"* and it says to put these away with all malice. These are sins that originate from hatred and anger harbored in the heart and burst out into words and actions. One who has put on the new man must put away all such evil starting from the heart. What must be put on in the place where it was put away is verse 32. It is to *"be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another."* Even if a brother has a rough edge or a flawed part, it means to treat them kindly, be tenderhearted, and forgive them with the expectation that it will be cast off someday. Not stopping at putting away bitterness, but filling that empty space with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness is the life of the new

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man.

This forgiveness has a clear standard. It is *"even as God in Christ forgave you."* The reason we must forgive one another and the standard of its measure both lie in God having forgiven us. We were not forgiven by our own merit, but freely forgiven in Christ.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the foundation of the word *"God in Christ forgave you"* lies in the salvation Christ accomplished. Christ took all our sins upon Himself through His baptism in the Jordan River, paid the full wages of those sins on the cross, and resurrected to make us sinless. Because God has thus completely forgiven all our sins in Christ, we too can forgive one another with the same love. Because the forgiveness I received is great and perfect, forgiveness toward a brother is also natural. The received grace of the gospel of the water and the Spirit becomes the power that enables us to put away bitterness, forgive one another, and live as one body. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# A New Man Walking Worthy of the Calling and Growing Together to the Measure of Christ

**< Ephesians 4:1-32 >**

**"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says: 'When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.' (Now this, 'He ascended'—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge**

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**of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another. 'Be angry, and do not sin': do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom**

**you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."**

## What does God want from us who have been saved from sin?

Through the words of Ephesians 4, the core heart God wants from us who have received the removal of sins is to bear the fruit of life fitting for the status of being saved from sin. The Apostle Paul expressed this as a life walking worthy of the calling with which we were called. Specifically, the three directions of life God wants from us can be summarized as follows.

## It is to make every effort to keep the unity of the faith

God does not want us to keep our faith individually, but to exist as one body within the gospel of the water and the Spirit. For this, an attitude of bearing with one another in all humility, gentleness, patience, and love is necessary. This is because there is one Lord, and the faith in Him—who took on the sins of the world through the baptism Jesus received from John, was crucified, and resurrected from the dead—is all the same. When we acknowledge that the brothers and sisters beside us have been saved by the exact same gospel of the water and the Spirit as us and unite, we become brothers and sisters.

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## It is to grow to the mature measure of Christ

God does not want us to remain as those who stay only in the state right after being saved from sin. The faith God wants is to possess a faith that is not easily shaken by the temptations of the world or the cunning deceit of men. Our faith must grow in all things into Him who is the head, that is, Christ. In other words, it is God's will for our faith, thoughts, character, and values of faith to resemble Jesus Christ and become more mature.

## It is to put off the old man and put on the new man

God does not want us to still live bound by past sinful habits, even though we have been washed from the sins of the world by the baptism the Lord received from John. We must boldly put off the appearance of the old man, which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts—that is, falsehood, anger, filthy language, etc. Instead, we must live our daily lives as a new man, being renewed in the spirit of our minds and created according to God in true righteousness and holiness.

To summarize, the greatest principle God wants from us is to live a life that does not grieve the Holy Spirit who is in us. The Holy Spirit is grieved when we go down the path of sin again or hate our brothers. What God wants is not for us to become humanly perfect. It means that He wants a life lived by faith, being so thankful for the love of the Lord, who took on the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John for you and me, went to the cross, was crucified, and shed His blood.

The holy desire itself to want to live worthy of the grace of salvation by which the Lord saved me from the sins of the world becomes the precious gift God most wants to receive from us.

When we harbor this heart and choose the path of the new man, we finally live the life of a true saint responding to God's calling. I hope that today as well, you will continue a life that becomes the Lord's joy, walking with the Holy Spirit who is in us.

## Is God the one who has granted us the Kingdom of God?

God wants us, who believe in the gospel word of the water and the Spirit, to live believing Him as the one who has granted us not only the kingdom of heaven we go to after the death of the flesh, but also the Kingdom of God we will enjoy in the future, starting right now on this earth. Synthesizing Ephesians 4 and the preceding words, the kingdom God has granted us contains the following three amazing meanings.

## A kingdom granted as a status: Heirs of God

The moment we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our status completely changed from slaves of sin to children of God's kingdom. Ephesians 3:6 testifies that we have become fellow heirs, that is, inheritors together in Christ. God did not entrust His kingdom to outsiders, but gave that kingdom as an inheritance to the saints who became righteous by faith believing in the truth that Jesus Christ gave the washing of sins to our hearts through the baptism He received from John and the blood of the cross. Therefore, we have become those who possess the faith to live in the Kingdom of God.

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## A kingdom that has actually come: Reign within the Holy Spirit

Living in the Kingdom of God is not something that will only happen in the distant future. For those who believe the righteousness of Jesus Christ in their hearts, the life of living in that kingdom has already begun. The Kingdom of God does not simply consist in outward things like eating and drinking, but in righteousness, peace, and joy enjoyed while living by faith within the Holy Spirit. God wants us to taste the life of the Kingdom of God while being ruled by Him.

## Those who live in the Kingdom of God are workers of Christ

God granted us the salvation Christ gave us, but He called us as holy workers of that kingdom. Looking at Ephesians 4:12 and below, we can see that the reason He gave various offices such as apostles, prophets, and evangelists is to build up the church, which is the body of Christ. The church established on this earth is the place where the Kingdom of God appears visibly. God wants to further expand the Kingdom of God and accomplish the work of new life through the faith of those who are born again.
To summarize, the fact that we have been granted the Kingdom of God endows us with tremendous pride and, at the same time, a holy sense of responsibility. It reminds us that even if the circumstances of the world oppress us, we must live without losing the faith that we are children of the King who possess the eternal Kingdom of God.
Satan hopes that saints will live bound by the problems of the flesh, forgetting the life of the Kingdom of God, but we must

live holding onto the faith that God has granted us the Kingdom of God. We must look back to see if there is the faith and peace that the Kingdom of God brings within our hearts right now. A life that confidently triumphs by faith as the people of God's kingdom will indeed be the glorious appearance of faith that our God expects from us.

## What God wants from us is whether we are living right now hoping for the Kingdom of God

All the guidelines for life that the Apostle Paul earnestly exhorted in Ephesians 4 are possible only on the foundation of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we believe. The reasons why God wants us to live keeping this faith, based on the principles of Ephesians 4, can be explained in three ways as follows.

## It is to protect from the temptation to destroy the unity of faith

The Apostle Paul proclaimed that there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Here, baptism refers to the faith of believing in Jesus Christ, who took on the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, went to the cross, was crucified, and resurrected from the dead. There are countless winds of teaching and human deceit in the world trying to shake us. God tells us not to be tossed back and forth pushed by these temptations, but to live the rest of our lives firmly keeping the faith that believes in the pure gospel word of the water and the Spirit, which made us righteous at once.

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## The way to maintain the identity of a new man is the path of faith

A person who has been clothed in holiness by faith believing in the Word of God can live being led by the Holy Spirit. Only when we stay daily in the faith that Jesus washed away all my sins with water and the Spirit can our spirits finally be renewed. Keeping the faith that believes in this gospel word of the water and the Spirit is itself the only way to maintain the state of wearing the clothes of the new man.

## Because it is a life that respects the sealing of the Holy Spirit

A born-again saint is a being who has been sealed by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit within us constantly testifies to the fact that we are children of God who have received the removal of sins. If we abandon this faith and act as slaves to sin again or doubt the gospel, the Holy Spirit becomes grieved. God wants us to live a life that respects His sealing, joyfully walking with the Holy Spirit within us by keeping the conviction of the gospel to the end.

In conclusion, the life of keeping the faith that God wants does not stop at simply remembering it as knowledge. It is the conviction to respond with the truth that Jesus took away all my sins with water and the Spirit when the world condemns, and it is the unity of acknowledging that other saints have also become one through the same gospel and bearing with one another. Also, because this gospel is so precious, it means the fruit of a life that does not return to the filthy old customs of the past but lives speaking good words that build up edification.

Rather than us leaving behind great achievements, God is most pleased when we consider the gospel of the water and the Spirit given as a gift like a treasure and rest in it. This is because when that faith is kept, the work of growing to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, which Ephesians 4 emphasizes, naturally occurs. I hope that today as well, you will walk confidently and peacefully upon the faith of this gospel, and complete the race of faith that the Lord cheers on to the very end.

## Is it our God's will that God connects us to each other as one people of God to live?

The core that the Apostle Paul emphasized in Ephesians 4 is the fact that God did not save us to live as independent individuals, but made us live firmly connected to each other within the massive organism called the body of Christ. The reasons why this is God's desperate blueprint and will can be summarized through the words of Ephesians 4 as follows.

## Because the body of Christ is one

The Bible defines the gathering of saved saints as the body of Christ. Just as the arms and legs, which are members of the body, cannot survive apart from each other, God wants us to be connected to each other in the Holy Spirit to give and receive life. Ephesians 4:3 says that the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace firmly binds us. When we live closely connected to each other, the world finally witnesses the living presence of God and His glory through the body that is us.

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## It is to make us grow by receiving help from each other

God has granted each of us different gifts and measures of faith. According to verse 16, it is recorded that the whole body, receiving help through every joint, is joined and knit together to make the body grow. This is the principle of filling each one's lack with the strength of other members, and embracing the weakness of other members with my strengths. Only within a relationship where we are connected and give and receive help like this can we grow healthily and completely up to Christ, who is the head.

## Because we have become members of one another

The fundamental reason we must live connected to each other is that spiritually and legally, we have already become parts of one body. Ephesians 4:25 exhorts, *"Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another."* Just as the hand of my body cherishes and cares for the foot, God wants us to treat each other kindly, be tenderhearted, and forgive one another. The practice of such a connected life is the ultimate destination to which God has called us.

To summarize, the connection between saints is a protective shield that guards us and a spiritual power. Satan tries to isolate saints from the community to make them fall into discouragement and temptation, but God has connected us to each other with the strong adhesive called the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we keep the faith together, we enjoy the safety of not being shaken by the winds of the world, and by

sharing the love of Christ experienced by other members, we come to experience the richness that reaches all the fullness of God.
The members beside us who share the gospel together are like precious lifelines prepared by God. Within this amazing truth that we are one, we must value each other and be built together into a dwelling place of God. When we deeply enjoy the reassurance and warmth given by the mystery of this connection, we can finally exert our complete function as the body of Christ and become God's joy.

## Are those who live in God's royal palace the body of Jesus Christ?

The Kingdom of God, which is God's royal palace, goes beyond simply a certain physical place and means everywhere the rule of Jesus Christ reaches. And those who live receiving the Lord's rule within that royal palace are exactly the church, which is the body of Jesus Christ. Explaining this mysterious relationship from three perspectives is as follows.

## The reality of the royal palace is exactly the body of Christ

The Kingdom of God is invisible to the eye, but the only reality that visibly shows that kingdom on this earth is the church, which is the body of Christ. Just as a king resides in a royal palace, Christ, who is the head, directly resides and rules within the body of Christ. The fact that we have been born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have become

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members of this body means that we have already entered into the Kingdom of God and are living according to His law of love and truth.

## We are connected to each other as members of the royal palace

Just as the people of the royal palace take on their respective roles to sustain the kingdom, the saints who have become the body of Christ are closely connected to each other. Ephesians 4:16 testifies that the whole body, receiving help through every joint, is joined and knit together to make the body grow. Within God's royal palace, we are not independent individuals but precious members who are indispensable to one another. When we love and bear with one another, the holy order and beauty of that royal palace are testified to the world.

## We enjoy authority as heirs of the royal palace

Those who live in the royal palace are not simple residents, but heirs with the rightful authority to enjoy the wealth of that kingdom. The members who have become the body of Christ will jointly inherit all the glory and spiritual blessings in the heavenly places that Christ the head has achieved through victory. If we have become a part of the body of Christ, all the resources of the royal palace—peace, wisdom, and power—are already ours. God wants us to live confidently using this authority by faith.

To summarize, God's royal palace is the spiritual territory where we dwell, and the body of Christ is our true identity living and

moving within it. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have entered the royal palace, become the body of Christ connected to the Lord who is the head, and have now become beings who live by the love of Christ, which is the King's will, not our own will.

The fact that I am the body of Christ living in God's royal palace maximizes the value of our existence. As children of the King, and also as the precious body of the Lord, it is right to live a life of victory fitting for that dignity. Being convinced of this magnificent truth, I hope that today as well, you will walk fully enjoying the glory of the kingdom as members who have become the body of Christ. ✉

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Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# What a Spirit-filled life is

**< Ephesians 4:17-32 >**

**"This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another. 'Be angry, and do not sin': do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as**

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**God in Christ forgave you."**

## What is a Spirit-filled life?

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is exactly this. Thinking, believing, thanking, and following by faith that oneself has received the removal of sins through the Lord and that the Lord has eliminated all our sins; that heart where one's mind is truly filled with the righteousness of Christ, and such a life—this is the life ruled by God.

In the past, because people lived their life of faith incorrectly, when they hear 'the fullness of the Holy Spirit', they think speaking in tongues is the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Such a thing is absolutely not the fullness of the Holy Spirit. No matter how much one speaks in tongues, will the heart be renewed? The heart being renewed is because of the word of salvation and the righteousness of salvation by which the Lord saved us from all sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## Fullness caused by faith believing in the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

Because the Lord made us sinless, and because He took charge of our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, washed them cleanly, judged all sins, and saved us, there is no sin in our hearts. He did not only eliminate our sins, but He also eliminated the sins of other people. The Lord's love is not limited only to us, but was bestowed equally upon all people in the whole world.

A person filled with such a heart, such a faith, and such belief is

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exactly the one who is filled with the Holy Spirit. A person who has become clean in his heart through the salvation given by the Lord, a person who knows there is no sin in his heart, a person who knows the fact that He eliminated not only his own sins but also the sins of others, and therefore wants the salvation given by the Lord to be preached to the people of the whole world and lives for this work—such a person is a Spirit-filled person. The Apostle Paul is speaking like this, and we also believe like this.

## The way to be renewed in spirit

When are we renewed in spirit? When we believe the fact that the Lord saved us from all the sins of you and me, our spirits become clean.

Therefore, if we want our spirits to become clean, even if it is unavoidable that the hearts of you and me often fall fleshly or temporarily, we must set our minds that living like worldly people is very wrong and the Lord is not pleased with it, saying 'At least I will not live like that,' and we must live distinguishing ourselves from the world.

While following the Lord like that, when we know and ruminate by faith that even the lacking parts and all sins have been eliminated by the righteousness of the Lord, because there is no sin, our hearts are renewed and we become those who follow the Lord. Such people are exactly the people who live a Spirit-filled life.

## Put away lying and speak the truth

Living a Spirit-filled life is this. In verse 25, He said,

*"Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,'" (Ephesians 4:25).* What does it mean to 'speak the truth'?

The Lord having eliminated our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, having taken charge of all sins through His baptism, having received the judgment on the cross, and having resurrected from death to make us perfectly sinless—telling them like this, 'The Lord also took charge of and eliminated your sins like this,' this is exactly speaking the truth.

Who are the ones speaking true words in this world? They are the people who preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The people who preach this to their friends and people around them are indeed the people who speak truly true words. They are not people who tell lies, but people who speak the truth.

Even people who are not yet born again and do not know this gospel of the water and the Spirit can become members of you and me. If we truly preach this true word to the whole world, those people can also believe the gospel of the water and the Spirit, receive the removal of sins, and become sinless people and children of God exactly like us. That is why we must speak the truth.

We must put away the habitual life of the past, and put away old thoughts, fleshly standards, and values. Now, with new values, new standards, and a new heart, we must speak true words and right words to the saints and to those who have not yet become saints.

## Be angry, and do not sin

In verses 26-28, He said, *"'Be angry, and do not sin': do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.*

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*Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need."* Doing like this is a Spirit-filled life.

A person who habitually stole well, or people who live according to old habits must put that away, and must work diligently, truthfully, and properly with their own hands to give benefit to other people. They must do so in order to help and relieve other people with the profits gained from doing business. A life living while striving for such works is exactly a Spirit-filled life.

## Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God

In verse 30, He said, *"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."* It means do not do things that God hates.

What does it mean to 'grieve the Holy Spirit'? It is precisely living like worldly people. The righteous living like sinners; even while believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believing that the Lord eliminated all our sins, and even while knowing that oneself has no sin, living like worldly people, committing sins like worldly people, and living for the same purposes as worldly people—these are exactly what grieves the Spirit of God.

Do we not often say, 'Do not grieve the hearts of your parents, do not make them worry'? The parents want their child to become a good, kind, brave, and upright person, but if one goes around committing sins that God hates, disobeying the will of such parents, how worried and hurt would the heart of even fleshly parents be? Likewise, it is the word that because we are God's children, we must not live like that.

## Circumcision of the heart, cut off old habits

Therefore, first, we must set our minds like this. If we want to live clothed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, we must set our minds clearly and firmly regarding this part: ‘living like worldly people is wrong’.
‘We are not worldly people. We are at least people saved from sin. Even if we are lacking, we must live doing the things that please the Lord. Also, even if we are weak by chance, we will have to live adjusting well among ourselves. We must not live like worldly people.’ We must draw such a line in our hearts.
Saying ‘Receive the circumcision of the heart’ is the word to cut off sins just as cutting off the foreskin. It means we must cut off all the habits, evil thoughts, tricks, and actions we lived with before being born again. Only then do we become people who give thanks for the Lord having eliminated our sins and preach this beautiful gospel to other people as well.

## Forgive and have compassion on one another

The Apostle Paul spoke to the saints of the Ephesian church to live this kind of life, and He is speaking this word to us now as well. We must live a life clothed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit.
Then, what kind of life is a Spirit-filled life? It is a life of putting away all evil in Christ, being kind to one another, having compassion, and forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. Even if that brother has some angular appearances and such sides, we must fellowship with him with the expectation that ‘that is wrong, but it will be stripped off someday,’ and we must live advising him, saying, ‘The Lord

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eliminated that sin as well, but living like this is not the right way.' This is living clothed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

## The Life of the Calyx That Holds Up the Flower: The Fullness of the Holy Spirit Lived Out in Serving the Gospel

I tell you repeatedly, but a life with the fullness of the Holy Spirit is not praying all night long, praying while speaking in tongues that make no sense, or jumping in to heal sicknesses by laying hands on other people; it is not these things.

There are many things that Christians commonly misunderstand. If they say 'faith is good', they say 'received the Holy Spirit, received tongues' and speak strange words, and they think that if one receives the fullness of the Holy Spirit, the voice becomes husky and praying in the mountains all night is being filled, and a life of performing powers is a filled life. However, that is not it.

Thinking of God's love and the salvation God gave us in our lives and giving thanks, and furthermore, cleaning the heart dirtied by the flesh by faith while loving and cherishing one another between brothers and sisters, striving to truly have something to give to other people, striving in the work of becoming a flower support for the gospel, and a life of preaching true words to all people in the whole world—wanting to live such a life is a Spirit-filled life. The Apostle Paul spoke this word to us.

Therefore, we work diligently with our hands to give benefit to other people as well. We absolutely do not allow our ministers, pastors, evangelists, or workers in the church, those who became first, to do things in a way of 'believing the gospel and finishing

after preaching a few times a week'. They must work. Whatever work they do, whether doing the work of becoming a flower support of the gospel, they must do the work of a flower support serving the gospel. Do not idle around just because you are a pastor. That is why we are doing the business of acting as a flower support now.

Living the life of a flower support, it is right for God's workers and brothers and sisters to strive together to preach this true word to other people and to give benefit. Living like this is biblical, and this is a Spirit-filled life. While taking charge of the work of a flower support, it is physically hard, but when you return, is there not joy in your heart? That is exactly the joy that arises because you are doing the work that pleases the Lord.

Acting arrogantly just because one is a pastor, riding around in luxury cars, sleeping in rooms worth millions or tens of millions of won in restaurants and hotels, and going somewhere to shout loudly is not a Spirit-filled life. Because the Lord came to serve us, made us sinless, and made us blessed, we also sacrifice like Christ for the people who have not yet entered into this gospel, and a life of living while preaching the gospel and acting as a flower support while laboring to have something to give for them—this is a life receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This concept must stand clearly. There is absolutely no need to put on airs just because one has been a pastor for a long time.

## The true meaning of pastoral ordination — not reigning but serving

I have sometimes thought, 'They are saying it as a joke,' while watching some people receive pastoral ordination. However, as time passed, I saw that it was not a joke but the

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truth.

There was a testimony time at the place of pastoral ordination. When asked to give a testimony of receiving pastoral ordination, if it were an ordinary person, they would confess, 'It seems He established me to live a life of serving the saints more by entrusting this precious duty to a lacking person like me. I am truly lacking, but I will follow the Lord's will.' However, a certain person testified, saying, 'I am a person who should have become a pastor long ago, but because people did not recognize me properly, they are only establishing me as a pastor now. It is a great relief that they establish me as a pastor even now.'

At that time, we all laughed. We laughed thinking, 'He makes humor in a bizarre way,' but the person speaking was not joking. So, a worry of 'What will happen if such a person becomes a pastor?' came to me to a fearful extent.

Everyone, is becoming a pastor, becoming an evangelist, and becoming a worker in the church an honorary position? No. It is a position to serve more. I am also thankful to receive much serving from you, but I too have work to do before the Lord, and I must act as a flower support in my own way. Physically, I receive serving from you, but I also do the work of serving the Lord with my flesh. I serve by offering my heart, faith, flesh, and time, everything I have.

I only became first a little earlier, but before the Lord, I am still a person who serves the Lord, not a person who reigns over you. How could I reign? The head of the church is Jesus Christ, and we are each members, and I only take charge of the work God entrusted to me and preach God's will. If I only follow the Lord, the work of preaching the word is not that difficult, but if I do not follow the Lord, it is a work so difficult that it is impossible.

## A Spirit-filled life where each member plays its role

Like this, the life where you and I act as a flower support for the Lord in the churches nationwide right now, serving the Lord in various shapes and positions, a life of sacrificing and serving for the propagation of the gospel—this is exactly a life receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Everyone, do you believe so? It is like that. A life that has received the fullness of the Holy Spirit is not making loud noises. A place where they make noise during church worship time, and where a pastor stands on the pulpit, reads the word, and then talks about his wife, talks about his son, boasts about himself, or talks about current events and politics—such a place is not a church. God's church is a place that upholds God's will. The head of the church is Jesus, and if the Lord commands, all members move according to that command.

The church is the body of Jesus Christ, and we are the arms, legs, and all members. We move according to what the Lord commands with each talent in our respective positions. Everyone, sometimes when a big toe or another toe gets caught and hurts, would it be good to cut it off? Then you will fall over. All toes must minutely fulfill their roles for us to be able to walk straight. Because each member minutely plays its role like that, we are carrying out this flower support.

Therefore, to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit, you must live this kind of life. Not living according to any value standards of the world but putting all those things away, engraving in the heart the gospel of the water and the Spirit by which the Lord made you and me sinless, confessing, 'I have become a person without sin, I have become God's people, I have become a new creation, I have become God's worker, I have become a flower

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support, I have become a member in the church, I am living entering the kingdom of God,' and knowing that the work of acting as a flower support for the gospel while living on this earth is exactly the work I must take charge of and the work entrusted to me in this church, a life living while giving thanks for the grace the Lord gave, taking charge of it well by faith, and seeking help—this is a life living receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Because God spoke this word to us, we must accumulate this word in our hearts and live well by faith. I conclude the message. ✉

# Questions and Answers on Ephesians Chapter 4

## [Question] 1. Ephesians 4:5-6, *"one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."* What is being said in this word?

This passage is the part where the Apostle Paul, after exhorting to *"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit" (Ephesians 4:3)*, reveals what the foundation of that unity is. Above all, the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is contained in the word *"one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5)*, so we will examine it focusing on its meaning.

### 1. Our Savior is only one, Christ

The word *"one Lord" (Ephesians 4:5)* points out that our Savior is only one, Christ. The Apostle Paul repeatedly emphasized the expressions *"in Christ"* and "through Christ" in the earlier parts of Ephesians. That Christ becomes our Savior, our Creator, and our God.

Here, one Lord does not merely mean that the Lord is one in number. It points to the fact that the One who saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit is this one Christ, and that He received baptism from John the Baptist, hung on the cross and shed blood, and resurrected from death to save us who believe now from the sins of the world. Because all our salvation came from this one Christ, the Lord is also one.

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**2. The people of God all have the same one faith**

The word *"one faith" (Ephesians 4:5)* means that the faith believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the same for all saints. Those who have become the people of God are all those who have the exact same faith.

This point is very important. If one person speaks of salvation with one verse, and another person with a different verse respectively, it is because it is not the same faith. The faith that Christ came to this earth, received baptism to take charge of our sins, hung on the cross and died, and resurrected from death to save us, that is, the faith believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is the only true one faith. People who have this kind of faith are all saved ones, and those who have a faith different from this cannot be said to be of the same one body.

**3. The word *"one baptism"* is the core of this passage**

There is a clear reason why the Apostle Paul deliberately pointed out *"one baptism"* while listing various unities. It is because baptism is directly connected to the washing of sins. (Matthew 3:13-17)

The baptism mentioned here does not refer to the ceremony of pouring water on a person's head. It refers to the baptism that Jesus received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. Jesus took upon Himself the sins of all mankind at once by receiving baptism from John the Baptist through the method of the laying on of hands. Because He took on those sins, He could go to the cross and die in our place, and by living again, He could save us perfectly.

The baptism we receive is the confession of faith that we believe in this very fact, and it is confessing one's faith before God and declaring it even to Satan the devil. Therefore, true baptism is

not two or three, but only one. The world speaks of various kinds of baptisms, but our salvation depends on that one single fact that Christ came to this earth and took charge of our sins through baptism.

### 4. The God we believe in is also the same one God

The word *"one God" (Ephesians 4:6)* emphasizes that the God we believe in is all the same one Being. This is not counting or reducing the number of God. It means that there are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but they become one God to us, and those who have become the people of God all serve the same God with the same faith.

In other words, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God all point toward one fact. It is that the faith that saved us with the righteousness of Christ is the same for all saints. Those who have become the people of God are all saved by the exact same faith.

### 5. That one God, as the Father of all, rules, unifies, and is with all

The latter part of Ephesians 4:6 shows in three ways what kind of Being that one God is. The word "who is the Father of all" points out that this God is the One who created all things. The visible world and the invisible world, all creatures came from God.

Following this, *"who is above all"* means that God is above all creatures and rules over them all; *"through all"* means the salvation that made us, who were originally creatures, into His children to become one family with God; and *"in you all"* means there is no place where God is not present. However, the last expression by no means speaks of pantheism, which says everything is god. It means that God made and rules everything,

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but specifically, He dwells together by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the saints who have received the removal of sins, making us His people.

**6. To summarize and speak**

Ephesians 4:5 and 6 are words revealing that the salvation we received all stands on one identical foundation. Our Savior is only one Christ, the faith we have is also one, the baptism we rely on is also one, and the God we serve is also one.
Among them, the word *"one baptism"* reveals the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is because Jesus took upon Himself the sins of all mankind at once through baptism at the Jordan River, paid the full price of those sins on the cross, and resurrected to save us perfectly. We have all received the removal of sins according to this one baptism and one faith.
Therefore, we, who serve the same one Lord and one God with the same faith and the same baptism, are originally one body. Because the one God, who becomes the Father of all, unified us who were originally creatures into His children to become one family, we must never lose this identical faith and must strive to keep it.

## [Question] 2. Ephesians 4:11, *"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers."* What is being said in this word?

This passage speaks of the work of Christ establishing various offices within the church, and we will examine it focusing on what those offices were given for, and what meaning that has from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 1. These offices are gifts personally given by Christ

The offices of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher were not taken or created by people themselves, but were personally given by Christ.

The word of Ephesians 4:11 is upon the flow of the immediately preceding verses 7 to 10. The gift, which was said that Christ descended to the lower parts and ascended far above and gave grace to each one according to the measure of Christ's gift, specifically appeared as various offices in verse 11. Therefore, the offices within the church are gifts of grace that Christ bestowed upon us, and another blessing given in addition to the salvation we received.

### 2. He did not only give the office but also gave the ability fitting for it together

What is important here is the fact that Christ did not only give the name of the office, but together gave the ability to handle that office. God first gives the ability and then establishes that person as an office-bearer.

Not only giving salvation to those who have received the removal of sins, but to some He gives the ability to teach, to some the ability to work well, and to some wisdom and understanding, so that each may handle God's work. The offices of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher were also given together with ability like that. All the talents we have are all gifts of God, and God accomplishes His kingdom through these different gifts.

### 3. Office is not for honor but for serving

The offices in verse 11 are not for someone's highness or honor. Becoming a pastor, an evangelist, or a worker in the

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church is not an honorary position but a position to serve more. Just as Christ, who is the head, came to this earth to serve us and made us sinless and blessed, the one who received an office is also not one who reigns but one who serves. The head of the church is Jesus Christ, and the office-bearer is merely a member of that body, doing the entrusted work and delivering God's will. It means they are just someone who became one a little earlier, but are still one who serves the Lord.

**4. The purpose of giving the office is in perfecting the saints to build up the body of Christ**

Verse 11 cannot be read separated from verse 12. It is because the following verse 12 clearly reveals what those offices were given for. It is *"for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."*
In other words, the purpose of the office is in perfecting the saints, making them do the work of service, and building up the church, which is the body of Christ. Here, *"the body of Christ"* is precisely the church, and building up the church points to expanding the kingdom of God. Although we have received the removal of sins by the same gospel of the water and the Spirit, if we stop at being saved, it is difficult to perfectly handle the life of faith. So God established leaders, servants, and teachers within the church to let them teach and lead one another.

**5. The final aiming point of all those offices is the work of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit**

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the reason God gave offices and gifts is ultimately to let this gospel be preached more widely.
The reason Christ not only saved us from sin but also gave

various offices and abilities is to let us expand the kingdom of God by preaching the received gospel of the water and the Spirit with that ability. Office-bearers build up the saints perfectly, and the saints who have become perfect like that handle the work of service, and that work finally leads to the propagation of the gospel. In other words, the offices of verse 11 are within God's plan to make each and every person grow in faith and serve the gospel together.

**6. To summarize and speak**

Ephesians 4:11 speaks that Christ personally established the offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers within the church. These offices were not taken by people but are gifts given by Christ, and along with the office, the ability to handle it was also given.

These offices are not for honor but for serving, and their purpose is in perfecting the saints and making them do the work of service to build up the church, which is the body of Christ. Under Christ who is the head, each office-bearer merely handles the entrusted work as a member.

And the final aiming point of all those offices and services is the work of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The reason God gives offices and gifts and makes the saints grow is to let them perfectly build up the kingdom of God by preaching the received gospel of salvation more widely.

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**[Question] 3. Ephesians 4:12-13, *"for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."* What is the meaning of this word?**

This passage reveals what the purpose of Christ establishing the offices in the preceding verse 11 is, and further speaks of how the faith of the saints grows. We will examine it focusing on the purpose of the office, the growth of faith, and how it connects with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

**1. The purpose of establishing the offices is in perfecting the saints**

Verse 12 reveals the purpose for which Christ established apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in the preceding verse 11. It is *"for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."*
In other words, the office is not for the highness of the office-bearer themselves, but for perfectly building up each and every saint. Although we have received the removal of sins by the same gospel of the water and the Spirit, if we stop at being saved, it is difficult to perfectly handle the life of faith. So God established leaders, servants, and teachers within the church to teach and lead one another, making the saints perfect.

**2. The perfected saints do the work of service and build up the body of Christ**

The saints becoming perfect does not end in itself but leads

to *"the work of ministry."* The perfected saints serve according to the gifts each has received and handle God's work.
And the place where that work of service heads is *"of the body of Christ."* Here, the body of Christ directly points to the church, and building up the church means expanding the kingdom of God. Therefore, both the office and the service of the saints gather in one direction, that is, for the church to stand firmly and the kingdom of God to grow.

### 3. The goal of that growth is becoming one in believing and knowing

Verse 13 reveals where all those offices and services finally reach. It is *"till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God."* In other words, the final goal of the work of building up the church is for all the saints to become one in the work of believing and knowing Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
We must pay attention to the fact that *"the faith"* and *"the knowledge"* of the Son of God are tied together here. We come to believe as much as we know Jesus Christ, and we act as much as we believe. The more we come to know who Christ is and how He saved us, the more our faith grows. In other words, our faith grows as much as we come to know more deeply the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the truth that Christ took charge of our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to save us.

### 4. Faith does not grow alone but grows by becoming one within the church

Just as verse 13 says that we must *"come to the unity of the faith,"* faith never grows alone. We grow together within the

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church by being joined and knit together with one another.
The one who is ahead cares for and leads the one who comes later with love, and through that love, the saints come to directly experience God's love. By fellowshipping with those who are ahead of oneself, receiving teachings, giving help, and supporting one another in weakness, faith grows and forms a *"perfect man."* Thus, without the church, no matter how born-again a person is, they cannot become perfect alone, and only when they are together with the office-bearers God has established can they grow toward the mark.

### 5. Reaching the *"measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* is deeply knowing and continuing to believe in the received salvation

The end of verse 13 is *"to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."* From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this shows that everything does not end with receiving the removal of sins once.
Salvation is received at once, but in the midst of our shortcomings, our faith grows by repeatedly reflecting in our hearts on the righteous work Christ has done. By knowing and believing Christ more deeply, we grow from the faith of a child to the faith of a mature person. When we become one in believing and knowing like this, the church is built up as the perfect body of Christ that is not shaken by the trickery of men and cunning deceitful plotting.

### 6. To summarize and speak

Ephesians 4:12 and 13 show the purpose for which Christ established offices within the church and the final goal those offices head toward. The purpose of the office is in perfecting

the saints and making them do the work of service to build up the church, which is the body of Christ, and its final goal is for all the saints to become one in believing and knowing the Son of God, reaching the measure of the stature of Christ.

Faith grows as much as we know Christ, and it also grows not alone but in uniting with one another in love within the church. The one who is ahead and the one who comes later help each other, and through that love, they experience God's love and grow into a perfect man.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, reaching the mature stature points to knowing the received salvation more deeply, repeatedly reflecting on it, and having faith grow. And that growth ultimately leads to the fruit of expanding the kingdom of God by preaching the received gospel.

## [Question] 4. Ephesians 4:15-16, *"but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."* What is the meaning of this word?

This passage shows how the faith of the saints grows through the relationship between Christ, who is the head, and the members who are His body. We will examine it focusing on growing in love, Christ who is the head, the union of the members, and how it connects with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

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### 1. We grow by doing what is true in love

We must first pay attention to the beginning of verse 15, *"but, speaking the truth in love."* In contrast to the appearance in the immediately preceding verse 14 of remaining as children and being shaken by the trickery of men and cunning deceitful plotting, it shows the path we ought to grow in.

That path is doing what is true in love. Just as the Lord came to this earth and saved us by doing good works for us, our faith must also grow like that in love. The church of God cannot become perfect without love. Only when union is achieved upon the truth of knowing Christ, upon the faith that truly believes in Him, and upon the love that embraces one another, can we smoothly handle God's work.

### 2. The direction we must grow toward is Christ, who is the head

The word *"may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—"* clarifies where the direction we must grow toward is. Our growth is not a vague growth but a growth toward Christ who is the head.

Christ becomes the head of the church, and we are the members of that body. That we grow up into Christ in all things, that is, in all areas of life, means that we advance toward knowing the received gospel of the water and the Spirit more deeply and resembling Christ. Just as the head leads the body, Christ leads our growth.

### 3. Faith does not grow alone but in the midst of the members being joined and knit together

Verse 16 shows how that body grows. It is the word, *"from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every*

*joint supplies."* Just as the head and neck are connected, the chest and limbs are joined, and all joints are connected to one another, the saints also grow together by being joined and knit together with one another.

Faith never grows alone. Faith grows in the midst of fellowshipping with those who are ahead of oneself, receiving teachings, giving help, and holding onto each other's weaknesses. When God works, He works by connecting part to part like this. Therefore, one must not try to make their faith grow alone, but faith grows when breaking the bread of fellowship with those who are ahead, learning, and holding onto one another.

### 4. When each part works according to its measure, the whole body grows

The word *"according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body"* means that only when each person handles their own role according to the measure they have received does the whole body of Christ grow. Not a single member in the body is useless. Even if a single toe looks small, because it does its role, we can stand without falling. Likewise, when each person in the church finely handles their role according to the received gifts, the church is firmly built up. It is not because any one person is outstanding, but when each member works together according to their measure, the whole body grows.

### 5. The foundation and result of all this growth is love, and it ultimately leads to the propagation of the gospel

Verse 16 concludes with *"for the edifying of itself in love."* It emphasizes once again that the foundation of all this growth

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is love. The beginning also starts in love, and the end is also built up in love.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the result of this growth ultimately leads to the work of preaching the gospel. It is because when faith grows, God makes us do that work. Growing up into Christ who is the head means that we become perfect as those who know the received gospel of the water and the Spirit more deeply, build each other up in love, and finally expand the kingdom of God by preaching that gospel. The purpose of our growth lies precisely here.

**6. To summarize and speak**

Ephesians 4:15 and 16 show that the faith of the saints grows in love, toward Christ who is the head, and in the union of the members. We must do what is true in love and grow up into Christ in all things.

Faith does not grow alone. As members of one body with Christ as the head, it grows in the midst of each joint being joined and knit together and exchanging help. Only when each person handles their role according to the received measure is the whole body firmly built up.

The foundation of all this growth is love, and when union is achieved upon truth, faith, and love, the church grows into the perfect body of Christ. And that growth ultimately leads to the fruit of expanding the kingdom of God by preaching the received gospel of the water and the Spirit.

**[Question] 5. Ephesians 4:17-18, *"This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."* What is the meaning of this word?**

This passage is the beginning of a new section dealing with how a born-again person should live in actual life, showing the futile life of the Gentiles as a warning. We will examine it focusing on what the condition of the Gentiles and that warning mean to us who are born again, and how it connects with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

**1. This word is the beginning of a new section dealing with the life attitude of a born-again person**

We must first pay attention to the expression in verse 17, *"This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord."* Ephesians chapter 4 moves on to a new section from verse 17.
If the preceding verses 1 to 16 dealt with keeping the unity worthy of the calling and growing into the body of Christ, from verse 17, it exhorts how a born-again person should live in their concrete life. The reason Apostle Paul speaks with weight, saying "*testify in the Lord,*" is because this exhortation is an important word that all born-again believers must certainly heed.

**2. It is an exhortation not to follow the futile walking of the Gentiles**

That first word is *"that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind."* Here, the

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Gentiles refer to those who do not yet know God and live according to the ways of the world.
Apostle Paul exhorts us who are born again not to follow that direction of living in pursuit of only corruptible things and the pleasure of a day like worldly people. It is because what we have learned from Christ is not such a futile life. Therefore, this exhortation demands us to draw a clear line in our hearts between worldly people and us. We are not worldly people, and at the very least, we are those who have received salvation from sin.

**3. The end of a futile life is the understanding becoming darkened and the heart becoming hardened**

Verse 18 shows what result the futile walking of the Gentiles leads to. It is, *"having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."*
Those who live pursuing futile things have their hearts hardened and their understanding darkened, becoming unable to discern what is right and wrong. The mind should be clear and clean to be able to discern reason, but if one abandons oneself to sin and pleasure, one ends up losing such discernment. If one becomes a person with a dull heart, one cannot follow God and cannot know the deep will of God.

**4. The final result is being alienated from the life of God**

Verse 18 concludes with *"being alienated from the life of God."* As a result of the heart becoming hardened and the understanding becoming darkened, one finally becomes distanced from the life of God.
This warning becomes a deep lesson for us who are born again as well. If we throw away today into sin while saying we will

live righteously tomorrow, and procrastinate like that the next day as well, we will end up living our entire life thrown into sin. If that happens, our understanding becomes darkened, our hearts become hardened, even the desire to live for God disappears, and we end up not knowing what the will of God is.

### 5. The reason the born-again person receives this warning lies in the received salvation

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the reason this exhortation is given to us who are born again becomes clear. By believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we have been washed from all sins and have become sinless people.

However, precisely because of that sinlessness, there is a risk of instead abandoning oneself to dissipation. Because there is no sin in the heart, one might leave one's flesh to go as it flows. But that is not the will of God, and the Holy Spirit is not pleased with it. Therefore, Apostle Paul confessed, *"I die daily" (1 Corinthians 15:31)*. Even a person who has received the removal of sins still has flesh, so there are times when thoughts of sin arise, but whenever that happens, if one puts oneself to death and serves only God, one can live a righteous life daily. The power by which we can avoid following the futility of the Gentiles does not lie in determination or effort, but in believing the fact that Christ has eliminated all our sins and created us as a new man, and in offering ourselves to God daily.

### 6. To summarize and speak

Ephesians 4:17 and 18 are the beginning of a new section dealing with the life attitude of a born-again person, giving the exhortation, "*that you should no longer walk as the rest of the*

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*Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind" (Ephesians 4:17).* This is because if one pursues only corruptible things and the pleasure of a day like worldly people, the understanding becomes darkened and the heart becomes hardened, finally leading to being alienated from the life of God.

The reason this warning is given to us who are born again is that we have received the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have become sinless people. Precisely because of that sinlessness, there is a risk of instead abandoning oneself to dissipation, so Apostle Paul showed a life of dying daily, that is, a life of serving only God daily.

The power by which we can avoid following the futility of the Gentiles does not lie in determination or effort. When we believe the fact that Christ has eliminated all our sins at once and created us as a new man, and offer ourselves to God daily, we do not lose our understanding and can live a righteous life while remaining in the life of God.

**[Question] 6. Ephesians 4:19-24, *"who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."* What is the meaning of this word?**

This passage clearly divides and shows the dissipated life of

the Gentiles and the new life of the born-again person, and advances to the exhortation to put off the old man and put on the new man. We will examine it focusing on how that division and exhortation connect with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 1. The Gentiles become those who are past feeling and give themselves over to dissipation

Verse 19 shows where the condition of the Gentiles depicted in the preceding verses 17 and 18 finally reaches. Those whose hearts have become hardened and whose understanding has become darkened, who are alienated from the life of God, become *"who, being past feeling."* Becoming a person past feeling means no longer being able to feel shame or hesitation regarding sin.

As a result, they give themselves over to dissipation to work all uncleanness with greediness. Giving over means leaving oneself as is; it is throwing oneself and not stopping oneself as the flesh desires and as the sins of the flesh drag one along. Endlessly committing sin as greed leads while feeling no hesitation whatsoever is the appearance of the Gentiles.

### 2. But what we have learned from Christ is not such a life

In verse 20, Apostle Paul clearly divides and sets the born-again believers apart from the Gentiles. It is, *"But you have not so learned Christ."* In other words, what we have learned from Christ is completely different from the dissipated life of the Gentiles.

Would Christ have taught us to live for corruptible things like worldly people? Never. The Lord taught us to live for the salvation of other people's souls, told us to pursue peace, and told us to live serving a righteous life. What we have learned

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from Christ is not the path of pursuing our own greed, but the path of serving other souls worthily of the received salvation.

### 3. The true truth is in Jesus

Verse 21 reveals what we have learned from Christ. It is the word, *"if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus."*

The true truth is nowhere else but in Jesus Christ. We are the very ones who have heard the truth that is in Jesus and have been taught in Him. Therefore, that those who have learned the truth must live according to that learned truth becomes the foundation of the following exhortation.

### 4. We must put off the old man

Verse 22 is the first exhortation given to those who have learned the truth. It is, *"that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."*

Here, the old man refers to the flesh dragged along by our lusts, the old way of life that lived as greed led. If one is a person who has learned the truth, one must now put off those old habits that grow corrupt.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, putting off the old man is not a merit we achieve by overcoming lusts ourselves. Because Christ took charge of our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to make us clean from all sins, the old man has already passed away. Because we are sinless people, whenever we set our minds to it, we can put off those old habits and live anew. It is because Jesus Christ has already taken away all sins.

### 5. We must be renewed in spirit and put on the new man

Verses 23 and 24 exhort us to put on the new man in the place where we put off the old man. It is, *"and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."* Here, what it means to "be renewed in the spirit" is important. This is not making our minds new by firming our determination or accumulating effort.

The spirit being renewed happens only when we believe the fact that Jesus took away all our sins, that is, the truth of salvation that the Lord has made us clean from all sins. Because the Lord took charge of our sins, washed them away, and judged them through the gospel of the water and the Spirit to make us sinless people, the heart that believes that fact is exactly the renewed spirit.

### 6. To summarize and speak

Ephesians 4:19 to 24 clearly divides and shows the dissipated life of the Gentiles and the new life of the born-again person. The Gentiles become those who are past feeling, give themselves over to dissipation, and work uncleanness according to greed, but what we have learned from Christ is not such a life. The true truth is in Jesus, and those who have learned that truth must put off the old man and put on the new man. Neither putting off the old man nor putting on the new man is something achieved by our determination or effort. It is possible because Christ took charge of our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to make us clean from all sins.

The spirit being renewed happens precisely when we believe this truth of salvation, that is, the fact that Jesus took away all our sins. Putting on the new man created in true righteousness and

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holiness with such a renewed spirit, and living for that work desiring the received gospel of the water and the Spirit to be propagated to the whole world, is the proper life of a born-again person.

## [Question] 7. Ephesians 4:30, *"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."* What meaning does this word contain?

This passage is a word that binds together the previous exhortations to put away lying, anger, stealing, and corrupt words into one. We will examine it focusing on what it means to grieve the Holy Spirit, what it means to be sealed, and how it connects with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 1. This word is the conclusion that binds the preceding exhortations together

Verse 30 stands on the flow of exhortations that continued from verse 25. Apostle Paul sequentially exhorted to put away lying and speak the truth, not to harbor anger, not to steal but to labor and give to the needy, and to speak good words instead of corrupt words.

Verse 30 binds all those exhortations together in one word. It is, *"do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God."* That is, when we abandon the life of the new man and return to the appearance of the old man, that very thing becomes the act of grieving the Holy Spirit who is in us. It shows that committing the aforementioned sins does not merely stop at moral wrongdoing, but is an act that saddens the Spirit of God dwelling within us.

### 2. Grieving the Holy Spirit is the righteous living like worldly people

The flow of the text clearly shows what it means to grieve the Holy Spirit. It is the righteous living like sinners.
Namely, even while knowing that one has become a sinless person by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, committing sins and living in pursuit of the world's purposes like worldly people is what grieves the Holy Spirit. We must be wary of living like worldly people even while believing that the Lord has eliminated all our sins and knowing that we have no sin. This is exactly what causes the Spirit of God to grieve.

### 3. Comparing it to the heart of parents makes the meaning clear

This word becomes clearer when considered through the relationship between parents and children. Parents want their children to become good and kind people, upright people, and hope they become excellent people who live well themselves and know how to help others.
However, if that child forsakes the parents' will and goes out committing sins that the parents do not want, how worried and hurt would that heart be, even if they are fleshly parents? Likewise, because we are God's children, when God's children live like worldly people, the Spirit of God grieves. Therefore, we must draw a clear line in our hearts that we are not worldly people, but at the very least, people who have received salvation from sin.

### 4. We have been sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption

The latter part of verse 30, *"by whom you were sealed for the*

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*day of redemption"* is the foundation of the reason why we must not grieve the Holy Spirit.

We have been sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption, that is, the day our salvation is fully completed. Being sealed is the evidence that we have been confirmed as God's possession. The Holy Spirit dwells together within us, who have received the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and guarantees us as God's people. Because it is the Holy Spirit who dwells within us and has sealed us like this, if we live like worldly people, that very Holy Spirit grieves.

### 5. Circumcision of the heart to cut off old habits is necessary

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the way not to grieve the Holy Spirit lies in receiving the circumcision of the heart. The circumcision of the heart is cutting off all the habits, evil thoughts, and actions lived before being born again.

Even if we are lacking, we must live doing the things that please the Lord, and even if we are weak, we must live leading one another well, and we must not live like worldly people. When we cut off old habits like this, we come to be thankful for the grace of the Lord who eliminated our sins, and in that thankfulness, we become those who preach this beautiful gospel of the water and the Spirit to others as well. That is exactly the life lived being filled with the Holy Spirit without grieving the Holy Spirit.

### 6. To summarize and speak

Ephesians 4:30 is a word that binds the preceding exhortations regarding the life of the new man into the single

phrase, *"do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God."* To grieve the Holy Spirit is exactly for the righteous to live like sinners, to live pursuing sin like worldly people even while knowing that one has become a sinless person through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The reason we must not live like this is that we are God's people who have been sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption. Being sealed is the evidence that we have been confirmed as God's possession, and it means that the Holy Spirit dwelling within us guarantees us.

Therefore, we must receive the circumcision of the heart that cuts off old habits, be thankful for the grace of the Lord who eliminated our sins, and advance to a life of preaching the received gospel of the water and the Spirit without living like worldly people. That is the way not to grieve the Holy Spirit who is in us.

## [Question] 8. The church, which is the body of Christ, is one church, and the God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit whom we believe in is also the One who becomes the exact same one God to us. Also, Jesus took the transfer of the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John, shed blood and died on the cross, and resurrected from death to become our Savior. If so, could you explain in detail why those who have this belief are all people of the same one belief?

This confession threads together "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" spoken of in Ephesians 4:4-6 into one, and it contains the gospel of the water and the Spirit itself. We will sequentially

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examine the oneness of the church, the becoming of one God, and the salvation accomplished through baptism, the cross, and resurrection.

**1. The church, which is the body of Christ, is one**

Just as the word says, *"There is one body" (Ephesians 4:4)*, God's church is one body with Christ as the head. The place where people who believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the removal of sins gather is God's church, and they are originally one as members of one body.

This oneness is not created by human intimacy or organization. Because we believed the same gospel and received the same removal of sins, we are one. Therefore, even if the environments we grew up in and our personalities are different from one another, we who serve the same Christ as the head live as one member within one church. The confession that the church is one is also a confession that we believe the One who made us one is the Holy Spirit, and that we will strive to keep that oneness.

**2. God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the exact same one God to us**

Just as the word says, *"one God and Father of all" (Ephesians 4:6)*, the God we believe in is one. This is not counting the number of Gods, but means that all those who have become God's people serve the same one God with the same belief.

God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit exist, but those three persons become the exact same one God to us. God the Father created the whole universe, the Son Jesus Christ also created all things together with that Father, and God the Holy Spirit was also equally present together. That one God saved us from sin to

become our Father, our Savior, and our Shepherd. Therefore, the confession that "He becomes the exact same God" is a confession that we all received salvation by believing in the same God with the same belief.

### 3. Jesus took the transfer of the sins of the world through the baptism He received from John

This is exactly the foundation of the word, *"one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5)*. Jesus receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River was not a simple ceremony, but the event where Jesus took the transfer of the sins of all mankind at once. This connects with the law of the laying on of hands in the Old Testament. Just as a person in the Old Testament laid hands on the head of the sacrificial offering to transfer their sins to that offering, the sins of the whole world were transferred to Jesus through the baptism given by John the Baptist laying hands on Jesus. That is why John the Baptist testified pointing to Jesus, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" Because Jesus shouldered all our sins through this baptism, He could finally go to the cross bearing those sins. Because baptism is exactly the beginning of the removal of sins, we cannot speak of our salvation leaving out this baptism.

### 4. He paid the full price of sin with the blood of the cross and resurrected to become our Savior

Jesus, who shouldered our sins through baptism, paid the full price of sin by shedding blood and dying while hanging on the cross bearing those sins. Because the wages of sin is death, Jesus received the judgment that we should have received in our place. And by resurrecting from death on the third day, He guaranteed that our salvation was permanently completed.

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In other words, baptism, the cross, and resurrection are not separate events, but one ministry of the one Christ who saved us. If one holds onto only the blood of the cross and leaves out baptism, it becomes holding onto only half of the gospel. It is because there was that baptism where sins were transferred to Jesus that the blood of the cross could become the price of our sins, and because there was the resurrection, that salvation became permanent. When we believe all these ministries of baptism, the cross, and resurrection, Jesus finally becomes my Savior.

**5. Those who have this belief are all people of the same one belief**

This confession contained in the question, that is, the belief that the church is one, God is one, and Jesus saved us through baptism, the cross, and resurrection, is exactly that one belief spoken of in *"one faith" (Ephesians 4:5).*

Those who have become God's people are all those who have this exact same belief. If someone speaks of salvation with a different verse, and someone else in yet another different way, that is not the same belief. The belief that believes this gospel of the water and the Spirit—that Christ took charge of our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to save us—is the only true one belief. By this belief, we become one body standing together upon one church, one God, and one baptism.

**6. To summarize and speak**

The confession contained in the question threads together *"one Lord, one faith, one baptism"* of Ephesians 4:4 to 6 into one, and is exactly the gospel of the water and the Spirit itself. The church, which is the body of Christ, is one body gathered by those who received the removal of sins through the same gospel,

and the God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit whom we believe in becomes the exact same one God to us.
And Jesus, who is that one God, took the transfer of the sins of the whole world through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, paid the full price of those sins by shedding blood on the cross, and resurrected from death to become our Savior. Baptism, the cross, and resurrection are the one ministry that saved us.
Those who have this belief are all people of the same one belief. We, who received salvation by believing in the same one Lord and one God with the same belief and the same baptism, are originally one body, and we must never lose this belief but strive to keep it.

## [Question] 9. The Apostle Paul explains the oneness of God's church with seven things. Then, what are those seven onenesses that the Apostle Paul set forth in Ephesians 4:4-6, and would you expound in detail on why they become the basis that makes us one body?

After exhorting to *"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit" (Ephesians 4:3)*, Apostle Paul reveals the basis of that oneness in seven ways. These seven things appear sequentially in verses 4 to 6. Let us examine them one by one.

### 1. It is one body

It is the word, *"There is one body" (Ephesians 4:4)*. God's church is one body with Christ as the head. The place where people who believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit and received the removal of sins gather is God's church, and they are

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originally one as members of one body. Just as the head, arms, and legs form one body, we who are different from one another form one body in Christ.

**2. It is one Spirit**

It is the word, *"and one Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4)*. One Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of the saints who have received the elimination of sins. Even if we are different people, because the same Holy Spirit is within us, we are one. The One who made us one is also exactly this Holy Spirit.

**3. It is one hope**

It is the word, *"just as you were called in one hope of your calling" (Ephesians 4:4)*. The calling we received contains the same hope. This hope points to the glorious life we will enjoy as God's children in the kingdom of God in the future. Because we look at that promised glory together, we endure the sufferings on this earth together and advance in one direction.

**4. It is one Lord**

It is the word, *"one Lord" (Ephesians 4:5)*. Our Savior is only the one Christ. Christ becomes our Creator, our Savior, and our God. Because all our salvation came from this one Christ, we are those who serve the same one Lord.

**5. It is one faith**

It is the word, *"one faith" (Ephesians 4:5)*. The belief that believes the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the same for all saints. The belief that Christ took charge of our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to save us is the only true one faith. Those who have become God's people are all

those who have this exact same belief.

**6. It is one baptism**

It is the word, *"one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5)*. There is a reason why Apostle Paul specifically pointed out baptism. It is because baptism is directly connected to the washing away of sins. The baptism spoken of here is not a ceremony of pouring water on a person's head, but points to the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River. By receiving baptism through the law of the laying on of hands, Jesus shouldered the sins of all mankind at once. Because we all believed this one baptism and received the removal of sins, the true baptism is not two or three, but only one.

**7. It is one God**

It is the word, *"one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:6)*. The God we believe in is one. God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit exist, but to us, They become the exact same one God. This one God, as the Father of all, created all things, rules above all, unifies us who were originally creatures into His children, and is present together as the Holy Spirit within the saints who have received the elimination of sins.

**8. To summarize and speak**

The oneness of God's church revealed by Apostle Paul is sevenfold. One body, one Spirit, one hope (the above in verse 4), one Lord, one faith, one baptism (the above in verse 5), and one God (verse 6).

These seven things are not separated but all point toward one fact. It is that we have received the removal of sins through the

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same gospel of the water and the Spirit and stand upon one foundation. The One who made us one is not ourselves but the Holy Spirit, and because the baptism, faith, Lord, and God we rely on are all one, we are originally one body.
Therefore, Apostle Paul exhorts, *"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit" (Ephesians 4:3)* based on these seven onenesses. Always remembering that we are one body saved by the same gospel, we must embrace one another with lowliness, gentleness, and longsuffering so that the oneness is not broken due to human differences.

## [Question] 10. Apostle Paul exhorts us to live holding firmly to the gospel of life we have received without losing it. If so, could you explain in detail what that gospel we must hold onto is, why we must hold firmly to this gospel, and how we can live holding firmly to this gospel?

In Ephesians 4, Apostle Paul repeatedly exhorts to *"endeavoring to keep"* the gospel of salvation we have received. We will examine what it is to hold onto, why we must hold onto it, and how we can hold onto it from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 1. Apostle Paul exhorts to endeavor to keep the received gospel

In Ephesians 4:3, Apostle Paul exhorts to *"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* The expression *"endeavoring to keep"* is the core. This is a word that premises that if we just leave what we have received, it can be scattered or lost.

What must be kept here is not a simple mindset, but that gospel which made us one. We believed the gospel of the water and the Spirit, received the removal of sins, and became one body. It means to hold firmly and keep that gospel and the oneness established upon it so that it is not lost due to human differences or false teachings.

### 2. What must be held onto is the gospel of one faith, one baptism

What must be held onto is clearly revealed in chapter 4 verses 5 to 6. It is the word, *"one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God."* What we must hold onto is exactly this one faith, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

This gospel—that Christ took charge of our sins through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, died on the cross, and resurrected to save us—is the gospel that gave us life. If we lose this, we are missing the truth that gives life. Therefore, to hold onto it is not keeping a vague religious devotion, but firmly holding this fact of salvation in our hearts.

### 3. If we do not hold onto the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we will be shaken by false teachings

Why we must hold firmly is shown in chapter 4 verse 14. It is the word, *"that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting."*

If we remain as children in faith and fail to hold firmly to the received gospel, we will easily be carried away by all kinds of winds of doctrine. Since the era of the early church, false people would enter the church and scatter the saints, and Apostle Paul was greatly concerned about this. Some people speak of salvation with different verses, and some in yet other ways, but

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if we do not hold firmly to this gospel of the water and the Spirit—that Christ saved us through baptism, the cross, and resurrection—we end up being swept away by that wind. Therefore, we must grow in faith to become mature and firmly hold this gospel so that even if false people come in and hinder, we will not be shaken.

### 4. The way to hold onto it lies in repeatedly meditating on the salvation already received

If so, how can we hold firmly to this gospel? That way lies in repeatedly meditating on the received salvation in our hearts. Salvation is received at once, but because we are lacking beings with flesh, we must confirm the righteous work Christ did in our hearts every day.

Faith is not maintained if not testified, and when we are lacking, we must once again meditate on the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts. We must repeatedly confirm the fact that Christ came to this earth to establish a good relationship with us, received baptism, hung on the cross, and resurrected to save us, and thus cleanse our hearts. When we repeatedly meditate on the received salvation like this, we can hold firmly to that gospel.

### 5. Holding onto it directly leads to preaching that gospel of the water and the Spirit

The act of holding firmly to the gospel does not stop at keeping it in one's own heart. Because preaching the received gospel is also the act of keeping that faith.

Even if we have received salvation, if we fail to preach this faith to the world, we are failing to keep the faith, and faith is maintained by continuously testifying. If we do not continuously run toward the gospel, our faith is not kept. Therefore, the one

who holds firmly to the received gospel of life lives as one who meditates on that gospel in the heart while simultaneously preaching it to other souls and expanding the kingdom of God.

### 6. To summarize and speak

In Ephesians 4, Apostle Paul repeatedly exhorts to *"endeavoring to keep"* the gospel we have received. What must be held onto is the gospel of one Lord, one faith, one baptism, that is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit in which Christ saved us through baptism, the cross, and resurrection.

If we do not hold firmly to this gospel, we will be shaken, pushed by the trickery of men and cunning craftiness, that is, all kinds of winds of doctrine. Therefore, we must not remain as children but grow into mature ones in faith, and hold firmly to this gospel. The way to hold onto it lies in repeatedly meditating on the received salvation in our hearts, and furthermore, it leads to preaching that gospel to other souls. Living while firmly holding the received gospel of life in our hearts and also preaching it is the life of keeping the faith that Apostle Paul exhorts to us. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 5

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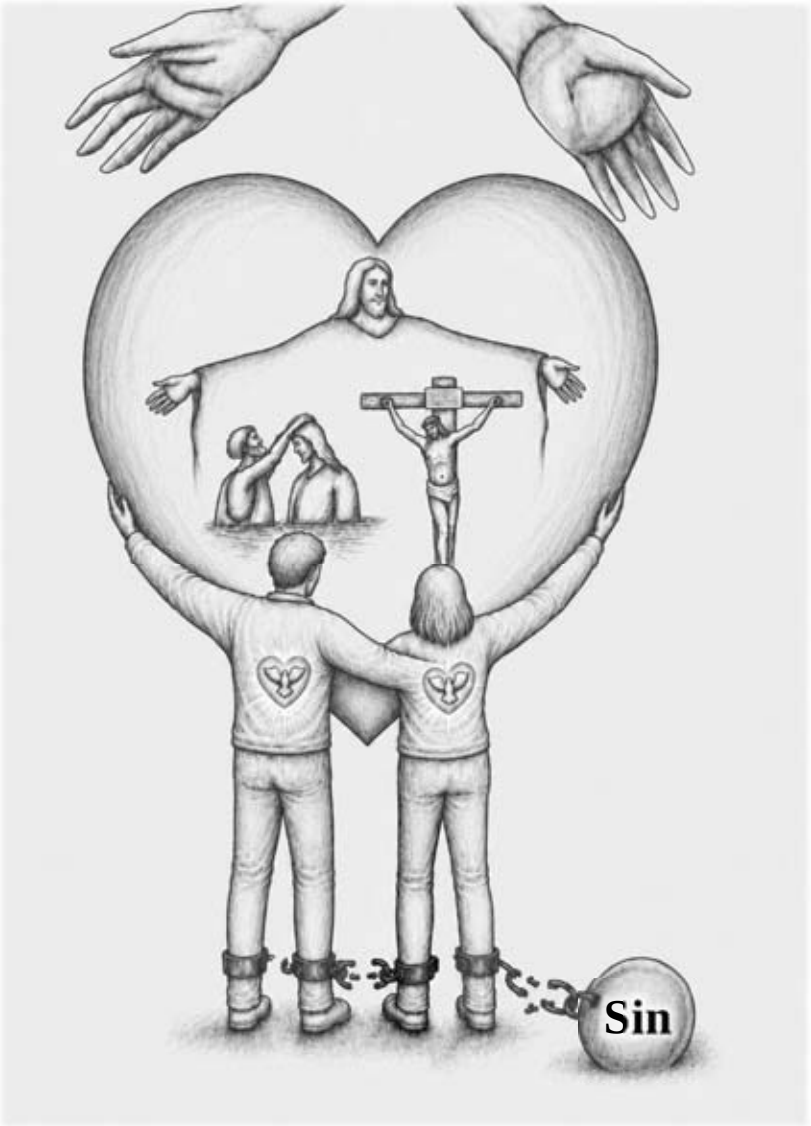


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Ephesians Chapter 5

# Live a life worthy of God's children

**< Ephesians 5:1-33 >**

**"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: 'Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.' See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but**

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**understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."**

## As children who have received God's love, you must imitate that love

"*Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk*

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*in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma" (Ephesians 5:1-2).*

This word begins with the conjunction *"Therefore."* In the preceding Ephesians chapter 4, the Apostle Paul exhorted to put off the old man and put on the new man, and to be kind to one another, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. As the conclusion of that exhortation, chapter 5 opens, and the command to be imitators of God is given. The text is not a place that demands ethical effort for the first time, but an exhortation given to those who have already become *"dear children,"* those who have already received God's love. Because they received love first, the flow is to imitate and act upon that received love.
The expression *"as dear children"* is the foundation of all exhortations. The fact that we have received love precedes the command to imitate. The basis on which we can imitate God lies not in our qualifications or resolutions, but in the fact that we have already received God's love and become His children. Then, how did we receive God's love and become His children? The answer appears right in the second verse.
The word, *"and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma." (Ephesians 5:2)*, is the heart of this text. It reveals that the love we have received is not a vague emotion, but a concrete ministry in which Christ actually gave Himself up and offered Himself for us. Here, *"sacrifice"* means an animal slaughtered for an offering, and it has the atonement sacrifices of the Old Testament as its background. In the Old Testament, a sinner laid his hands on the head of an unblemished animal to transfer his sins to that animal, and that animal shed blood and died in place of the sinner. It is exactly as recorded: *"Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel,*

*and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat" (Leviticus 16:21)*. That Christ became *"an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma"* means that He became the Lamb who bore our sins as the reality of this Old Testament sacrifice.

Looking at this ministry from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the work of Christ offering Himself for us was not accomplished solely by the blood of the cross. First, Jesus took the sins of all humanity upon His body once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River. The word, *"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.'" (Matthew 3:15)*, refers to this. According to the law of transferring sins by laying hands on the head of an animal, all the sins of the world were transferred to Jesus through the baptism administered by John the Baptist, who laid his hands on Jesus as the representative of humanity. Jesus, who bore the sins in this way, paid the full wages of those sins by shedding His blood and dying on the cross, and permanently guaranteed our salvation by resurrecting in three days.

Within the single phrase *"an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma"* the ministries of baptism, the cross, and the resurrection are contained together. The Lord bore our sins with His living body, obeyed the will of God the Father to receive baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected from death to save us. A faith that separates and emphasizes only the blood of the cross is holding onto only half of the gospel; only when we also believe the fact that Jesus bore our sins through baptism is it fully revealed how the *"dear children"* came to receive God's love.

This fact makes the exhortation of the first verse possible. The reason we can imitate God and walk in love is because Christ

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washed our sins clean and made us righteous through His baptism, cross, and resurrection. A person who still has sin intact cannot imitate God. However, a person who has received the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and has become a child of God can live loving other souls by imitating that love, because they have received the love of Him who gave Himself up for them. Therefore, the text is not a demand to obtain salvation through deeds, but an exhortation for those who are saved to walk in love in a manner worthy of the grace they have received.

## You must live a holy life fitting for a saint who has received the removal of sins

*"But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints" (Ephesians 5:3).*

This word continues from the preceding exhortation, *"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children" (Ephesians 5:1).* It is a place that specifically points out what a person who has received God's love and become His child must rightfully stay away from. *"Fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness"* are representative appearances of the old man living according to the flesh. Fornication refers to sexually immoral acts, uncleanness refers to the lusts of the world that will rot and disappear, and covetousness refers to the heart that endlessly seeks the impermanent wealth and honor of the world. The expression to note here is *"let it not even be named."* It is a strong exhortation not merely to avoid committing the sin, but to stay so far away from it that you do not even bring its name to your lips. And as the reason, it states, *"as is fitting for saints."*

This holiness is not a condition for a saint to obtain salvation, but a rightful appearance of life that naturally follows a person who has already become a saint.

The reason this text does not sound like a heavy legalistic command lies in its order. The text does not demand a sinner to live like this in order to become righteous. Towards a person who has already been justified by receiving the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it exhorts them to stay away from the old life since they have now become such a person. Because Jesus took the sins of all humanity once and for all by receiving baptism in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), paid the full price of those sins on the cross, and justified us by resurrecting, we have become those who no longer have any reason to serve fornication, uncleanness, and covetousness as our gods.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, just because one is a saint who has received the removal of sins, it does not mean the weakness of the flesh disappears. As the word says, *"For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin" (Ecclesiastes 7:20),* we still have a flesh that can stumble. However, temporarily falling into weakness is completely different from making sin one's purpose and following it entirely. What the text warns against is the attitude of making sin the direction of one's life, like those who are not born again. A person who has received the removal of sins clearly knows that the sin is not right, and lives by drawing a clear line in their heart that they will never again make that path their purpose.

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## You must speak words of thanksgiving instead of filthy words

*"Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks" (Ephesians 5:4).*

If the third verse dealt with actions and the lusts of the heart, the fourth verse deals with the words coming out of the mouth. *"Filthiness"* refers to base and dirty words, *"foolish talking"* refers to vain words with no benefit, and *"coarse jesting"* refers to joking that enjoys degrading others. Because such words are not fitting for saints, that is, they are not appropriate, we are told to stay away from them.

The Bible does not take the weight of words lightly. It says, *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Proverbs 18:21),* and Jesus also said, *"for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment" (Matthew 12:36).* From the mouths of those who are not born again, words that incite the pride and lusts of the world, and words that slander others, never cease. However, something else must be contained in the mouth of a saint who has received the removal of sins.

Therefore, the text does not merely stop at telling us not to speak bad words, but actively exhorts us, *"but rather giving of thanks."* It means not just leaving the space of filthy words empty, but filling it with thanksgiving. Where this thanksgiving comes from becomes clear when looking at it from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. A sinner who was bound to go to hell, who knows the fact that they have been delivered from all those sins because Jesus bore their sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected, cannot help but have thanksgiving flow out of their heart due to that grace of salvation.

Therefore, the *"giving of thanks"* in the fourth verse is not a

forced courtesy, but a confession that naturally comes out of a person whose received salvation is clear. In the mouth of a person who knows that they were darkness but have now become light in the Lord, that is, a person who has been justified by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, thanksgiving offered to God takes its place instead of vain and filthy words. The change in the words coming out of the mouth is evidence of how deep the received grace is.

## You must receive the inheritance of the Kingdom of God that idolaters cannot receive

*"For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them" (Ephesians 5:5-7).*

This word reveals the basis for the preceding exhortation to stay away from fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, and filthy words. Why we must stay away from them is presented with the emphasis, *"For this you know."* The Apostle Paul defines a fornicator, an unclean person, and a covetous man as an "*idolater.*" A person who endlessly pursues lusts and the wealth and honor of the world, even if they call upon God with their lips, is in reality serving those lusts and covetousness as their own god.

The text says that such people *"has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."* Here, "*inheritance*" can be understood in two ways. One is the inheritance as a workplace to be used for God's work on this earth, and the other is the glory

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of the Kingdom of God to be enjoyed in the future. A person who makes sin their purpose and entirely follows it gradually distances themselves from God's work and eventually loses that inheritance.

Next comes the warning, *"Let no one deceive you with empty words."* This is an exhortation not to be deceived by false words that incite that it is okay to live moderately compromising with the world even while having received the removal of sins. The target indicated by the word, *"the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience"* is also noteworthy. This includes not only the unbelieving people of the world, but also the children of disobedience who know the truth yet do not live according to God's will.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this text teaches that the lives of those who are born again and those who are not born again must be clearly distinguished. People who do not know this gospel—that Jesus took the sins of all humanity once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), died on the cross, and resurrected to save us—make lust and covetousness their gods and run only in that direction. Even if one is a saint who has received the removal of sins, it does not mean there is no weakness of the flesh, but making that weakness and sin the purpose of one's life is completely different. The exhortation, *"Therefore do not be partakers with them"* means do not live holding hands with those who are not born again, sharing the exact same purpose and the exact same direction.

## You must live bearing the fruit of one who has been moved from darkness to light

*"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth)" (Ephesians 5:8-9).*

This word is the turning point of the entire text. If the preceding part dealt with things to stay away from, here it declares what kind of being we have changed into. The core lies in the change of status: *"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8).* The text does not merely say we were in darkness, but says *"were once darkness."* That is, we ourselves were darkness itself. And now it declares not "received light" but *"are light."* It means our very existence has changed.

Everyone is a being of darkness who is born with sin and has no choice but to live committing sin. Without acknowledging the fact that one is a sinner bound to go to hell before God, one cannot be moved to the light. Therefore, on the path to becoming light, two acknowledgments must exist together. One is acknowledging the fact that one is a sinner and darkness bound to go to hell, and the other is acknowledging the fact that the Lord has saved such a self.

Unfolding this salvation from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, a person who was darkness becoming light is not due to their own effort or religious acts. It is because the Lord came to this earth in human flesh as the High Priest of heaven, took over all our sins onto His body by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River, was crucified bearing those sins to receive our judgment in our place, and resurrected from death in three days to deliver us from sin. A being of darkness bound to go to hell becomes a sinless child of

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God, that is, light, precisely by accepting this ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection with the heart.
Therefore, the exhortation to *"Walk as children of light"* is not a condition to become light, but a natural calling given to one who has already become light. It says the fruit of that light *"is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth."* Goodness is the heart that purely accepts what is right as right and tries to act on it; righteousness is believing in the righteousness by which the Lord saved us and living for the salvation of other souls; truth is acknowledging one's shortcomings and living without falsehood before God. These three fruits are not forced, but are fruits borne by the Holy Spirit in a person who has become light by receiving the removal of sins.

## You must discern what pleases the Lord and depart from the works of darkness

*"Finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them" (Ephesians 5:10-11).*

This word immediately follows the preceding exhortation, *"Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth)" (Ephesians 5:8-9).* The specific way for one who has become light to live bearing the fruit of light is presented here. The first step is the command, *"finding out what is acceptable to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:10).* Here, *"finding out"* does not mean to guess vaguely, but is an exhortation to discern and confirm what pleases the Lord and to stand on that side.
When discerning what pleases the Lord, we must make one fact clear. The fact is that our eating well and living happily itself is

not the Lord's greatest joy. The Lord is pleased when a person who has received the removal of sins preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit to other souls who do not know that received salvation, and lives serving that work. Therefore, discerning what pleases the Lord is ultimately the work of examining where I belong, with whom, and in what direction I am living.

The following word, *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them." (Ephesians 5:11)*, supports this. To have fellowship means to associate and participate together. A person's fruit is determined by whom they follow and where they belong. If you belong to the side of people doing good works, you will do those works together even if you do not want to, and conversely, if you belong to the side of those doing works of darkness, you will unknowingly participate in that darkness. Turning this word around, it becomes an exhortation to participate together in good works that have the fruit of light.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, departing from the works of darkness and participating in the works of light is not a condition to obtain salvation, but a life that follows one who has already become light. Because Jesus took our sins once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), died on the cross, and resurrected to move us from darkness to light, we who have become light no longer have any reason to participate in the unfruitful works of darkness. Rather, we come to participate by giving our hearts to the work that pleases the Lord, that is, the work of preaching this gospel of salvation to other souls.

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## The born-again person appears as light by being exposed

*"For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: 'Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light'" (Ephesians 5:12-14).*

This word takes up the preceding exhortation *"but rather expose them"* and explains what the works of darkness are and what happens to them before the light. *"For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret." (Ephesians 5:12)* indicates that the things done in hiding by those belonging to darkness are shameful even to bring up to the lips. The works of darkness are originally done secretly in hiding, fearing being exposed.

However, the text immediately declares the power of light. *"But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light" (Ephesians 5:13)*. When the light shines, the hidden works of darkness reveal their true nature. The moment it is exposed and clearly revealed before the light, darkness can no longer remain as darkness. The word *"whatever makes manifest is light"* means that what is revealed by the light takes on the nature of light itself.

This principle applies exactly to our own lives as well. Just because one is a saint who has received the removal of sins, it does not mean there are no shortcomings at all. We too may have incorrect aspects, aspects of darkness remaining. However, when the Lord rebukes those wrong things with the Word, we advance into the bright light again through that rebuke. Not hiding in fear of being revealed by the light, but exposing oneself before the light to receive correction is the attitude worthy of

children of light.
From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the basis on which we can expose ourselves before the light lies in the fact that all our sins have already been washed clean. Because Jesus bore our sins through baptism and paid their full price on the cross, we no longer need to hide in darkness fearing our sins will be revealed. A person who has received the removal of sins does not receive it as condemnation even if their shortcomings are revealed by the light, but rather gains the way to live in the light again through the rebuke of the Word. Therefore, this text calls us not to a life of hiding darkness, but to a life of advancing into the light and living clearly revealed.

## You must live a life redeeming the time like a wise person

*"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16).*

This word corresponds to the conclusion of the preceding exhortation, the exhortation that one who has been moved from darkness to light should walk worthy of children of light. The conjunction *"See then"* continues that flow. One who has become light must now live *"See then that you walk circumspectly" (Ephesians 5:15)*. Here, the expression *"walk circumspectly"* means that a person who has received the removal of sins should not take lightly how they should live in the future, but live examining it deeply.
The text exhorts to do so *"not as fools but as wise" (Ephesians 5:15)*. Here, wisdom is different from simple knowledge. If knowledge is knowing something, wisdom is the discernment

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and practice of accomplishing the right will through what is known. It is a foolish thing to live exactly the same as before being born again while having received the removal of sins, and it is a wise thing to live thinking about what is right in a manner worthy of the received salvation.

The specific appearance of a wise life is presented as the command *"redeeming the time" (Ephesians 5:16)*. Redeeming the time means not letting time flow away in vain, but discerning and utilizing the given times and opportunities well. As the reason for this, the text reveals, *"because the days are evil." (Ephesians 5:16)*. Because the era we live in is an evil era, we must live valuing time preciously by being even more awake.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the greatest reason we must live redeeming the time lies in the magnitude of the salvation we have received. If everything ended on the day we were saved while having received the removal of sins, there would be no reason for us to stay on this earth any longer. A person who has received this salvation—that Jesus took our sins once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), died on the cross, and resurrected to justify us—comes to use that received time not for their own lusts but for other souls who do not know this gospel of salvation. Redeeming the time means devoting time to works worthy of the received salvation.

## You must live a life understanding what the will of the Lord is

*"Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17).*

This word goes one step further from the preceding

exhortation to *"redeeming the time,"* and reveals what that redeemed time should be used for. The text exhorts, *"do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is."* A foolish person is one who lives only as their flesh desires, and a wise person is one who lives thinking about what the will of the Lord is.

Here, the word *"understand"* is important. It does not mean to follow vaguely, but to realize and know what the Lord's will is. A wise person is one who lives thinking about what God's will for me is, and what God's will for God's church is. Even if one cannot put everything into action, discerning what is right in the light of the Word and deciding to stand on that right side is the starting point of a wise life.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the core of understanding the Lord's will lies, above all, in correctly knowing how the Lord saved us. The Lord's will is that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist to take the sins of the world onto His own body, shed blood and died on the cross, and resurrected in three days to justify us once and for all. The Bible clearly states, *"for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).* Understanding the fact that all our sins were washed clean by this ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection is precisely the first step on the path to understanding the Lord's will.

This point is very important. The teaching that one does not receive the removal of sins all at once, but receives it little by little every day as they live and becomes perfect later, is not the teaching of the Bible. The Bible says that because Jesus removed our sins once and for all, there is no longer any offering for sin. Because the Lord became the Alpha and the Omega and bore all our sins from beginning to end once and for all, the person who believes in this gospel becomes a righteous person without sin.

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A person who understands the Lord's will stands on this gospel of salvation accomplished once and for all, and lives relying not on their own deeds but on the Lord's righteousness.

## You must not get drunk with wine, but live receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit

*"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18).*

This word follows the preceding exhortation, the exhortation to redeem the time like a wise person and to understand the Lord's will. One specific appearance of a wise life is presented as the exhortation, *"do not be drunk with wine."* The text defines drunkenness as *"dissipation."* When one gets drunk, the mind becomes clouded, and as a result, one is dragged by the thoughts and lusts of the flesh. Drunkenness represents falling into the world and the flesh.

What should be noted here is that the text does not stop merely at the prohibition *"do not be drunk with wine,"* but immediately leads to the active exhortation *"but be filled with the Spirit."* Drunkenness and the fullness of the Holy Spirit are contrasted with each other. Just as wine controls a person and leads them to the thoughts of the flesh, the fullness of the Holy Spirit points to the state where God controls our body, mind, and thoughts. Namely, who controls you is the key issue.

There is one thing that must be made clear regarding the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The fullness of the Holy Spirit is not about emotions becoming intense or some mystical feeling wrapping around the heart. "Fullness" means being filled up. That is, when God's will and God's work fill our hearts, and we offer ourselves to the work of fulfilling that will, the Holy Spirit controls us and

our hearts become filled. Offering our hearts to God's work and rejoicing while watching that work be accomplished is itself the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, a person who receives the fullness of the Holy Spirit is first a person who has received the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and in whose heart the Holy Spirit dwells. Because Jesus took the sins of all mankind once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), died on the cross, and resurrected to justify us, the Holy Spirit indwells in the hearts of us who have received the removal of sins. Offering oneself to God's will and work so that this Holy Spirit may control us is precisely the way to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

## You must become a person who offers praise with the heart and gives thanks in all things

*"Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:19-20).*

This word shows how the exhortation to be filled with the Spirit in the preceding verse appears in actual life. What naturally flows out from a person who has received the fullness of the Holy Spirit is precisely praise and thanksgiving. The text says, *"speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Ephesians 5:19).* Here, the expression *"speaking to one another"* is important. Praise is not merely singing a melody beautifully, but responding with the heart that the confession contained in the lyrics is right.

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The reason the text repeatedly emphasizes *"singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19)* is also here. Praise sung only with the lips stops at being a mere formality, and only praise sung with the heart becomes true praise. The lyrics of praise are precisely our testimony of the salvation God has bestowed upon us. Confessing with the heart how God saved us and giving thanks is true praise.

Following this, the text says, *"giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20)*. The expressions *"for all things"* and *"always"* mean to give thanks constantly in everything, not only when circumstances are good. How this thanksgiving is possible becomes clear when examined from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. A person who knows the fact that a sinner bound to go to hell was delivered from all those sins by Jesus bearing the sins through baptism, dying on the cross, and resurrecting, has no choice but to give thanks for the grace of that salvation in any circumstance.

Therefore, this praise and thanksgiving are not forcedly produced, but are confessions that naturally flow out from a person who has been saved by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and has received the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The clearer the received salvation is, the more the mouth and heart become filled with praise and thanksgiving.

## You must submit to one another in the fear of Christ

*"Submitting to one another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:21).*

This word concludes the exhortations of chapter 5, and at the

same time serves as a bridge moving into the following exhortations concerning husbands, wives, and the family. The core of the text is that the exhortation to *"submitting to one another"* is built upon the foundation of *"in the fear of."* Here, submission is not yielding to human status or authority, but originates from a heart that fears Christ.

The word *"submitting to one another"* is not a one-sided submission but submission toward each other. Its standard is the will of Christ and the work that pleases the Lord. Therefore, whether someone's status is higher or lower than mine, if it is the right thing that the Lord desires, it is to bow our hearts to each other, acknowledge that rightness, and follow it. This is also the work of uniting hearts. When people who fear Christ acknowledge each other's rightness and gather their hearts, true unity is achieved in that community.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the basis on which such mutual submission is possible lies in the fact that we are all those who have received the same grace. No one obtained salvation by their own deeds or qualifications, but became a righteous person by receiving the salvation accomplished by Jesus through baptism, the cross, and resurrection. A person who knows that they were originally a sinner bound to go to hell cannot exalt themselves before others. When people who know that the grace they received is the same submit to one another with a heart that fears Christ, only then is the unity and order worthy of God's church established.

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## You must know the submission of wives to their husbands and the relationship between Christ and the church

*"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything" (Ephesians 5:22-24).*

This word specifically applies the preceding exhortation, *"submitting to one another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:21),* to the marital relationship. The Apostle Paul does not speak the deep truth concerning the church directly, but unfolds it through the analogy of the marital relationship that is easy for anyone to understand. Therefore, the first thing to remember when reading the text is that the true theme of this word is not the superiority or inferiority of men and women, but the relationship between Christ and the church.

The text says, *"For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church" (Ephesians 5:23).* Here, the husband points to Christ, and the wife points to the church that believes in Christ. Therefore, the true meaning of the word *"so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." (Ephesians 5:24)* is to do as the church submits to Christ. This was by no means recorded because men are superior to women. Men and women are the exact same creatures, only their genders are different.

The point where the text expresses Christ as *"He is the Savior of the body." (Ephesians 5:23)* is important. The basis on which Christ becomes the head of the church is not power or status, but lies in the fact that He Himself became the Savior of the church. Namely, the church submitting to Christ is because He is the

Savior who delivered and saved us from sin.
From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the church submitting to Christ is not a simple duty but a proper response to the received salvation. Jesus Christ came to this earth as our Bridegroom, took our sins over onto His own body by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), shed blood and died on the cross, and resurrected to save us from sin. Because He is the Bridegroom who made us His bride in this way, the church, which has become the bride, submits to Christ the Bridegroom and follows the work that pleases Him.

## You must believe in the love of God who cleansed us by the washing of water by the word

*"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27).*

This word, following the treatment of the wife's submission, deals with the husband's love. However, here too, the essence is the love with which Christ loved the church. The text tells husbands to love their wives *"just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25).* Namely, Christ's love becomes the example for all love.
The phrase that must be paid attention to the most in this text is *"that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word" (Ephesians 5:26).* This word contains the core of the gospel of the water and the Spirit exactly as it is. Here,

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*"washing of water"* points to the baptism Jesus received. Christ came to this earth as the eternal High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek, took our sins over onto His own body by receiving baptism, and saved us from sin by offering that body as an eternal sacrifice. Namely, Christ, the Bridegroom, washed us, who would become the bride, with water and made us clean. Why this fact is important becomes clear in the following word. It says Christ made the church *"Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (Ephesians 5:27).* However, there is no one in this world who does not commit sin, and even after being born again, no one lives flawlessly and perfectly. If so, how can we become holy and unblemished before God? It is because only Jesus Christ, when He became thirty years old, took the sins of our mankind over onto His own body through baptism and eternally and cleanly eliminated all our sins. By bearing all those sins, being crucified in our place to receive the punishment for sin, dying, and resurrecting, He made us holy.

There is one thing that must be made clear here. The baptism Jesus received is not a special doctrine asserted by only some churches. The Apostle Paul repeatedly mentions this baptism in Romans, Colossians, and also Hebrews. If Jesus Christ had not come to this earth and washed away our sins by receiving baptism, there would be no one to become His bride. Therefore, this single phrase, *"cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,"* testifies that Christ's love is precisely the saving love that cleansed us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## You must love your wife as your own body

*"So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own*

*bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself" (Ephesians 5:28).*

This word concludes by applying the love of Christ shown earlier to the husband's love. For a husband to love his wife *"wash his body"* means to imitate the love with which Christ loved the church, considering it as a member of His own body. The text says, *"he who loves his wife loves himself."* This is because, just as the wife is one body with the husband, the church is one body with Christ.

Looking at the reality of this analogy from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the church and Christ became one body because Christ made us His bride through baptism, the cross, and resurrection. Christ came as the eternal High Priest, took those sins over onto His own body, washed them clean, and made us a bride without blemish or spot, making us members of His own body, for us who were bound to go to hell due to sin. Therefore, Christ loving the church is precisely the same as loving His own body.

Such love is something no husband in the world can accomplish on his own. When his bride falls into sin and is in a situation to go to hell, there is no husband in this world who can love her to the point of taking over those sins himself and dying in her place. Only Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, did so. Therefore, the exhortation for the husband to love his wife as his own body is not a demand to achieve moral perfection by human strength, but a calling to live imitating that love as one who has received the love with which Christ loved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

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## You must nourish your wife just as Christ nourishes the church

*"For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church" (Ephesians 5:29).*

This word unfolds one step further the preceding exhortation, *"So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies" (Ephesians 5:28)*. Everyone does not hate their own flesh, but rather feeds, clothes, and cares for it. The text raises this natural principle to say that a husband must nourish and protect his wife like that. However, here too, the true theme of the text does not stop at the duty of a married couple, but heads toward the deeper truth that the Lord *"nourishes and cherishes"* the church.

The word *"nourish"* means to protect and rear. The text presents Christ nourishing the church as the example for all rearing and protection. Namely, Christ, the Bridegroom, does not stop at merely saving the bride, the church, once, but protects, rears, and cares for her to the end. The following word, *"For we are members of His body" (Ephesians 5:30)*, is the basis for that. Because the church is a member of Christ's body, Christ caring for the church is the same as caring for His own body.

What it means that Christ nourishes the church becomes clear when examined from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The first step of Christ making us His bride is taking our sins over onto His own body by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15). Bearing those sins, He shed blood and died on the cross, and by resurrecting, He established us as a holy bride without blemish or spot. However, Christ's love does not stop at this salvation. Protecting and rearing us, who have become the bride, to the end is precisely nourishing.

If so, how does Christ nourish the church today? Ephesians, to

which the text belongs, shows the answer elsewhere. *"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12).* Namely, Christ establishes office-bearers in the church, and through them, protects, rears, and blesses the weak members. Also, when we work for the Lord, the Lord helps us, and when we pray, He answers; this is also the way Christ nourishes the church.

## It is like having to become a member of Christ's body

*"For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'" (Ephesians 5:30-31).*

This word immediately follows the preceding exhortation that *"Christ is head of the church."* The reason Christ cares for the church like His own body is contained in the single phrase, *"For we are members of His body" (Ephesians 5:30).* Because the church is a member of Christ's body, His caring for the church is exactly the same as caring for His own body.
Following this, the text quotes the word of Genesis. *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (Ephesians 5:31)* originally points to the husband and wife forming one body through marriage. However, the reason the Apostle Paul quotes this verse is to show the deeper truth of the union between Christ and the church through that union of the married couple forming one flesh. Just as the husband and wife become one flesh, Christ

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and the church also became one inseparable body.
From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the church and Christ becoming one body is because Christ made us His bride. Christ took our sins over onto His own body by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), shed blood and died on the cross, and resurrected to make us a holy bride without blemish or spot. We, who were bound to go to hell due to sin, received the removal of sins through the ministry of baptism, the cross, and resurrection, and became members of Christ's body. Therefore, our forming one body with Christ is not due to our qualifications or efforts, but is entirely the result of the salvation accomplished by Christ, the Bridegroom.

## You must realize the great mystery concerning Christ and the church

*"This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:32).*

This word clearly reveals what the analogy of the married couple was actually intending to say. After crying out, *"This is a great mystery,"* the Apostle Paul clarifies, *"but I speak concerning Christ and the church."* Namely, everything spoken so far about the husband and wife, the head and the body, and the union forming one flesh, was not to argue about the ranks or superiority/inferiority of men and women, but to convey the mystery of Christ and the church.
The reason the text calls this a *"mystery"* is because the union of Christ and the church is a deep truth that cannot be fathomed by human thoughts. And saying that this mystery is *"great"* means that this truth is that much magnificent and glorious.

Because this mystery is so great, the Apostle Paul is explaining it by borrowing the familiar analogy of the married life of a husband and wife so that people can understand.
Unraveling the core of this great mystery from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it lies in how Christ made us sinners His bride. Christ came to this earth as the eternal High Priest, took the sins of our mankind over onto His own body through baptism, shed blood and died on the cross while bearing those sins, and resurrected from death to make us a clean bride without blemish or spot, making us His church. How those who had fallen into sin and were bound to go to hell became the holy and glorious bride of Christ—this is exactly the great and amazing mystery. This mystery is fully unraveled only within the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## You must live loving your wife and respecting your husband

*"Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband" (Ephesians 5:33).*

This word is the conclusion that wraps up the long exhortations of chapter 5. After speaking of the great mystery of Christ and the church, the Apostle Paul returns to the reality of the marital relationship with the word *"Nevertheless."* The husband is to love his own wife as his own body, and the wife is to respect her husband. This condenses the exhortations unraveled previously into a single sentence.
However, this exhortation is not merely moral advice for the harmony of the family. The mystery of Christ and the church revealed earlier is laid as its foundation. The husband loving his

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wife as his own body is imitating Christ loving the church as His own body, and the wife respecting her husband is imitating the church respecting Christ, the Bridegroom. Namely, the marital relationship on this earth is like a mirror reflecting the relationship between Christ and the church.

From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the basis on which such love and respect are possible lies in the fact that we first received the love of Christ. When his bride falls into sin and is in a situation to go to hell, there is no one in this world who can love her to the point of taking over those sins himself and dying in her place. Only Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, loved like that through baptism, the cross, and resurrection. It is a proper response for the bride who received that love to respect and follow the Bridegroom. Therefore, the husband's love and the wife's respect are not duties squeezed out by human strength, but a natural life that flows out from those who have received the love with which Christ loved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. ✉

Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# Act like children of light and live a life united as one body with Christ

**< Ephesians 5:1-33 >**

**"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: 'Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the**

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**dead, And Christ will give you light.' See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."**

## Is it Jesus Christ's will to make us love one another and become imitators of God like children who have received the love of Jesus Christ?

Ephesians 5:1 and 2 declare the most glorious principle of life that Christians should pursue and the earnest will of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, like children who have received love, you become imitators of God, and walk in love just as Christ also loved you. The Lord wanted us not to merely stay at being delivered from sin, but to resemble God's character and become God's representatives who flow that love to the world. Summarizing the specific reasons into three, they are as follows.

### Because we are children who have received love

God loved us not because we did acts worthy of receiving love, but because He washed us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit and gave us a new identity as God's children. Just as it is a natural logic for children to resemble their parents, for us who have received immeasurable love from God to imitate that Father and live loving should become the natural nature of those who are born again. This is the first will of the Lord who made us His children.

### It is following the model of sacrificial love the Lord showed

The Lord did not tell us to love only with words, but personally showed the confirmed love by directly giving Himself up and offering Himself to God as a fragrant offering and a sacrifice. Just as the Lord gave up His life for us, when we treat the members, we must also live a life of love that gives oneself up for the other person rather than seeking one's own benefit. Like this, the attitude of remembering Christ's sacrifice

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and valuing others is exactly the essence of the life walking in love that the Lord expects from us.

**Imitating God is the completion of being born again**

For us to imitate God does not mean mimicking God's omnipotence, but it means growing to resemble His character of holiness and love. The purpose of being born again is for us, who became righteous people by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, to now manifest God's character in our hearts and deeds as well, making the world see God's living presence through us. Only when our lives become a mirror reflecting God's character is the grace of salvation perfectly completed within us.

To summarize, the love the Lord wants is not a vague emotion but must appear as a very practical attitude of life. This is speaking words of thanksgiving instead of filthy words or words of foolish talking, and discerning what will please the Lord to act as children of light. Also, it includes the attitude of submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ and respecting and serving one another.

Ultimately, the Lord's will is to live translating God's character, love, into the language and deeds of this earth, like holy righteous people washed by the water and the Spirit. The holy desire asking to let us live imitating that love that loved me becomes the most certain evidence that we are children who have received God's love. I hope that today as well, you live a victorious life manifesting the dignity worthy of God's children on that glorious path of imitation.

## Is it God's will for us to also walk in Christ's truth and love just as Christ loved us?

Ephesians 5:2 presents to the saints an absolute standard beyond a simple moral admonition to live nicely, to do to the world and brothers exactly as Christ did to us. This is exactly God's earnest desire and will. Summarizing the deep reasons why we must walk in Christ's truth and love into three, they are as follows.

### To emit the fragrance of sacrificial love

Christ's love was a fragrant offering given to God by giving Himself up. When we walk in love like Christ, our lives become a holy fragrance that God joyfully receives. God wants the life itself of boldly discarding the old man's way that only sought one's own benefit first, and considering and serving the members first in the truth, to become a living sacrifice offered to God.

### Because the truth separates us from darkness

Christ's love does not mean unconditional acceptance only, and it necessarily accompanies the truth. The Bible declares that you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Because we possess the truth which is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God wants us to no longer participate in the works of darkness such as sexual immorality, greed, or filthiness. Walking in the truth is exactly the secret to bearing the fruits worthy of children of light, which are all goodness, righteousness, and truth.

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**To complete the family-likeness of God**

Born-again saints have the identity of children who have received God's love. Because the Father is a being of love and truth, His children also must naturally resemble that character. When we imitate Christ and walk in love and truth, God wants the fact that we are God's family to finally be clearly proven before the whole universe.

To summarize, love and truth are like two pillars supporting salvation. Love without truth easily falls into self-indulgence and confusion, and truth without love easily becomes a cold and critical law. God wants us to stand firmly on the truth which is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and live treating one another with that love with which the Lord forgave.

The resolution to love just as the Lord loved me, and to live truthfully just as the Lord is the truth, makes the saints' footsteps glorious. When these two pillars stand strongly in life, God indeed acknowledges us as His beloved children and greatly rejoices. Through the lives of the saints walking this path, God's kingdom will be revealed more solidly.

## Is it God's will to make us live with the purpose of faith for the prosperity of God's kingdom?

The life of a wise person emphasized in Ephesians 5 touches the most ultimate reason why God left the born-again saints on this earth. God wants us not to merely stay at living a life of faith for personal comfort, but to participate in the massive purpose of the expansion and prosperity of God's kingdom. Summarizing that specific will into three through the words of Ephesians 5, it is as follows.

### The purpose contained in the command to redeem the time

The Apostle Paul warns to redeem the time, because the days are evil. Here, redeeming the time is not a simple moral admonition to save time and live diligently, but it means to strategically grasp the opportunities God gave and use them for the values of God's kingdom. God wants us not to waste our precious lives on the vain trends of the world, but to focus our life's resources on the work of propagating the gospel of the water and the Spirit and building up the members. This very concentration is the spiritual wisdom that makes God's kingdom prosper.

### Discernment to understand what the will of the Lord is

A foolish person lives only for their own benefit and comfort, but a wise person places deep interest in how God's rule is accomplished on this earth. God wants saints to live pondering every moment how God's kingdom can be manifested through them. When this purpose of faith becomes clear, our ordinary daily life is transformed into a holy mission field for the prosperity of God's kingdom.

### Propagating the vitality of the kingdom through the fullness of the Holy Spirit

The fullness of the Holy Spirit does not stop at personal emotional elevation, but becomes a powerful driving force leading to the prosperity of the community. When those full of the Holy Spirit answer one another with psalms and hymns and give thanks, God's kingdom prospers with vitality within that community. By being ruled by the Holy Spirit, God wants us to drive out the darkness of this earth and become channels of blessing that expand the light of God's kingdom.

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To summarize, God's kingdom prospers through the devotion of those who are born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have a holy purpose. The process of being convinced that this gospel I believe is the only power to save the world, pondering how my job, family, and language will become a benefit to God's kingdom, and uniting with the members is necessary.

The noble sense of purpose that my life itself is a tool for the prosperity of God's kingdom makes a saint's day boundlessly valuable. When we live embracing this purpose, God will fill us more abundantly than all that we ask or think, and through us, He will make His kingdom prosper brilliantly. As the main characters of this glorious history, I hope you live a life preciously used for the expansion of God's kingdom.

## Must we know the fact that the Lord hates idolaters in the kingdom of God?

Ephesians 5:5 strictly and firmly warns that no covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. The reason idolatry is so strictly forbidden in the kingdom of God is because, beyond a simple religious act, it is a fatal toxin that severs the relationship of life between God and us. Summarizing the reasons into three from the perspective of Ephesians, they are as follows.

### Because covetousness is exactly idolatry

The Bible does not define only bowing down before visible statues as idolatry, but defines the greed of the heart that loves and relies on things more than God as idolatry. If one puts the

wealth or honor of the world, or one's own desires, ahead of the joy of God's kingdom obtained by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that exactly becomes an idol of the heart. God does not want His children to have their hearts stolen by these vain things and lose true happiness.

**Because it prevents obtaining the inheritance of the kingdom of God**

Idolatry is an act that directly collides with the laws of God's kingdom. God's kingdom is a kingdom only for those who rejoice in God's rule and His righteousness. The Bible declares that because a person who worships idols is in a state of serving something other than God as king, they are not qualified to enjoy the blessings and inheritance of the holy kingdom. In other words, unless the master of the heart changes, the abundant inheritance of God's kingdom cannot become that person's.

**Because it damages the identity as children of light of the kingdom of God**

Those who are born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit are now children of light, not darkness. However, idolatry drags us back into darkness and the old customs of the past. God wants us to keep to the end that noble identity we obtained through the gospel. The fundamental reason God hates idolatry is because He cannot stand by and watch His beloved children act as slaves to worthless idols and mingle with the sons of disobedience.

To summarize, clearly knowing the fact that God forbids idolatry gives us great spiritual benefit. This makes us re-establish daily the priority that the Lord alone is the master of my life, and supplies the power to reject the temptations of the world with the

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pride that I am an heir who has inherited the inheritance of God's kingdom. Only when we let go of the hand that sought corruptible idols can we fully contain the spiritual blessings God gives.

The world will constantly tempt us to rely on things other than God, but saints must remember the warning, "Let no one deceive you with empty words." Only when we wholly love God alone, who made us His possession by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, will the abundant inheritance of God's kingdom overflow as practical blessings in our lives. I hope you boldly walk as children of light who discard the idols of the heart and serve only God as King.

## Are those who live in the royal palace of God children of light living in the gospel of truth?

According to the proclamation of Ephesians 5, those who dwell in God's kingdom are not simply those whose location has been moved, but those whose existence itself has changed from darkness to light. The Apostle Paul declares this amazing change of identity and way of life, saying, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." Summarizing the three characteristics that appear in the children of light who enjoy the gospel of truth within the royal palace of God, they are as follows.

### Existence has changed by the light of the gospel

The reason we became children of light is not because we have the ability to emit light ourselves. It is because the truth, which is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, completely drove

out and removed the darkness and sins of our hearts. Just as darkness cannot coexist where there is light, the soul of a person for whom the gospel of truth has become reality is in a state of being completely moved into the realm of the brilliant light, which is God's kingdom. This means that beyond a simple change, the source of existence has changed.

**We live bearing the fruit of the light**

Children of light are bound to have concrete evidence appear in their lives. The Bible defines the content of that fruit as all goodness, righteousness, and truth. These fruits are not the product of human effort, but the natural result of the light of Christ dwelling within being projected outward. That life itself, living while discerning what will please the Lord, becomes the way God's kingdom concretely appears on this earth.

**We have a mission to expose and awaken the darkness**

Children of light are not satisfied with simply staying in a bright place alone. Not only do they not participate in the unfruitful works of darkness, but they rather perform the role of reproving them to make them revealed under the light. Like the cry, "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you" the saint who has the gospel of truth bears the mission of a spiritual watchman who awakens the souls still sleeping in darkness by shining the dawn of God's kingdom upon them.

To summarize, living inside the royal palace of God means living confidently without hiding under the sun called truth. Because the darkness of sin has disappeared, one comes to have confidence without hesitation before God and people, and acts as a wise person who redeems the time and understands the will

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of the Lord. Also, having lips that give thanks to God in everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, instead of filthy words, is the appearance worthy of children of light.
The declaration “are light in the Lord” is a powerful confession that represents the identity of a saint. We must believe that wherever we go, the light of truth is driving out the darkness and revealing the glory of God’s kingdom. When we triumph with the truthfulness that the world cannot give as children of brilliant light, our footsteps themselves will become a channel of blessing through which God’s kingdom expands. I hope you walk confidently in that bright light today as well.

## Is the fruit of the light in all goodness, righteousness, and truth?

Ephesians 5:9 declares that the fruit of the light is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. This is a word that clearly shows the essence of light and the evidence of the Holy Spirit appearing in the life of a born-again saint. God wants that if we have become children of light by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that light will be borne into three concrete fruits through our character and life. Summarizing the spiritual meaning these fruits have, it is as follows.

### All goodness

Goodness means, beyond simply having a soft or good personality, God’s goodness flowing out to the world through the saint. It is an attitude of doing good to others with a generous and merciful heart, remembering that unconventional goodness the Lord bestowed upon a sinner like me. The benevolence that covers

a brother's fault and sincerely helps a member in trouble is indeed the concrete appearance of goodness, the first fruit of the light.

### All righteousness

Righteousness is a fruit deeply related to God's justice prior to moral innocence. A saint became a righteous person not by their own deeds, but only by believing in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Therefore, this fruit means that the righteousness of Christ dwelling within me becomes the only standard of life. The confident attitude of acting honestly and rightly, making the truth, which is the word of God, the final authority of life without compromising with the injustice of the world, is exactly the manifestation of righteousness.

### All truth

Truthfulness refers to a state without lies, that is, a state where the truth of the word has become one with character. Because the gospel of the water and the Spirit is unchanging truth, children of light dwell within this truth and distance themselves from hypocrisy or lies where the outside and inside are different. Speaking and acting truthfully without embellishment before God or people can be said to be the appearance of the exhortation emphasized in Ephesians, "put away falsehood and speak the truth," being fulfilled in actual life.

To summarize, there is a deep reason why the Bible calls this a fruit rather than an effort or achievement. Just as it is a natural principle for apples to bear on an apple tree, if Christ, who is light, is in the heart, these characters will naturally be borne. Having fruit is evidence that the life is alive, and the goodness, righteousness, and truth appearing in life become the most

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certain spiritual certificate showing the fact that one is a child of light born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit.
When a saint lives a life that pleases the Lord by bearing these three fruits, God receives the greatest glory seeing the darkness of the world retreat through that light. The truthfulness and goodness of a saint become a bright lamp that shows God's kingdom to someone. I hope you live a blessed life that becomes a joy to the Lord, testifying to God's living presence through the fruits of light ripening within you today as well.

## Must those who have become righteous not participate in the works of darkness, but rather reprove them?

Ephesians 5:11 commands, "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them" and clearly presents the holy mission granted to the righteous who are born again as children of light. Summarizing into three the reasons God demands active reproof, not stopping at simply avoiding darkness, and its spiritual principles, they are as follows.

### Because darkness and light can never mix

A righteous person is a being who dwells under the brilliant light called the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The command not to participate in the works of darkness means the firmness of not staying near them because one knows how vain and unfruitful sin, greed, and lies are. Because a child of light participating in the works of darkness is an act of defiling their own noble identity, God wants us to live a holy life separated

from the children of darkness.

**Reproof is not condemnation but shining the light**

The reproof the Bible speaks of is not a means of condemnation that criticizes and degrades the other person. Ephesians 5:13 says that all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light. Just as ugly things hidden in darkness are revealed on their own when light enters, when a righteous person acts in truth and righteousness, the darkness of the world is naturally exposed. In other words, the holy life of a saint itself becomes the most powerful reproof against darkness.

**It is to awaken sleeping souls**

The ultimate purpose God gave us the mission of reproof is in salvation, not destruction. This is to cry out to those dying in darkness, "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead." When we firmly reject the works of darkness and live truthfully, the souls stimulated by that light finally realize their condition and obtain the opportunity of life to come forward to the light of Christ.

To summarize, when a righteous person reproves the works of darkness, firmness against sin and mercy for souls must coexist. This means that while drawing a clear line that this is an act that cannot inherit the kingdom of God, one must simultaneously harbor an earnest heart hoping they escape from darkness and become children of light within the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

God wants a born-again saint not to be swept away by the darkness of the world, but rather to become a lamp of the world that brightly illuminates that darkness. When we confidently reveal the inner light of truth without fearing or conforming to

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the surrounding darkness, our honest words and righteous actions will become a milestone of life for someone who has lost their way. We must live a life that reveals God's glory by joyfully bearing this mission of light.

## When we do wrong and commit a sin, if we receive reproof for that act, are we revealed by God's light?

Ephesians 5:13 says, "But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light." When we are weak and commit a wrong, receiving reproof for that act through the word or members is never to ruin us. Rather, it is God's deep love to pull us out of darkness and restore us again into God's brilliant light. Summarizing that spiritual mystery into three, it is as follows.

### Exposing what is hidden in darkness is the beginning of healing

The essence of sin lies in hiding. Just as Adam hid behind a tree after committing a sin, sin always grows in dark shadows. However, the moment one receives reproof for a wrong, the identity of the sin secretly hidden in darkness is fully revealed under the light. God does not want us to harbor sin and have our souls damaged in darkness. Revealing our faults to a bright place through reproof is a merciful process of inviting us to the place of healing and washing called the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### Through reproof, I reconfirm who I am

When a born-again righteous person commits a sin, the reason the Holy Spirit reproves us is not to condemn us saying, "You have now become a sinner again." Rather, He shakes us awake by asking, "You are a child of light, so why are you staying in the works of darkness?" When we humbly accept reproof, we restore our identity as noble children of light born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, as clearly as light, realizing that we are not people suited for such darkness.

**The mystery of whatever is made manifest becoming light**

The Apostle Paul makes the amazing declaration, "for whatever makes manifest is light." This tells the principle that when what was in the darkness comes out before the light, it no longer belongs to the darkness but to the realm of light. When our faults and sins are honestly confessed and revealed before the light called the word of God, all that shame is extinguished within the grace of the Lord, and we return once again to the state of pure light. Therefore, for a saint, receiving reproof becomes the channel of blessing of being moved into the light.

To summarize, when we commit a wrong, what we must guard against is not the reproof itself, but the mind trying to hide back into the darkness avoiding that reproof. We must be thankful for the fact that the Lord still considers me a child of light and awakens me without giving up. Rather than striving to fix the revealed fault with one's own strength, it is wisdom to once again be assured of becoming righteous under the gospel of the water and the Spirit that made us perfectly whole forever.

Receiving reproof when committing a wrong is not a shame, but the most powerful evidence that one is being protected within the kingdom of God. Like the word, "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead," we must use reproof as an opportunity to advance again into a vibrant life of light. When we always stand

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honestly before the warm yet stern light of God, our souls will be molded more transparently and beautifully every day.

## Must the righteous live saving their remaining time with the purpose of propagating God's gospel?

Ephesians 5:15 to 17 emphasizes what the life of a wise person is, and presents the holy time management method God gave to the righteous. The Apostle Paul exhorts, "redeeming the time, because the days are evil" and here, redeeming the time does not mean simply living busily, but means to valuably buy up the time of opportunity God has given for the purpose of the kingdom of God. Summarizing into three the reasons the righteous must save time for the propagation of the gospel, they are as follows.

### The priority of a wise person

God wants us to live with a clear purpose, not living aimlessly following the world. The essence of wisdom lies in looking carefully how to walk, not as unwise but as wise. A wise person is someone who knows that the time remaining for them is not eternal, and that this time is a precious opportunity to plant the seeds of the gospel. Because the temptations and busyness of the world make us forget our essential mission and pour energy into vain places, the righteous must go against this evil flow and recapture time as a tool for the gospel.

### Because the Lord's will is in the salvation of souls

The Bible says do not be foolish, but understand what the

will of the Lord is. God's greatest interest is for the souls sleeping in darkness to hear the gospel of the water and the Spirit and come forward to the light. The reason we are left on this earth is not simply to enjoy personal bliss, but to bear the role of ambassadors of the gospel who expand the kingdom of God. Only when we deeply understand this will of the Lord can we live a life that uses time valuably without wasting it.

**The fullness of the Holy Spirit is the power of time management**

The reason He said do not give time to the dissipation of the world like drunkenness, but be filled with the Holy Spirit is here. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives our hearts a fervor for the gospel and makes us capture the opportunity to preach the gospel in the people and situations we meet. The righteous filled with the Holy Spirit fix every moment on the Lord's will and come to ask how they can spread the fragrance of the gospel right at this time. Only when we receive the rule of the Holy Spirit do we gain the ability to use time for a holy purpose, not for lust.

To summarize, the time given to the righteous is holy capital entrusted by God. In the family, time must be spent showing the gospel, which is the mystery of Christ and the church, through life by husbands and wives loving and submitting to each other, and in society, time must be invested in emphasizing the necessity of the gospel by not participating in the works of darkness and bearing the fruit of light. Also, with lips, instead of filthy words, one must strive to propagate the truth of the gospel while exalting the Lord with words of thanksgiving and spiritual songs.

The confession that the time remaining for me exists only for the gospel makes the life of a saint noble. When we redeem the time with this purpose, God will change our ordinary everyday lives

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into the treasure of the eternal kingdom. We must live expecting a glorious history to occur where even one more soul is guided before the Lord's light through the precious time called 'now' given to us today.

## Are we those who must understand what the Lord's will is and be loyal, offering ourselves for the Lord's purpose?

The most perfect and glorious conclusion that can be drawn as we conclude the words of Ephesians 5 is the fact that God does not want us to remain as observers who just sit still after hearing the news of salvation. The Lord earnestly wants us to deeply understand the Lord's will and become loyal co-workers who offer our lives for His purpose. Summarizing the meaning of the life of offering oneself taught by the entirety of Ephesians 5 into three core points, they are as follows.

### Understanding the Lord's will is the beginning of loyalty

The Bible says do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Because vague zeal can easily be dangerous, true loyalty must begin from accurately knowing God's plan contained within the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God wants to unite all things in Christ, and wants to use the church, the gathering of born-again ones, as that channel. Therefore, focusing the focus of life on the Lord's master plan, not one's own plan, is the attitude of loyalty a wise person must possess.

### It is imitating Christ who gave Himself up

Before demanding loyalty from us, the Lord first gave Himself up for us to become a fragrant offering and loved the

church as He gave Himself up for it. When we are overwhelmed by that love where the Lord took charge of all sins with the water and the Spirit for me and laid down His life, we can finally joyfully offer ourselves to the Lord. Such offering is not a forced duty, but the essence of loyalty, laying down one's language, time, and family as an offering for the Lord's glory as one indebted to love.

**It is racing to the end with the fullness of the Holy Spirit**

Because it is difficult to maintain loyalty to the end with human will alone, the Lord exhorts to only be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit becomes the driving force of loyalty that makes praise and thanksgiving unceasing in our hearts, and supplies heavenly power to advance for the Lord's purpose in any environment. Giving thanks in everything, submitting to one another, and beautifully building up the church, which is the body of the Lord, in each one's position is indeed the highest loyalty acknowledged by God.

To summarize, those who live inside the royal palace of God are all those who have received their own holy special missions. Knowing that the days are evil, one must display the wisdom of redeeming the time for the gospel, and must offer oneself as a living sacrifice with goodness, righteousness, and truth like a child of light. Also, one must fulfill the mission of unchangingly keeping and propagating this gospel of the water and the Spirit until the day the Lord comes again.

The fervent confession asking to be used for the Lord's will makes the soul of a saint the most valuable. The Lord never forgets the sincere loyalty of those who offer themselves for the purpose. For such people, the abundant inheritance of the kingdom of God and the warm praise of the Lord are prepared. I hope you live a blessed life today as well, fulfilling the Lord's

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purpose by responding with your whole heart to that glorious calling.

## Must we not get drunk with wine, but only be filled with the Holy Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing to the Lord with our hearts to give glory to God?

Ephesians 5:18 to 20 teaches what the practical method is for a born-again righteous person to maintain the fullness of the Holy Spirit and give glory to God. God wants us not to have our hearts stolen by the stimulations or dissipation of the world, but to live fully filled with spiritual joy coming from heaven. Summarizing the spiritual principles contained in this word into three, they are as follows.

### The clear contrast between drunkenness and the fullness of the Holy Spirit

The reason the Apostle Paul contrasted and emphasized not getting drunk with wine but being filled with the Holy Spirit is to make clear who the subject of control is. If one gets drunk with wine, the wine controls that person's reason and behavior, leading to disorderly dissipation, but the fullness of the Holy Spirit means the state where the Holy Spirit completely rules my heart and thoughts. God wants us not to live a staggering life drunk on the pleasures or temporary comforts of the world, but to live testifying to the gospel of the water and the Spirit with the clearest and holiest mind within the rule of the Holy Spirit.

### The community addressing one another and singing to the Lord

The fullness of the Holy Spirit does not stop at solitary emotion but is bound to lead to beautiful communication with the members of faith. The community must address one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and encourage one another by exchanging the grace of God who saved us and the mystery of the gospel. What is important at this time is not the outward appearance but the center of the heart. When singing to the Lord with the heart and offering praise welling up from the center, the Lord who is within us receives glory, and the community, which is the body of Christ, is built up more solidly.

**Giving thanks in all things is the evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit**

The most powerful confession coming from the lips of a person filled with the Holy Spirit is exactly thanksgiving. The Bible says to always give thanks to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ for all things, that is, in everything, including not only joyful times but also during tribulations. When we are assured of the fact that we have obtained the eternal removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, no circumstance in the world can take away thanksgiving from us. This unceasing thanksgiving immediately becomes the highest glory returned to God.

To summarize, the fullness of the Holy Spirit does not refer to immersing only in some mystical experience, but refers to the state where the joy of the gospel overflows in life. This is a state where one cannot endure because of being so joyful over the fact that Jesus perfectly washed away all my sins with the water and the Spirit, and it is a worship of life that shares that joy with brothers through praise and interprets every moment of daily life as God’s grace.

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God wants the born-again saint to spend a day filled with praise and thanksgiving toward the Lord, not the vain pleasures of the world. The spiritual song echoing from the heart will become a beautiful light that brightens the world. Believing that the confession of thanksgiving that the soul sings toward the Lord in the fullness of the Holy Spirit is becoming the most fragrant offering to God, one must live a blessed life dwelling in the rule of the Holy Spirit every moment.

## Must we acknowledge that Jesus Christ is our bridegroom and live a life according to His purpose?

In the last part of Ephesians 5, the Apostle Paul marvels, "This mystery is profound," and proclaims the deepest identity that a Christian has. God designed the relationship between Jesus Christ and us, the church, as the relationship of a bridegroom and a bride. That we acknowledge Jesus as the spiritual bridegroom and live according to His purpose contains the following amazing meanings.

### It is a bride washed with water and cleansed by the word

Jesus, the bridegroom, not only gave Himself up to obtain us, the bride, but also adorned us most beautifully. The Lord washed and sanctified us with the gospel of the water and the word. Just as a bride keeps her purity for the bridegroom, the born-again saint must not give their heart to other vain gospels or worldly idols. Living while keeping oneself holy and without blemish within the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord is the duty of one who has become a bride.

### Submission and trust acknowledging the headship of the bridegroom

The Bible says that Christ is the head of the church as the husband is the head of the wife. That the bridegroom becomes the head contains the meaning of rule and protection that He takes responsibility for, protects, and guides our lives. Just as a wife trusts and follows her husband, we must completely entrust the initiative of our lives to Jesus, the bridegroom. Believing and following that His will and purpose are better than my plans is the proper duty of one who has become a bride.

### A life where the bridegroom's purpose becomes the bride's joy

Like a married couple where the two join to become one flesh, Christ and we have spiritually become one body. Now, the bridegroom's purpose of the salvation of souls and the prosperity of the kingdom of God immediately becomes the purpose of us, the bride. It means the state where the work the bridegroom rejoices in becomes my joy, and the soul the bridegroom agonizes over becomes my agony. The Lord nourishing and protecting us is to make us bear the mission of ruling the kingdom of God together with the Lord and revealing His glory to the whole earth.

To summarize, the fact that Jesus is our bridegroom simultaneously grants tremendous comfort and mission to life. The fact that the Lord, who is the King of kings, cherishes, nourishes, and protects me like His own body becomes a great comfort. At the same time, I now have the mission that I am not one who lives as I please, but a noble bride called for the glory of the bridegroom and His kingdom.

The confession that Jesus, who laid down His life for me and

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cleansed me with the water and the Spirit, is my bridegroom makes the saint's heart flutter. As a bride who refreshes the heart of the Lord who became the bridegroom, one must joyfully obey the Lord's will and act by making His purpose my mission. The Lord rejoices the most in the world in managing this kingdom together with the born-again saints. I hope you live a victorious life keeping the dignity of a bride within this mystery of union.

## Is the mystery of Christ all within the church of God?

In Ephesians 5:32, the Apostle Paul proclaimed, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church," and confirmed that all the dispensation of God and the mystery of Christ are contained right within the church, which is the gathering of born-again ones. Summarizing three important reasons based on the word as to why all the mysteries of Christ managing the kingdom of God are contained within the church, they are as follows.

### Because the church is the body and fullness of Christ

God made Christ the head over all things, and made the saints who believe in Him the church, which is His body. Ephesians 1:23 records that the church is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. Just as all the thoughts and plans of the head are executed through the body, all the wisdom and mystery of God dwell fully within the church, which is His body. The world cannot know the mystery of Christ, but the church born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit has the privilege of sharing and enjoying that mystery because it is connected to the Lord with one life.

**Because the church shares everything as the bride of Christ**

Just as a married couple becomes one body and shares all the secrets of life, Christ and the church are in an inseparable relationship of union. Jesus, the bridegroom, opens and shows all His purposes and plans not to others but to His bride, the church. The purpose for which the Lord washed us with water and cleansed us by the word to present us to Himself as a glorious church is to make us companions of the kingdom and share all His mysteries and inheritance together. Within such an intimate relationship, the church comes to understand the heart of Christ most deeply.

**Because the manifold wisdom of God is made known through the church**

God makes the wisdom of God known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, and He chose the church as that channel. Ephesians 3:10 says that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known. The place where the mystery of the kingdom of God—where sinners become righteous through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, people of different backgrounds become one, and all things are united in Christ—is actualized and proven is exactly the church. Therefore, without going through the church, one cannot fully realize the mystery of Christ.

To summarize, the fact that the mystery of Christ is all within the church grants great pride and mission to the saints. We must acknowledge that we can never fully know the deep will of God apart from the church. Because the church is the pillar and foundation of the truth, which is the gospel of the water and the Spirit bought with the Lord's blood, we have the responsibility

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to preserve this mystery so that it is not corrupted.

The born-again saint is a noble member entrusted with the mystery of Christ. We must reveal this glorious mystery hidden within the church as light to those who are still in darkness. When we are joined together and build up the body of Christ, the Lord will reveal His abundant mystery more clearly among us. I hope you live confidently as one entrusted with the mystery, enjoying to the fullest the mysterious love and wisdom of Christ contained within the church today as well. ✉

# Questions and Answers on Ephesians Chapter 5

## [Question] 1. Why did the Apostle Paul tell us to become *"imitators of God"*? What is its specific meaning?

This question accurately pinpoints the core of Ephesians 5:1. Let us examine what the command to "imitate God" means and how it is possible from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 1. We must first look at the position of the word "imitate God"

We must pay attention to the place where the Apostle Paul begins this word. He said, *"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children" (Ephesians 5:1)*. Here, the conjunction *"Therefore"* is important. This is given as the conclusion of the exhortation in the preceding Ephesians chapter 4, that is, the word to put off the old man, put on the new man, and forgive one another just as God in Christ forgave you.

In other words, the command to "imitate God" is not given to just anyone. It is an exhortation given to a person who has already received the removal of sins and become a child of God. It is not saying to a sinner who is not born again that they will obtain salvation if they live righteously by imitating God, but it is exhorting a child who is already saved to imitate God since you have now become such a person.

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### 2. The foundation of imitation lies in the fact of being *"dear children"*

The text does not just say "imitate God," but to imitate *"as dear children."* The fact of having received love precedes the command of imitation. The basis on which we can imitate God is not in our qualities or resolutions, but in the fact that we have already received God's love and become His children.

Then how did we receive God's love and become His children? The answer appears in the very next verse. *"And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma" (Ephesians 5:2).* That is, the love we received is not a vague emotion, but the specific work of salvation in which Christ actually gave Himself up and offered Himself for us.

### 3. The gospel of the water and the Spirit pointed to by *"an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma"*

*"Sacrifice"* refers to a beast slaughtered as an offering, and it has the atonement sacrifice of the Old Testament as its background. In the Old Testament, a sinner laid hands on the head of an unblemished beast to transfer their sins to that beast, and that beast shed blood and died on behalf of the sinner. It is exactly as recorded: *"Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat" (Leviticus 16:21).*

That Christ became "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma" means that He became the Lamb who bore our sins as the reality of this Old Testament sacrifice. The work of Christ giving Himself for us was not accomplished by the blood of the cross alone. First, Jesus took the sins of all

mankind upon His own body once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. The word, *"But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.'" (Matthew 3:15)*, is exactly that. Having thus borne the sins, He paid the full price of sin by shedding blood and dying on the cross, and permanently guaranteed our salvation by resurrecting on the third day.

**4. Because one has received the removal of sins, one can finally imitate God**

A person who retains sin as it is cannot imitate God. It is like one who is in darkness cannot imitate light. However, a person who has become righteous by receiving the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit has been transferred from darkness to light, and thus can imitate God who is light. This is why the text immediately says, *"walk in love, as Christ also has loved us" (Ephesians 5:2)*. Because the love we received is clear, we can live loving other souls by imitating that love.

**5. Imitation is not a condition for salvation but a fruit of salvation**

There is something that must be distinguished here. The word "imitate God" must not be misunderstood as a condition to obtain salvation. If we must perfectly imitate God to obtain salvation, there is no one in this world who will be saved. Because there is not a single righteous person in the world who does not commit sin.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit teaches the exact opposite order. First, Christ made us righteous through His baptism, cross, and resurrection, and as a result, we became God's children, and

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because we became children, a life of imitating the Father finally follows. One does not become a child by accumulating righteousness through deeds, but one comes to resemble the Father because one has become a child.

**6. To summarize:**

The Apostle Paul saying *"be imitators of God"* is not a demand to reach salvation by becoming holy like God through our own efforts. It is an exhortation given to a person who has already become a *"dear children."* We became God's children because Christ became a sweet-smelling aroma and a sacrifice, that is, He bore our sins through His baptism in the Jordan River, died on the cross, and resurrected to make us righteous. Only one who has been transferred from darkness to light by receiving the removal of sins through this gospel of the water and the Spirit can imitate God who is light. Therefore, a life of imitating God is not a condition for salvation, but a natural response flowing out from one whose received love is clear.

## [Question] 2. Ephesians 5:6 says that the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience; what is the meaning of this word?

This question asks who the *"sons of disobedience"* in Ephesians 5:6 refer to, and what the wrath of God coming upon them means. Since it is a word easy to misunderstand, let us examine it step by step from the flow of the text and the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

**1. First, we must look at the text of verse 6 and its flow**

The relevant word is as follows: *"Let no one deceive you*

*with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 5:6).* This word connects with the preceding verses. In verse 5, the Apostle Paul said, "*For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" (Ephesians 5:5).* And as its conclusion, verse 6 warns not to be deceived by empty words, and that the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

### 2. What *"Let no one deceive you with empty words"* points to

To understand the wrath in verse 6, we must first see what *"empty words"* are. This is a false word that encourages that it is okay to live moderately compromising with the world even while having received the removal of sins. The whispering word that since you have received the removal of sins, there is no problem living in sin while enjoying the world to some extent—this is an empty word. The Apostle Paul sternly warns not to be deceived by such words. Therefore, the wrath in verse 6 is directly connected to the attitude of making sin the direction of life by being deceived by these empty words.

### 3. Who do the *"sons of disobedience"* refer to?

A very important point is revealed here. The "*sons of disobedience"* spoken of in the text do not merely refer to worldly people who have never even heard the gospel. Looking at the flow of the text, this warning is directed toward those who know the truth yet do not live according to God's will. That is, it is a warning given to those who live pursuing sin exactly like those who are not born again, even while saying they have received the removal of sins.

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This is a very solemn word. The wrath of God does not only come upon unbelieving worldly people, but also comes upon children who disobey even while knowing the truth.

### 4. The weakness of a saint who has received the removal of sins and a life of disobedience are different

There is something that must be distinguished here. Just because one is a saint who has received the removal of sins does not mean the weakness of the flesh completely disappears. Just as the word says, *"For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin." (Ecclesiastes 7:20),* we still have flesh that can stumble. However, temporarily falling into weakness and making sin one's purpose and living completely pursuing it are entirely different.

The *"disobedience"* warned of in the text is the latter. That is, it is the attitude of living by making sin the direction of life with the exact same thoughts, same hobbies, and same purposes as those who are not born again. A person who has become light through the gospel of the water and the Spirit clearly knows that the sin is not right, and lives drawing a clear line in their heart that they will never make that path their purpose again.

### 5. Does "wrath comes" mean a matter of heaven and hell?

Then, does it mean that if a saint who has received the removal of sins disobeys, they will lose salvation and go to hell? That is not so. From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, a person who has become righteous by receiving the removal of sins once does not lose that status. Because Jesus bore all our sins at once through His baptism in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), paid the full price on the cross, and resurrected to make us righteous once and for all.

Therefore, the wrath in verse 6 is not the loss of salvation, but refers to God's rebuke and discipline received on this earth by a disobedient child. It is in the same context as the word *"has any inheritance"* spoken in verse 5. That is, a child who lives pursuing sin gradually drifts away from God's work, loses the blessings God gives, and is placed under God's discipline. This is like the rebuke of a father received when a child goes against the father's will.

**6. To summarize:**

Ephesians 5:6 warns not to be deceived by empty words to compromise with the world even while having received the removal of sins. Here, the *"sons of disobedience"* include not only unbelieving worldly people, but also those who live making sin the purpose of their lives like those who are not born again despite knowing the truth. However, this warning is not about temporary weakness, but about a life of disobedience that lives leaving the back door open toward sin.

A person who has become righteous through the gospel of the water and the Spirit does not lose that status of salvation, but if they disobey, they drift away from God's work, lose blessings, and receive God's rebuke and discipline on this earth. Therefore, this word is not to make us fearful, but is an exhortation to awaken children who have become light to not return to the path of darkness but live worthily of the salvation they have received.

## [Question] 3. What is the fruit of the light?

This question asks what the *"fruit of the Spirit"* in Ephesians 5:9 is, and how it is borne in us. Let us examine this from the perspective of the text's words and the gospel of the water and

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the Spirit.

**1. First, we must look at the words of the text**

The relevant word is as follows: *"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth)" (Ephesians 5:8-9)*. The text clearly presents the fruit of the light as three things. That is, *"goodness," "righteousness,"* and *"truth."* These three are the fruits borne from one who has become light.

**2. The one who bears the fruit of the light is first one who has become *"light"***

Before talking about the fruit, there is an order that must be pointed out. Before commanding to bear fruit, the text first declares our status, saying, *"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8)*. In other words, the fruit of the light is not something that a person of darkness struggles to produce, but something that is naturally borne from a person who has already become light. Just as a tree must be of a good seed to bear good fruit, one must be a person who has become light to bear the fruit of the light.

Then how did we become light from darkness? It is not because of our own efforts or religious deeds. It is because Jesus took all our sins upon His own body by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), took our judgment on our behalf by being crucified, and delivered us from sin by resurrecting on the third day. A being of darkness who was bound to go to hell became a sinless light by accepting this work of baptism, the cross, and resurrection in their heart.

### 3. The first fruit is the fruit of goodness

The first fruit of the light is *"goodness."* Here, goodness does not simply mean having a gentle personality. It is the pure heart to accept what is right as right and to act accordingly. When parents teach what is right, accepting it as right, and when they teach what is bad as bad, obediently accepting it—this pure heart is goodness. A person who has become light comes to have a good heart that accepts the Word of God as right when it says it is right.

### 4. The second fruit is the fruit of righteousness

The second fruit is *"righteousness."* The root of this righteousness is the righteousness by which the Lord saved us. Believing in the rightness that the Lord loved us and eliminated our sins, and living for the work of saving other souls as befits the Lord's children—this is righteousness. In other words, righteousness is not accumulating one's own righteous deeds, but believing in the righteousness the Lord accomplished and doing what is right within that righteousness.

### 5. The third fruit is a life lived in truth

The third fruit is *"truth."* A person must not live by their head but by truthfulness. Truthfulness is acknowledging one's shortcomings before God without deceit. As we live, there are things we do well and things we do wrong, but honestly acknowledging what is wrong as wrong before God, and accepting what the Lord says is right as right, is truthfulness. Because God examines the center of a person's heart, He loves, acknowledges, and guides a truthful person even if they have shortcomings.

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**6. These fruits are borne through the Holy Spirit**

These three fruits are not something we forcefully create. They are fruits borne by the Holy Spirit who dwells in the one who has become light. A person of darkness who has not received the removal of sins cannot bear these fruits no matter how hard they try. Rather, it is the nature of darkness to feel bad when doing righteous things. However, a person who has become light by receiving the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit bears the fruits of goodness, righteousness, and truth through the Holy Spirit within them, and their heart actually becomes joyful when doing those righteous works.

**7. To summarize:**

The fruit of the light is *"all goodness, righteousness, and truth" (Ephesians 5:9).* Goodness is the pure heart that accepts what is right as right; righteousness is believing in the righteousness the Lord accomplished and living for the salvation of other souls; and truth is acknowledging one's shortcomings before God without deceit. However, bearing these fruits is not something a person of darkness achieves through effort, but something borne first from one who has become light. Because Jesus transferred us from darkness to light through His baptism, cross, and resurrection, we who have become light bear the fruits of goodness, righteousness, and truth through the Holy Spirit within us. Therefore, the fruit of the light is not a condition for obtaining salvation, but the evidence of salvation naturally flowing out from one who has already become light.

## [Question] 4. What is it that pleases the Lord?

This word is directly connected to the word in Ephesians 5:10, *"finding out what is acceptable to the Lord."* Let us examine what pleases the Lord and how to discern it from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 1. First, we must look at the words of the text

The relevant word is as follows: *"Finding out what is acceptable to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:10).* This word immediately follows the exhortation in the preceding verses 8-9, *"Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth)."* That is, the first step for a person who has become light to live bearing the fruit of the light is precisely to discern what pleases the Lord.

The text saying *"finding out"* does not mean to guess vaguely. It is an exhortation to discern and confirm what pleases the Lord and to stand on that side.

### 2. What pleases the Lord is not merely us living well in the flesh

When discerning what pleases the Lord, there is a misunderstanding that must be corrected first. It is considering that us eating well and living happily in itself is the Lord's greatest joy. Of course, God wants His children to be at peace. However, the *"what is acceptable to the Lord"* pointed to by the text lies deeper than that.

The Lord is pleased when a person who has received the removal of sins preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit to other souls who do not know the salvation they have received, and lives serving that gospel. Not just staying in our own peace and

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happiness, but standing together with the Lord's heart, which desires other souls to be saved as well, is the work that pleases the Lord.

### 3. The work that pleases the Lord includes the preaching of the gospel of salvation

To understand why the thing that pleases the Lord is the work of preaching the gospel, we must look at what the Lord did for us. Jesus took the sins of all mankind upon His own body once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15). Bearing those sins, He shed blood and died on the cross, and resurrected on the third day to deliver us from sin.

The Lord, who saved us through this work of baptism, the cross, and resurrection, does not want it to stop at just saving us. He wants the countless souls who do not yet know this gospel to be saved as well. Therefore, the very work of preaching and serving this gospel of salvation we have received to others is the work that aligns with the Lord's heart and pleases the Lord.

### 4. The work that pleases the Lord is manifested by who we are with and where we belong

The text immediately follows with, *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" (Ephesians 5:11).* This shows that the work of pleasing the Lord is ultimately a matter of where we belong and who we live with. A person's fruit is determined by who they follow and where they belong. If one belongs to the side of people doing good works, they end up participating in those good works even if they do not intend to; conversely, if one belongs to the side of those doing works of darkness, they unknowingly participate in that darkness.

Therefore, to please the Lord, one must unite their heart and participate in the good works where the fruit of the light is. The meaning lies not in being isolated alone, but in gathering hearts together with those who serve the gospel and participating in that work.

**5. All things, big and small, become works that please the Lord**

There is another thing to remember when discerning the works that please the Lord. The work that pleases the Lord does not only mean prominent, big works. Going far away, lifting one's hands, preaching the gospel, and being martyred is not the only good work. Working silently to serve the gospel, and all the works that support the preaching of the gospel to other souls as the fruit of that work, are works that please the Lord.
Therefore, even if the work one does seems trivial, if it is a work for serving the gospel and for the salvation of other souls, the Lord is pleased. What is important is not the size of the work, but whether that work is directed toward the Lord's will and the gospel.

**6. To summarize:**

What pleases the Lord is not merely us eating well and living happily in itself, but a person who has received the removal of sins living by preaching and serving the gospel of the water and the Spirit to other souls who do not know the salvation they have received. Because Jesus saved us through His baptism, cross, and resurrection, and wants other souls to be saved as well, the work of preaching that gospel is precisely the work that aligns with the Lord's heart. This work is accomplished not alone, but by uniting hearts with those who serve the gospel, and all works

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directed toward the gospel—whether they are prominent big works or small works of silent service—please the Lord. Therefore, we must discern what pleases the Lord and offer our hearts to participate in the works of light, not the works of darkness.

## [Question] 5. In Ephesians 5:15, it says *"as wise,"* what is the meaning of this word?

This question asks what the word *"as wise"* in Ephesians 5:15 means, and where true wisdom lies. Let us examine this from the perspective of the text's words and the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 1. First, we must look at the words of the text

The relevant word is as follows: *"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16).* This word is the conclusion of the exhortation from the preceding verses 5:8 to 14, telling those who have been transferred from darkness to light to walk as children of light. The conjunction "then" in *"See then"* connects that flow. That is, one who has become light must now carefully examine how to walk and live like a wise person.

### 2. Wisdom is different from simple knowledge

First, we must clarify what "wisdom" is. Wisdom is not simply knowing something. Discernment and practice that accomplish the right will through what one knows is wisdom. If knowledge is knowing with the head, wisdom is rightly utilizing

that knowledge in life to bear fruit.
The text telling us to walk *"not as fools but as wise" (Ephesians 5:15)* teaches that it is a foolish thing to live without deeply thinking about how to live even after receiving the removal of sins, and that it is a wise thing to live discerning what is right in a manner worthy of the salvation received.

### 3. The first step to living wisely — carefully paying attention to how to walk

The text says, *"See then that you walk circumspectly."* The first step of a wise life lies in a person who has received the removal of sins not taking lightly how they should live in the future, but examining it deeply. If we only receive salvation and everything ends on that day, there is no reason for us to stay longer on this earth. Living exactly the same after being born again as before being born again is a foolish thing without wisdom.
A wise person thinks about their future and considers where they will spend the time given to them. Even if one cannot put everything into action, discerning what is right in light of the Word and deciding to stand on that right side is the starting point of a wise life.

### 4. The way to live wisely is redeeming the time

The text presents the concrete appearance of a wise life with the command to *"redeeming the time."* Redeeming the time means not letting time flow away in vain, but well discerning and utilizing the given times and opportunities. As the reason for this, the text reveals, *"because the days are evil."* Since this age we live in is an evil age, we must live more awake and valuing time.

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From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the greatest reason we must live redeeming the time lies in the greatness of the salvation we received. A person who has received this salvation—that Jesus took our sins once and for all by being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), died on the cross, and resurrected to make us righteous—will use that received time not for their own lusts but for other souls who do not know this gospel of salvation. Redeeming the time is precisely dedicating time to works worthy of the salvation received.

**5. True wisdom lies in understanding and living the will of the Lord**

The text continues, *"Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17)*. That is, the core of living wisely lies in realizing and knowing what the Lord's will is. And the most fundamental aspect of understanding the Lord's will is correctly knowing how the Lord saved us.

The Lord's will is that Jesus received baptism from John the Baptist to take the sins of the world upon His own body, died on the cross, and resurrected to make us righteous once and for all. The word, *"for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.'" (Matthew 3:15)*, is exactly that. Knowing the fact that all our sins were washed clean by this work of baptism, the cross, and resurrection is precisely the first step on the path to understanding the Lord's will, and the beginning of true wisdom. The teaching that one does not receive the removal of sins all at once but receives it little by little every day as they live and later becomes perfect is not the teaching of the Bible, and following it is not a wise life.

**6. To summarize:**

The word *"as wise"* in Ephesians 5:15 means that one who has received the removal of sins carefully examines how they should live, and lives worthy of the salvation received by redeeming the time. Here, wisdom is not simple knowledge but discerning and practicing what is right, and its core lies in correctly understanding the Lord's will. The Lord's will is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in which Jesus took our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to make us righteous once and for all. Correctly knowing this salvation, not spending time in vain in this evil age, and dedicating oneself to the work of preaching the received gospel of salvation to other souls is precisely the life lived wisely.

## [Question] 6. In Ephesians 5:16, it says "*redeeming the time,*" what is the meaning of this word?

This question asks what the word *"redeeming the time"* in Ephesians 5:16 means, and how we should use our time. Let us examine this from the perspective of the text's words and the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

**1. First, we must look at the words of the text**

The relevant word is as follows: *"Not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16)*. The command to *"redeeming the time"* is given as a package with the preceding exhortation to walk *"as wise."* That is, redeeming the time is precisely the concrete appearance of living wisely. A wise person values time, and a foolish person lets time flow away in vain.

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### 2. *"Redeeming the time"* means "saving time"

In the text, *"the time"* refers to time. If we divide "sewol" into small pieces, it is time. Therefore, redeeming the time means saving time. It is an exhortation not to let the twenty-four hours of a day flow away in vain, but to well capture and utilize the given times and opportunities.

Saving time does not merely mean living busily. Just because you are holding onto something all day long does not mean you are saving time. Discerning what to do within that time and fruitfully accomplishing the works that please the Lord is saving time. That is, even if the same time is used, whether or not that time is dedicated to works beneficial to the Kingdom of God divides the one who redeems the time and the one who does not.

### 3. *"Because the days are evil."* — this is the reason we must redeem the time

The text reveals *"because the days are evil"* as the reason we must redeem the time. This age we live in is an evil age. In this last age, things like earthquakes, famines, and tribulations occur, and the world becomes increasingly wicked. The more we are in such an age, the more awake we must be, not letting the given time flow away into vain places but valuing it.

Also, time is something that cannot be turned back once it passes. Therefore, in this evil age, deeply considering what we will use our limited given time for is a wise life.

### 4. What should we do by redeeming the time — it is work worthy of the salvation received

Then what should we use the saved time for? From the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the answer is clear. Jesus took our sins once and for all by being baptized

by John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:15), died on the cross, and resurrected to make us righteous. A person who has received this salvation will use that received time not for their own lusts but for other souls who do not know this gospel of salvation.

If we only receive salvation and everything ends on the day we receive salvation, there is no reason for us to stay longer on this earth. The reason we live longer on this earth is to preach and serve the received gospel of salvation to other souls. Therefore, redeeming the time is precisely dedicating time to works worthy of the salvation received, that is, the work of serving the gospel.

**5. If we fail to redeem the time, we will spend time in the wrong places**

What happens if we do not redeem the time? Because we have the flesh, if we do not dedicate our time to the works that please God, we naturally end up spending our body, mind, and time on works that God is not pleased with. If we just let time flow away by sleeping a little more, enjoying a little more, and being a little more comfortable as the flesh desires, that is a foolish life unworthy before God.

Conversely, if we save time and dedicate it to the Lord's work, God's will is accomplished through that time, and the fruit of other souls being saved is borne. Therefore, redeeming the time is not merely a matter of diligence, but a matter of how we use the salvation we received.

**6. To summarize:**

The word "*redeeming the time*" in Ephesians 5:16 is an exhortation that one who lives wisely should not let time flow away in vain, but value it and dedicate it to the works that please

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the Lord. It is not merely living busily, but discerning what to do within the given time and fruitfully accomplishing works beneficial to the Kingdom of God that is saving time. In this last age where the days are evil, we must stay awake and use the time that cannot be turned back once it passes. Because Jesus saved us through His baptism, cross, and resurrection, dedicating that time not to our own lusts but to the work of preaching and serving the gospel in a manner worthy of the salvation received is precisely a life that redeems the time.

## [Question] 7. How does Christ help and protect God's Church?

This word is directly connected to the words in Ephesians 5:25 to 29, where Christ loves and nourishes the Church. Let us examine how Christ helps and protects the Church, His bride, from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 1. First, we must look at the words of the text

The relevant words are as follows: *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25),* and *"For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church" (Ephesians 5:29)*. The text explains the relationship between Christ and the Church through the parable of a bridegroom and a bride, presenting Christ's work of loving and nourishing the Church as the example for all love.

### 2. What Christ did for the Church is washing and cleansing it with water

Christ's work of helping the Church begins, above all, with

saving us from sin. The text says that Christ loved the Church, *"that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word" (Ephesians 5:26)*. Here, *"washing of water"* refers to the baptism that Jesus received.

Christ came to this earth as the eternal High Priest, took the sins of our human race upon His own body through baptism (Matthew 3:15), shed His blood and died on the cross while carrying those sins, and resurrected from death to make us *"Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (Ephesians 5:27)*. There is no one in this world who does not commit sin, and no one lives flawlessly even after being born again. Nevertheless, the reason we could become a holy bride before God is solely because Christ washed all our sins clean through His baptism, cross, and resurrection. That is, the most fundamental work Christ did to help the Church is delivering us from sin through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and making us His bride.

### 3. Christ does not stop at salvation but nourishes and protects us to the end

Christ's love does not stop at saving us once. The text says Christ *"nourishes and cherishes it"* the Church (Ephesians 5:29). "Nourish and cherish" means to protect and raise. It means that the bridegroom, Christ, protects, raises, and takes care of the Church, His bride, to the very end.

The basis for this is in the word, *"For we are members of His body" (Ephesians 5:30)*. Because the Church is a member of Christ's body, Christ taking care of the Church is like taking care of His own body. Just as no one hates his own flesh but feeds and protects it, Christ never abandons the Church, His body, but takes responsibility and cares for it to the end.

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### 4. The way Christ protects the Church is by entrusting it with the work of preaching the gospel

Then how does Christ help and protect the Church today? The book of Ephesians, to which the text belongs, clearly shows the answer elsewhere. *"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12).*

That is, Christ establishes appointed ministers within the Church, and through them, He protects, nourishes, and blesses the weak members. Just as a bridegroom takes responsibility so that his bride does not starve or suffer need, Christ establishes ministers so that the weak members of the Church may grow and be protected in faith.

### 5. The way Christ helps the Church — working together and answering

Another way Christ helps the Church is by personally being with the Church when it works for the Lord. When we serve the Lord and do the work of preaching the gospel, the Lord helps us. When we pray for a certain matter, the Lord answers and fills what is needed.

This shows that the relationship between the bridegroom and the bride is not one-sided. When we, the bride, do the works that please Christ, the bridegroom, Christ the bridegroom helps, protects, and answers us, the bride. Therefore, our serving the Lord and the Lord's taking care of us are interlocked with each other.

**6. Because the Church is one body with Christ, it is never abandoned**

The deepest basis for Christ protecting the Church to the end lies in the fact that Christ and the Church have formed one body. The text quotes the word from Genesis that a husband and wife *"shall become one flesh.'" (Ephesians 5:31),* and reveals that this is a great mystery speaking *"concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:32).*

A person who has received the removal of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and has become the bride of Christ has become one body that cannot be separated from Christ. Therefore, for Christ to abandon the Church is the same as abandoning His own body, so it can never happen. This becomes the greatest comfort to us who have become the bride. Christ, who saved us through His baptism, cross, and resurrection, considers us as His own body and takes responsibility and protects us to the end.

**7. To summarize:**

Christ's work of helping and protecting God's Church begins, above all, with saving us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Christ took our sins through baptism, died on the cross, and resurrected to wash and establish us as a holy bride without spot or blemish. And He does not stop at this salvation, but considers the Church as members of His own body and protects and nourishes it to the end. As a concrete method, He establishes ministers within the Church to take care of the weak members, and when we serve the Lord, He personally is with us and answers our prayers. Because Christ and the Church have formed one body, Christ, the bridegroom, never abandons us, the bride, but permanently takes responsibility and protects us. This

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is the love by which Christ helps and protects the Church, and the true image of Christ and the Church revealed within the Kingdom of God. ✉

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# CHAPTER

# 6

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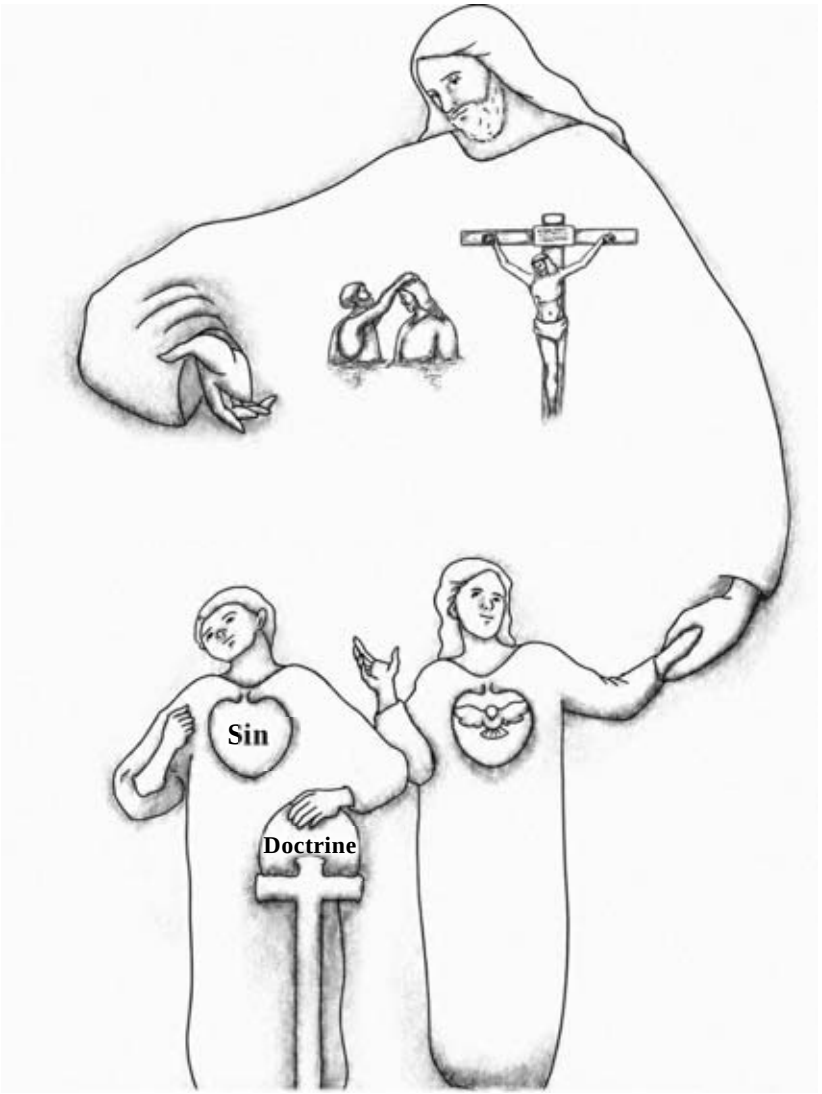


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Ephesians Chapter 6

# Put on the whole armor of God

**< Ephesians 6:1-24 >**

**"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.' And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded**

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**your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts. Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."**

## The promised blessing received by obeying in the Lord

*"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.' And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1-4).*

Ephesians chapter 6 is the word recorded by inheriting the

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flow of the preceding chapter 5. Apostle Paul said in Ephesians chapter 5, *"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church" (Ephesians 5:22-23),* and subsequently exhorted, *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25).* The theme that Apostle Paul consistently deals with throughout the entirety of Ephesians is Christ and His body, the church. Therefore, it is right to read the words concerning children and parents, bondservants and masters in chapter 6 not merely as teaching family ethics or social morals, but as words that spiritually unravel how the born-again saints within the church should treat one another.

In the word, *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." (Ephesians 6:1),* the expression that must be grasped first is *"in the Lord."* Apostle Paul did not speak of unconditional obedience, but always nailed down to obey *"in the Lord."* If the fleshly parents are outside the Lord and cause the children not to believe in God and block their life of faith, one cannot obey even those parts. Doing well humanly and fleshly to un-born-again parents is a proper duty, but blindly submitting to demands that make one leave God becomes rather a great sin. Because of this, the standard of all obedience must be within the fence of *"in the Lord."*

The deeper meaning this word points to is the spiritual order within the church. The parents, father, and mother in the main text do not only refer to fleshly parents, but together point to the spiritual leaders who first received the gospel of the water and the Spirit, were born again, and walk ahead by faith. The very core of this word is that the one whose faith is still young within the church obeys and honors the one who preached the gospel to him, the leader who was born again first. In the book of Proverbs,

it also said, *"Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding; For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law." (Proverbs 4:1-2)*, and Apostle Paul took over this teaching of the Old Testament exactly as it is and applied it to the church.

The word, *"'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.'" (Ephesians 6:2-3)*, is the very beginning of the commandments dealing with the relationship between people among the Ten Commandments. To this commandment to honor parents, the promise *"that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."* is clearly attached. Namely, honoring and obeying parents, and spiritually the leaders who became first, is the secret to doing well and receiving blessings on this earth. Conversely, treating the one who leads oneself lightly, rebelling against him, and looking down on him humanly leads directly to the path of curses. This is because there is order in the kingdom of God, and God flows His blessings through that order. Just as the word of Psalms said how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, like the oil poured on Aaron's head flowing down his beard to the edge of his garments, God's blessing equally flows down to the one who is within that order.

Here, we must not miss the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The blessing promised in the main text, *"that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."* does not point to salvation itself. Salvation is not obtained by the merit of deeds or obedience, but is a free gift given to us by Jesus taking upon Himself the sins of all mankind at once by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, being crucified and shedding His blood to die while bearing those sins, and living again in three days. The main text is teaching how the

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person who has already been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, that is, the righteous who has received the removal of sins, should live. The one who has received the removal of sins does not live just any way, but must live obeying and honoring the leader in the Lord and following the spiritual order, and at that time, both spirit and flesh come to enjoy blessings together on this earth.

The word, *"And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4)*, is an exhortation given to the one who leads, namely the one who became first. If obedience is the duty of the child and the one who became last, bringing them up in love without provoking them to wrath is the duty of the father and the one who became first. Even when making them do the same work, making them do it for that person without selfish motives, and above all, leading them to serve and follow the Lord well is proper upbringing. Just as the Lord has been longsuffering toward us and taught and raised us with love, the leader must also treat the spiritual children entrusted to him in that way. If they are taken care of well only fleshly, they can go wrong again later, so above all, one must open the way for the spiritual part to be built up first, that is, how he can serve God. This is the appearance of those who have become one family in the gospel of the water and the Spirit building each other up.

## One must have the attitude of a bondservant who serves with a willing mind as to the Lord

*"Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as*

*bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free" (Ephesians 6:5-8).*

Following speaking of the duties of children and parents from verses 1 to 4, Apostle Paul broadens the exhortation to the relationship of bondservants and masters from verse 5. This word also is not teaching mere labor ethics or status order, but is a spiritual word teaching with what mind all the servants entrusted with God's work within the church should handle that work. The targets called *"Bondservants"* are precisely the born-again saints, the ministers and workers entrusted with God's work, and more broadly, all the righteous who have those who entrusted work to them in the workplace, family, and society.

The center of the word, *"be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ" (Ephesians 6:5),* is in *"as to Christ."* It means to obey the person who makes oneself work, but to serve knowing that the true object of that obedience is not a person but Christ. Because there is no way for us to serve the invisible Lord without going through the work of serving people, He told us to treat the master before our eyes as if serving the Lord. So the following word, *"not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers" (Ephesians 6:6),* forbids false serving that only decorates the outside in a way that it is enough if it only catches people's eyes. Deceiving people and only doing eyeservice is the appearance of an un-born-again person, and the born-again person faithfully handles his entrusted work as to the Lord even when there is no one watching.

In the word, *"but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord"*

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*(Ephesians 6:6-7), "goodwill"* means not a bitter mind but a joyful and glad mind. It is not doing it reluctantly by force, but a mind that serves voluntarily with joy because one knows the fact that this is God's work. Since the born-again righteous has become one body with Christ, God's work precisely becomes his own work, and his own work precisely becomes God's work. Therefore, no matter what position and what amount of work one is entrusted with, it is proper to serve with all one's heart, on a small scale like one's own work and on a large scale like God's work.

The word, *"knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free." (Ephesians 6:8)*, teaches that a clear recompense follows all this serving. Because the Lord does not look at the outward appearance but knows the center of the heart, He knows all about with what mind we work and how we labor, and repays exactly as it is. The point that must be grasped here is the fact that this recompense is not postponed to a reward received only in heaven. While living on this earth after receiving the removal of sins, one receives exactly on this earth the good and evil done before God. To the one who serves God's work with joy like his own work, the blessing of his heart toward the Lord broadening and the eyes of spiritual discernment opening comes, along with the blessing of even the things necessary for the flesh being filled.

## One must have the attitude of stopping threatening and serving with love

*"And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him" (Ephesians 6:9).*

Apostle Paul, who commanded the bondservant to serve as to the Lord, demands the exact same mind from the master in verse 9. The word, *"do the same things to them,"* means that even when the one who became first treats the one who became last, he should treat him as if treating Christ. He must consider the person entrusted under him not as his own bondservant but as God's bondservant, and lead him to grow in faith by loving and protecting him first so that God's glory may appear through that work.

The word, *"giving up threatening,"* is a command to stop the act of threatening, abusing, and making a person's heart anxious. In the same context as telling not to provoke children to wrath in verse 4, the one who became first must not hate the person even if there is something to rebuke, and must correct the wrong thing but embrace the person with love. Teaching what they do not know, waiting for what needs to be waited for, and treating them with that mind just as Christ loves His children is the proper attitude of a master.

The basis of this word is in *"knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."* To both the bondservant and the master, the true Master is the One who is in heaven, and He does not look at a person's outward appearance, status, or position, but only looks at the center of the heart and faith. Therefore, whether the one who became first or the one who became last within the church, only the measure and entrusted work are different, but all are bondservants serving the same one Master. When those who have been born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have received the removal of sins obey each other and build each other up in love as bondservants serving one Master, God's blessing flows down upon that church.

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## We must wage a spiritual warfare resisting evil spirits, not flesh and blood

*"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:10-12).*

Apostle Paul begins this paragraph that concludes Ephesians with the word *"Finally."* At the end of teaching the duties of children and parents, bondservants and masters, he is now declaring the spiritual warfare in which born-again saints must necessarily engage born-again saints must necessarily fight while living on this earth. This passage teaches that just because one is a righteous person who has received the removal of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, one is not exempted from this fight, but rather, because one is a born-again person, Satan the devil attacks endlessly.

The word, *"be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." (Ephesians 6:10)*, is the passage that must be grasped first. Apostle Paul did not tell us to become strong by our own strength or determination, but told us to be strong only *"in the Lord"* and *"in the power of His might."* The victory or defeat of this fight does not depend on a person's will or effort, but depends on whether or not one relies on the power given by the Lord. In the following word, *"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:11)*, *"wiles"* means the cunning methods by which the devil uses tricks to deceive. Because the devil works by secretly entering into a person's thoughts and mind to deceive

rather than attacking head-on, we cannot stand against those tricks unless we are armed with the whole armor of God, that is, the word of God. Here, *"Put on"* points to accepting the heard word of God by faith.

The word, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood" (Ephesians 6:12)*, clearly reveals the essence of this warfare. The object we fight against is not visible people, that is, flesh and blood. While living a life of faith, it seems as if we are clashing with people and wrestling with circumstances, but behind that, there are invisible spiritual forces. Therefore, the true opponent we must hate and fight against is not people, but the forces of darkness working behind them. If we do not know this truth, we make the people next to us our enemies and pour out all our strength into vain fights.

The word, *"against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12)*, points to who the actual adversaries are. These are the spiritual forces ruling this dark world, and the evil spirits belonging to the devil. The most secret place where these evil spirits work is a person's thoughts and mind. The devil comes into my thoughts and your thoughts, and even into the place of the unconscious, to cause warfare and leave scars. Taking advantage of a person's frailties and weaknesses to enter, he tries to confirm it as if we are originally such people, as if we are people who go in the exact opposite direction of God's will. Constantly whispering toward the already saved righteous person, "You are a person without faith, you are a person who betrayed God," and driving them into a sense of guilt is the devil's way of working.

Here, the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is clearly revealed. The fact that we are born again, that is, the fact that Jesus took upon Himself all our sins by receiving baptism at

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the Jordan River, paid the full price of those sins by shedding His blood on the cross, and made us righteous by resurrecting in three days, is clearly guaranteed by the word of God. However, the devil attacks our thoughts to shake this very confirmed salvation. Therefore, the core of this spiritual warfare lies in not accepting the false condemnation the devil throws into our thoughts as our own truth, but holding onto the truth of the removal of sins proclaimed by the word of God. Because the written word, not our feelings or thoughts, calls us righteous, when we hold onto that word by faith, the wiles of the devil become nothing more than a mere vain trick.

## We must be armed with the whole armor of God and become those who are used in the evil day

*"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:13-17).*

Apostle Paul, who previously revealed the identity of the spiritual warfare, now specifically teaches how we must be armed in that fight. If he said to *"Put on"* the whole armor in verse 11, he said to *"take up"* in verse 13. If *"put on"* is a passive attitude of accepting the heard word of God by faith, *"take up"* is an active attitude of holding onto that word oneself. Namely, it points to not stopping at believing the word heard at

church, but personally opening the Bible and holding onto each and every verse among it as one's own. The reason we must take up the word of God like this is *"that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13)*. It is to stand firm and be victorious to the end on that evil day when the devil attacks.

The word, *"having girded your waist with truth" (Ephesians 6:14)*, means tightly binding ourselves with the truth, which is the word of God, just as ancient soldiers tightly bound their waists to prepare for battle. Tying our thoughts and lives to the word of God, which is the truth, is the beginning of all armament.

The word, *"having put on the breastplate of righteousness" (Ephesians 6:14)*, points to the breastplate that protects our most important place, that is, the heart. Here, *"righteousness"* is not the righteousness we have built up by our own deeds, but the righteousness Jesus has clothed us with. What protects our hearts from the condemnation the devil constantly throws, that is, the false arrows saying "You are a sinner," is precisely this assurance of righteousness. The clear faith that I am a righteous person and God's people becomes the breastplate that protects our hearts.

In the word, *"having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15)*, the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is most clearly revealed. Just as a soldier must firmly put on his shoes to stand without shaking, what makes us stand firm is the peace of mind. However, there is only one way for true peace to come to a person's heart, and that is the way of believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we believe in this gospel prepared by God, that is, the gospel that Jesus took upon Himself our sins through the baptism He received at the Jordan River, paid the full price of those sins by shedding His blood on the cross, and lived again

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from death, we receive the removal of sins and peace comes to our hearts. Only the one who is wearing this gospel of peace like shoes can stand firm without shaking before any attack.

The word, *"above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (Ephesians 6:16),* teaches that the shield that blocks all the fiery darts the devil shoots is faith. The devil opposes us so that we cannot preach the gospel, deceives with lies, persecutes, and throws false condemnation into our thoughts. However, if we have the word of God and the faith that believes that word, we can block and extinguish all those fiery darts. *"Fiery darts"* mean the flaming arrows thrown into the battlefield and the remnants left in that fight, and the shield of faith is able to quench them.

The armament is completed with the word, *"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).* Just as a helmet protects the head, the assurance of salvation protects our thoughts. It is firmly holding onto the fact that I am saved so that the devil's whispers cannot shake it. And Apostle Paul clearly nailed down that the only attacking weapon, the *"sword of the Spirit,"* is precisely the word of God. The weapon with which we can resist and defeat Satan the devil is not our wisdom or thoughts, but only the written word of God. When we know, hold onto, and wield this word, the devil is able to retreat.

Here, we come to see that the entire whole armor ultimately gathers into the word of God and the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the word testifies to. The belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit all come from holding onto by faith the truth of salvation that Jesus accomplished at once through His baptism, cross, and

resurrection. There is not a single weapon that we have created ourselves, and from beginning to end, they are what God has prepared and given.

## We must pray watchfully in the Spirit and boldly preach the mystery of the gospel

*"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (Ephesians 6:18-20).*

Following the exhortation to be armed with the whole armor, Apostle Paul points to prayer as the way to actually fight this spiritual warfare. If one has put on and taken up the whole armor, the answer to what one must do now with that armament is precisely this prayer and gospel preaching. Namely, it is a word showing that the whole armor is not for the safety of oneself alone, but an armament for praying watchfully to the end and boldly preaching the mystery of the gospel.

In the word, *"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:18),* the expression that must be grasped first is *"in the Spirit."* Our prayer must not be a prayer offered following our own greed or fleshly thoughts, but a prayer offered following the Holy Spirit who is within us. To the one who has received the removal of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit is in his heart, and only a prayer offered following that Holy Spirit becomes a prayer that God receives. *"Always"* means at all times without

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setting a time, so it points to constantly relying on God in every place of life, not just praying at set times.

The word, *"being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication" (Ephesians 6:18)*, teaches the attitude of the righteous living in the last days. The devil secretly comes into our thoughts and mind to throw false condemnation and tries to drive us into negative thoughts. Therefore, we must always be awake. Not one who falls asleep and is careless, but only one who discerns whether his own thoughts are fleshly thoughts or thoughts following the word of God, and prays watchfully, does not fall on that evil day. Since it is said that many people sleep in the last days, staying awake, being sober, and preparing with prayer is the proper attitude of one who fights the spiritual warfare.

The word, *"and supplication for all the saints—" (Ephesians 6:18)*, shows that this prayer is not for myself alone. Because we are members who have formed the one body of Christ, we must pray for all the saints and co-workers who serve the gospel together. The fight of one person is precisely the fight of the whole church, and when we pray for each other, we can be victorious together.

In the word, *"and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:19)*, the final purpose of all this armament and prayer is revealed. The content that Apostle Paul asked the saints to pray for him was not the peace or circumstances of his own body, but to let him *"boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel."* Telling them to put on and take up the whole armor, and telling them to pray watchfully, were ultimately to boldly preach this gospel.

Here, the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is clearly revealed. This gospel that Apostle Paul called the

*"mystery of the gospel"* is the truth that Jesus took upon Himself the sins of all mankind at once by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, was crucified and shed His blood to die while bearing those sins, and justified us by resurrecting in three days. What Apostle Paul most earnestly longed for even facing death was that the mystery of this gospel be preached without hindrance. The reason we must be armed with the word of God and pray watchfully is also ultimately to boldly preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit. The armament and prayer of spiritual warfare do not end at protecting oneself, but advance to the work of preaching this gospel that saves people to the world.

## We must have comfort and fellowship with faithful workers

*"But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts" (Ephesians 6:21-22).*

Apostle Paul, having finished the exhortation of the armament of spiritual warfare, prayer, and gospel preaching, now introduces a worker who will deliver his circumstances as he concludes the letter. When Apostle Paul wrote this letter, he was in a confined body while preaching the gospel. Since he called himself an *"ambassador in chains"* in the previous verse, he was in the midst of longing to boldly make known the mystery of the gospel even while bound. In such circumstances, Apostle Paul sent Tychicus to make his affairs known to the Ephesian church and to comfort their hearts.

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The word, *"But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing" (Ephesians 6:21),* shows that Apostle Paul wanted to share his circumstances with the church. This is not a simple delivery of regards, but a fellowship where members who belong to the one body of Christ know each other's circumstances and share their hearts together. Because those who serve the gospel together must know each other's affairs and pray for one another, Apostle Paul deliberately wanted to make known what he was doing. This directly continues the flow of verses 18 to 19 earlier, where he asked for prayers for one another, saying, *"supplication for all the saints— and for me."*

The expression, *"Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:21),* shows what kind of person Tychicus is. Apostle Paul called him a *"beloved brother"* and designated him a *"faithful minister in the Lord."* The expression to grasp here is *"faithful minister in the Lord."* Tychicus was not a person who made a name for himself or sought his own benefit, but a worker who faithfully handled the work entrusted to him in the Lord. This is the very image of living out the attitude of a bondservant mentioned earlier in verses 6 to 7, *"doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord."* This serving of delivering Apostle Paul's affairs and comforting the church in an unseen place is exactly the model of a faithful worker who serves with a single heart as to the Lord.

The word, *"whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts." (Ephesians 6:22),* reveals the clear purpose of sending Tychicus. That purpose, along with the work of making his affairs known, was above all to comfort the heart of the church. The believers, knowing that the apostle was imprisoned, could easily have fallen into worry and anxiety. However, Apostle Paul rather

wanted their hearts to be comforted and sent a faithful worker. The faithful serving of one person comforts the heart of a church far away and firmly builds up the members of the one body again. Even in this short closing greeting, the image of the church built upon the gospel of the water and the Spirit is revealed. The reason Tychicus could be called a *"beloved brother"* and a *"faithful minister in the Lord"* was because he was a righteous person who had received the removal of sins by believing in the salvation that Jesus accomplished at once through His baptism, cross, and resurrection. Because they were people who became one family by being born again through the same gospel, Apostle Paul, Tychicus, and the Ephesian church could know each other's affairs, comfort each other's hearts, and be bound as one body even though they were far apart. This fellowship of comforting members with faithful serving is exactly the image of the blessed union enjoyed by those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## We must receive the grace of salvation that comes upon all who love Him without changing

*"Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen" (Ephesians 6:23-24).*

Apostle Paul concludes the entire book of Ephesians with the blessing of these two verses. After finishing the exhortation of spiritual warfare and gospel preaching, and making his affairs known through Tychicus, he wishes peace, love, and grace toward the Ephesian church. It looks like a greeting closing a letter, but within it, the truth of salvation that Ephesians has

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testified to from the beginning is condensed.

In the word, *"Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 6:23),* both peace and love come from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Namely, it is not peace or love that a person creates oneself, but a gift that God gives from above. Because he specifically said *"love with faith,"* this love is not a vague emotion but a love rooted in faith. Only love built upon the faith that believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can remain among brethren without changing.

The word that must be grasped most in the final blessing, *"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." (Ephesians 6:24),* is *"Grace."* The grace of Jesus Christ spoken of here points exactly to our salvation. This grace of salvation is not something a person has obtained through effort, but a free gift given by God. The fact that the blessing Apostle Paul wished at the very end as he concluded Ephesians was precisely this grace of salvation shows that this grace was the foundation of all exhortations and teachings.

The text clearly points out what this grace of salvation is. It is the saving work in which Jesus, who is God, came to this earth clothed in the flesh, took over all the sins that you and I commit throughout our entire lives at once by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, received the punishment for sins on our behalf by hanging on the cross and shedding His blood to die while bearing those sins, and resurrected in three days. Namely, the gospel of the water and the Spirit itself is the grace of God. The greatest grace God has given us is precisely washing away and eliminating all the sins of you and me at once. Since He washed away at once all those sins committed from morning until sleeping, and even in dreams, there is no greater grace than this.

How this grace comes upon our spirits also connects with what the text teaches. This grace of salvation comes upon the one who honestly confesses that he is a sinner like David before God, that is, the one who acknowledges "I am one who cannot keep the law and has no choice but to go to hell." Only the one who does not try to establish his own righteousness, acknowledges his own lack and weakness, and relies on the heard gospel of the water and the Spirit receives this grace. If even a little bit of a person's effort or thought enters, this pure grace of salvation cannot remain. This is because the grace of salvation is a gift of God given without price from beginning to end.

Therefore, the one in whose spirit this grace dwells lives as a person with no sin in his heart. The one who recognizes by faith that there is no sin in his heart is bold as a lion, and joy and peace that the world cannot know overflow in his spirit. Conversely, if this grace of salvation is not in the spirit, the heart is nothing but emptiness and chaos, and one lives and goes through a life like walking in a desert. The blessing Apostle Paul wished at the end, *"Grace be with,"* was exactly this earnest desire hoping that this gospel of the water and the Spirit would remain unchangingly in the spirits of the brethren. ✉

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Sermon 1 by Paul C. Jong

# Serve as if to the Lord

**< Ephesians 6:1-9 >**

**"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.' And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."**

Beloved saints, today we look together at the words in the earlier part of Ephesians chapter 6. The Apostle Paul speaks in turn about the relationships between children and parents, and slaves and masters. At first glance, these words sound like family ethics or social morals that we often hear. Since it is a teaching to obey parents, raise children with love, and serve masters well, it is a word that anyone would nod their head at. However, please remember the theme that the Apostle Paul has

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consistently dealt with throughout Ephesians. That is Christ and His body, the church. The Apostle Paul also said just before in chapter 5, *"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church" (Ephesians 5:22-23)*. Therefore, the words concerning children and parents, and slaves and masters in chapter 6 must also be read not as simple human ethics, but as spiritual words teaching how we should treat one another within the church born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Through these words today, I want us to grasp together with what kind of heart we who are born again should live.

## Children, obey in the Lord

The Apostle Paul first speaks toward children. *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1)*. The expression we must grasp first and foremost in this word is *"in the Lord."* The Apostle Paul does not speak of unconditional obedience. He nailed it down to always obey *"in the Lord."*
If fleshly parents are outside the Lord, preventing their children from believing in God and blocking their life of faith, one cannot obey even up to those parts. It is a proper duty to do well humanly and fleshly to parents who are not born again. However, blindly submitting to demands that make one leave God rather becomes a great sin. Therefore, the standard of all obedience must be within the fence of *"in the Lord."*
And there is a deeper meaning this word points to. The parents, father, and mother in the text do not only refer to fleshly parents, but also refer together to spiritual leaders who first received the gospel of the water and the Spirit, were born again, and walk ahead in faith. For a person whose faith is still young within the

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church to obey and honor the one who preached the gospel to them, the leader who was born again first, is exactly the core of this word. In Proverbs as well, it said, *"Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding" (Proverbs 4:1),* and the Apostle Paul inherited this teaching of the Old Testament exactly as it is and applied it to the church.
Everyone, a born-again leader does not lead a born-again person to a wrong path. Because the Holy Spirit is within them, even if their own deeds are not perfect, their leading alone is right. Therefore, following that leading with faith immediately becomes obeying in the Lord, and that is the secret to receiving blessings from God. Conversely, a person who does not keep the one leading them in their heart and looks down on them acts as if they are the only one in the whole world, and ends up failing to grow in faith.

## The first commandment with a promise and the order of the kingdom of God

The Apostle Paul continues to speak. *"'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth'" (Ephesians 6:2-3).* This commandment to honor parents is the very first of the commandments dealing with the relationship between people among the Ten Commandments. And there, the promise *"that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth"* is clearly attached.
This promise applies exactly as it is to spiritual leaders as well. Namely, honoring and obeying the one who leads you is the secret to things going well and receiving blessings on this earth. Conversely, looking down on, going against, and humanly

despising the one who leads you immediately leads to the path of a curse.

Why is that so? Because there is order in the kingdom of God. God flows His blessings through that order. Rather than unilaterally pouring down blessings on each person one by one, God gives blessings through the order within the church. Just as the word of Psalms says, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity; just as the oil poured on Aaron's head ran down his beard to the collar of his robes, God's blessing flows down exactly the same to those who are within that order. Therefore, it is impossible to want to receive blessings while ignoring the one who leads you.

Beloved saints, this truth is also something that people who have lived long since olden times have consistently testified to. Regardless of East or West, we have seen countless times the sight of those who honored their parents and elders doing well, and those who went against and despised them facing ruin. However, this promise spoken by the Bible is not merely a worldly lesson on how to conduct oneself. It is a spiritual order that God Himself has established, and it is God's promise poured out to those who submit to that order.

## Fathers, do not provoke to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord

This word was not given only to those who obey. The Apostle Paul also speaks toward those who lead. *"Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).* If obedience is the duty of the one who comes later, bringing them up with love without provoking them to anger is the duty of the

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one who is first.
Even when assigning the same task, assigning it for that person without selfish motives, and above all, leading them so that they may serve and follow the Lord well, is proper upbringing. Just as the Lord has been patient with us and taught and raised us with love, the one who leads must also treat the spiritual children entrusted to them in that way.
Beloved, if you only take good care of them fleshly, things can go wrong again later. Therefore, above all, you must open the way so that the spiritual part is built up first, that is, how they can serve God. This is the image of those who have become one family within the gospel of the water and the Spirit building each other up. One with obedience, one with love, holding onto each other and growing together.

## Slaves, serve with a willing heart as to the Lord

The Apostle Paul now expands the exhortation to the relationship between slaves and masters. *"Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ" (Ephesians 6:5)*. The center of this word is in *"as to Christ."* It means to obey the person who assigns you work, but to serve knowing that the true object of that obedience is not a person but Christ.
Without going through the act of serving people, we have no way to serve the unseen Lord. That is why He said to treat the master right in front of your eyes as if serving the Lord. So the following word, *"not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers" (Ephesians 6:6)*, forbids false serving that only decorates the outside in a way that says it is enough just to catch people's eyes.

Deceiving people and only doing eye-service is the image of one who is not born again. A born-again person faithfully handles the work entrusted to them as if to the Lord, even when no one is watching.

*"But as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord" (Ephesians 6:6-7).* Here, a *"goodwill"* means not a bitter heart, but a joyful and glad heart. It is a heart that serves voluntarily with joy because it knows that this is God's work, rather than doing it reluctantly and forcefully. Because the born-again righteous person has become one body with Christ, God's work immediately becomes their own work, and their own work immediately becomes God's work. Therefore, no matter what position or what amount of work one is entrusted with, it is proper to serve with all one's heart, treating it as one's own work in a small sense, and as God's work in a large sense.

Beloved, think about the work we are entrusted with. Some people step forward to work, some prepare in unseen places, some procure food, and some support from behind with prayer. However, all those works are God's work. Only the entrusted fields are different; not a single one is less precious. Therefore, no matter who assigned it or who is above me, handling the work entrusted to me with all my devotion as if doing it to the Lord is the proper attitude of a born-again person.

And for the one who works as if to the Lord like this, the work itself also goes well. Because devotion is put into it, the result is different, and because they are faithful, people trust them. Above all, through that work, God's glory is revealed and the gospel is propagated. Conversely, a person who only does eye-service for people and seeks only their own benefit, no matter how shrewdly they rack their brains, will end up blocked in everything they do. That is because they failed to accept the words of their senior,

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the one who leads them, with faith.

## You will receive back from the Lord exactly as you have done good

The Apostle Paul teaches that a clear recompense follows this serving. *"Knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free" (Ephesians 6:8)*. The Lord does not look at outward appearances but knows the center of the heart. He knows exactly with what kind of heart we work and how we labor, and He repays exactly as it is.

There is a precious truth we must grasp here. It is the fact that this recompense is not postponed only as a reward to be received in heaven. While we live on this earth having received the removal of sins, we receive exactly on this earth the good and evil we have done before God.

To the one who serves God's work with joy as their own work, the blessing of their heart toward the Lord broadening and the eyes of spiritual discernment opening comes upon them. The ability to discern what kind of work pleases God and what kind of work will later become an obstacle to the gospel arises. And along with that, the blessing of filling even what is needed for the flesh comes upon them. When God's work goes well, not only myself but also the coworkers serving together become abundant in both spirit and flesh. This is the blessed life that a born-again person enjoys on this earth.

Therefore, we must not put off the thought, thinking we will only receive the reward when we go to heaven. Of course, there is a reward that the Lord repays on the last day. However, even on this earth, God repays us according to what we have done. If you

offer your heart and serve for God, that serving is never in vain. On the contrary, as time goes by, your heart broadens, your faith grows, and your life becomes abundant. This is not a theory known only by the head, but a living truth that anyone who has tried serving the Lord will testify to with their own life.

## Masters, stop your threatening and serve with love

The Apostle Paul, who commanded slaves to serve as to the Lord, demands the exact same heart from masters as well. *"Masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening" (Ephesians 6:9)*. The word *"do the same things to them"* means that even when the one who is first treats the one who comes later, they should treat them as if treating Christ.

One must consider the person entrusted under them not as their own slave but as God's slave, and lead them so that their faith may grow, loving and protecting them first so that God's glory may be revealed through that work. The word *"giving up threatening"* is a command to stop the act of threatening, abusing, and making a person's heart anxious. It is in the same context as saying earlier not to provoke children to anger. The one who is first must not hate the person even if there is something to rebuke, and while correcting the wrong deed, they must embrace that person with love.

What is the basis for this word? *"Knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him." (Ephesians 6:9)*. For both the slave and the master, the true Master is the One in heaven. He does not look at a person's outward appearance, status, or position, but only looks at the center of the heart and faith. Therefore, whether one is first or comes later within the church, only their measure and entrusted

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work are different; all are slaves serving the same one Master.
Beloved saints, we are all God's slaves. There is one Master above us, who is Jesus Christ. Therefore, when we treat each other, we must not treat them carelessly or oppress them with threats just because they are under us. We must consider them as Christ's person and God's child, and treat them with love. If there is something to rebuke, we correct that deed, but we do not hate the person. Even if we point out the wrong as a wrong, embracing that soul with love to the end is the proper attitude of one who has become a master, one who is first.

## The church is built up as one body within this order

The reason the Apostle Paul spoke about children and parents, and slaves and masters in turn is right here. It is to show that there is a spiritual order established by God within the church. There is one who is first and one who comes later, and there is one who leads and one who follows. However, that is not the highness or lowness of people, but the channel through which God flows His blessings.
When this order is established uprightly, the church grows firmly as one body. The one who comes later obeys and honors the one who is first, and the one who is first does not provoke the one who comes later to anger but brings them up with love. When doing so, that one who comes later also grows up and comes to serve the one coming behind them in that way. In this way, love and obedience flow and flow, and the entire church comes to reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.
Beloved, we must see each other with the eyes of Christ. If we begin to look for the fleshly faults of the brothers and sisters

beside us, there is no one without faults. However, when we cover that person with the love of Christ and build them up so that they may serve the Lord well, we receive blessings together. This is the beautiful image of the church built upon the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## All this serving is the proper life of a born-again person

Beloved saints, there is something here that we must never miss. It is the fact that the obedience and serving taught by today's text are not the conditions for salvation. The blessing promised in the text, *"that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."* is not salvation itself.

Salvation is not obtained by the merit of deeds or obedience. Salvation is solely a gift that Jesus brought to us who believe, by taking on the sins of the world once and for all through the baptism He received from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, paying the full price for those sins by shedding His blood on the cross, and resurrecting from death. One cannot add to salvation through human sincerity or serving.

The text exactly teaches how a person who has already been born again by believing in this gospel, that is, the righteous person who has received the removal of sins, should live. The one who has received the removal of sins does not live just any way. They obey the leader in the Lord, serve the entrusted work with joy as if to the Lord, and build each other up with love. When those who have become one family through one gospel obey and serve each other like this, God's blessing flows down from head to toe upon that church and the life of each person.

Beloved saints, today we have held together the word, "service,

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as to the Lord." Children must obey their parents and leaders in the Lord, fathers must bring them up with love without provoking them to anger, slaves must serve with a willing heart as to the Lord, and masters must stop their threatening and build up those souls with love. The true Master of all these relationships is the One in heaven, and He does not look at our outward appearance but the center of our hearts.

And all this obedience and serving is not a labor to obtain salvation, but the proper way of life lived by us who have already been born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have received the removal of sins. Because we are the ones who have been clothed with the grace of salvation that Jesus accomplished once and for all through His baptism, cross, and resurrection, we can handle even the work of serving people with joy as if serving the Lord.

Now, I desire that we all become one family within one gospel, and be built up as a holy community that obeys one another and serves one another with love. When doing so, I believe that God's blessing will flow down from head to toe upon our church and the life of each person. I bless you in the name of the Lord. Amen. ✉

Sermon 2 by Paul C. Jong

# Put on the full armor of God

**< Ephesians 6:10-17 >**

**"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;"**

Beloved saints, today we stand together before the final paragraph of Ephesians. The Apostle Paul has continuously spoken about Christ and His body, the church, throughout the letter of Ephesians. He sang of God's grace, who chose us before the foundation of the world and blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ; he testified to the salvation that made us, who were dead in trespasses and sins, alive together with Christ; and

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he taught how the church, which has become one body, should live. And now, concluding the letter, he gathers all those teachings together and sets them before us as a single command. *"Put on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:11).*

This word is not a leisurely exhortation. The Apostle Paul began this paragraph with the word *"Finally."* He is declaring that for all God's children living in the last days, there is one battle that must be fought. Even to us who have already received the removal of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, this battle is not exempted. On the contrary, because we are born again, the attacks of Satan the devil toward us do not cease. Through this word today, I desire that we grasp together who we are fighting against, what we must be armed with, and what that battle is ultimately for.

## We are called into a battle in the last days

First, I desire to deeply engrave the fact that the text begins with the single word *"Finally."* After speaking of the duties of children and parents, and teaching the serving of slaves and masters, the Apostle Paul now declares the spiritual war that born-again saints must fight while living on this earth. The life of faith does not end at the moment of receiving salvation. Salvation was completed once and for all, but on the path we walk on this earth having received that salvation, there lies a battle that continues until the last day.

Some people might think like this. "I have received the removal of sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, so now only a smooth path remains." However, the Bible does not speak like that. On the contrary, the more one is a born-again person, the more they become the target of Satan the devil. As

we live our life of faith, the world has not changed and I myself have not changed, but many changes come into my heart and thoughts, confusion arises, and unexplainable worries and frustrations visit. That is exactly the trace of the invisible war.
Therefore, the Apostle Paul commands toward us to "be strong." But how did he say to be strong? He said to be strong "*in the Lord and in the power of His might.*" Here is the first truth we must grasp. The victory or defeat of this battle does not depend on our own will, determination, or resolution. It is not a battle won just because I make up my mind more firmly. It is a battle where we can stand ably only when we rely on the power given by the Lord.
Beloved saints, we are originally weak people. However, our weakness does not become a problem. Because the One we rely on is not ourselves, but the Almighty Lord. When David stood before Goliath, he did not boast of his own strength or weapons, but went forward "in the name of the LORD of hosts." It is the same for us. What firmly establishes us in this battle of the last days is not our ability, but the strength of His might given by the Lord.

## The wiles of the devil work within our thoughts

The Apostle Paul clearly states what we must stand against. He said to put on the full armor "*be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*" What are "*wiles*" here? It refers to the cunning methods by which the devil uses tricks to deceive people. The devil does not rush toward us head-on. Because if he does so, we will notice immediately. The devil is secretive. He works in a deceiving way, entering silently into our thoughts and hearts.

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We do not only live in the visible real world. We have a world of heart and thoughts. It is exactly in that invisible place where the devil wages war. Please look carefully at the way the devil works. The devil always takes advantage of a person's weakness and vulnerabilities. Through that weakness, he makes us weaker and drives us into a deeper sense of guilt.

What is more frightening is the fact that the devil constantly whispers lies even toward the righteous who have already received salvation. "You are a person without faith. You are a person who betrayed God. You are a person going in the exact opposite direction of God's will." He throws such words into our thoughts. And the moment we agree with those lies, we confirm to ourselves, "Ah, I am really such a person." Even at a single dirty dream or a single negative thought, we end up condemning ourselves.

Beloved, this is exactly the wile of the devil. The devil cannot take away the salvation itself that we have received. However, he attacks our thoughts, making us feel as if we are a person who has not received salvation, as if we are a person under condemnation. Thus, he makes us unable to follow the Lord, making us discouraged and sit down. We must discern this cunning trick. Otherwise, we will be captivated by a vain sense of guilt and live like losers our entire lives.

## Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood

The Apostle Paul clearly reveals the essence of this war. *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood" (Ephesians 6:12)*. This single phrase opens our eyes. The target we are fighting against is not visible people. That is, it is not flesh and blood.

While living a life of faith, we clash with people. Our feelings get hurt with brothers and sisters beside us, we argue with family members at home, and we wrestle with our circumstances. So that person feels like my enemy, and that circumstance seems to destroy me. However, the Apostle Paul lifts our eyes to see what is behind it. Behind people, there are invisible spiritual forces.

If we do not know this truth, we commit a great mistake. We make the person beside us our enemy, and we pour out all our strength in fighting that person. But the real adversary is not that person. Hating that person is falling into the devil's trap. The opponent we must actually stand against is the force of darkness working behind them.

The Apostle Paul tells us who that actual adversary is. *"But against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).* These are the spiritual forces that rule this dark world, and the evil spirits belonging to the devil. And the most secretive place where these evil spirits work is exactly a person's thoughts and heart. The devil comes into our thoughts, even into the deep places we are not conscious of, to wage war and leave wounds. Therefore, the decisive battlefield of this fight is nowhere else but the place of our thoughts.

## The full armor is exactly the word of God

Then with what must we fight this battle? The Apostle Paul said, *"Put on the whole armor of God."* The most important question here is this. What on earth is the full armor? The Apostle Paul clearly nails down the answer at the end of the text. *"Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which*

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*is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17)*. The reality of the full armor is exactly the word of God.

In verse 11, it said to *"Put on"* the full armor. To *"Put on"* points to receiving the word of God heard from the church with faith. When we hear the word during worship, receiving that word with *"Amen"* and engraving it in our hearts is exactly the act of putting on the full armor.

Everyone is a being that thinks. But it diverges depending on what one follows in those thoughts. It is whether one thinks following the word of God, or thinks following the judgment of one's own flesh. What happens if you follow the thoughts of your own flesh? The works of God all feel uncomfortable, and all look wrong. You do not like what the church does, and God's guidance only looks negative. As you solidify your own thoughts like that, without even realizing it, you end up standing in a place that opposes God.

Therefore, the word to put on the full armor is a word to align our thoughts with the word of God and follow that word with faith. Beloved, our feelings or thoughts are not the truth. The written word of God is the truth. No matter how much the devil whispers "You are a sinner," if the word of God declares "You are righteous," we are righteous. When we hold onto this word with faith, the wiles of the devil become nothing more than a mere vain trick.

## Each part of the full armor converges into the gospel of the water and the Spirit

The Apostle Paul unfolds the full armor part by part. He said, *"having girded your waist with truth."* Just as an ancient soldier tightly bound his waist to prepare for battle, we must tightly bind

ourselves with the truth, which is the word of God. Tying our thoughts and lives to the word, which is the truth, is the beginning of all arming.

He said, *"having put on the breastplate of righteousness."* The breastplate is the armor that protects the heart. However, the *"righteousness"* here is not the righteousness we have built up through deeds. It is the righteousness that Jesus clothed us with. What protects our heart from the false arrows of "You are a sinner" that the devil constantly throws is exactly the clear faith that "I am righteous and a people of God."

He said, *"having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace."* Here the essence of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is revealed. Just as a soldier must wear his shoes tightly to stand without wavering, what makes us stand firmly is the peace of heart. However, there is only one way for true peace to come upon a person's heart. That is the way of believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we believe in the gospel that Jesus took on our sins through the baptism He received at the Jordan River, paid the full price for those sins by shedding blood on the cross, and lived again from death, we receive the removal of sins and gain peace in our hearts. Only the one who wears this gospel of peace like shoes will not waver before any attack.

He said, *"above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (Ephesians 6:16)*. The devil opposes us from preaching the gospel, deceives with lies, persecutes, and throws false condemnation into our thoughts. However, if we have the word of God and the faith to believe in that word, we can block and extinguish all those fiery darts. And lastly, he said, *"take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17)*. Just as a helmet protects the

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head, the assurance of salvation protects our thoughts, and the only attacking weapon, the sword of the Spirit, is exactly the word of God.

Beloved saints, look. The belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit—all of them ultimately converge into one place. That is, they converge into the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Jesus accomplished once and for all through His baptism, cross, and resurrection. There is not a single weapon that we ourselves have created. From beginning to end, it is what God has prepared and given to us.

## We must not stop at 'putting on' the full armor, but must 'take' it

Here is a precious word that we must not miss. In verse 11, it said to *"Put on"* the full armor, but in verse 13, it said to *"take up the whole armor of God."* It is the same full armor, but the expression has changed. There is a deep meaning here.

If "putting on" is a passive attitude of receiving the heard word with faith, *"taking"* is an active attitude of holding onto that word oneself. That is, not stopping at believing the word heard at church, but personally opening the Bible and holding onto each and every verse within it as my own.

Why did the Apostle Paul not stop at "putting on" but go as far as *"taking"*? There is a reason. When we attend church well and hear the word, we become filled. However, there are many times when that alone is insufficient. As we live our life of faith, there are good times and bad times, and someone cannot always hold onto me by my side. Exactly at such times, what holds us is that

word which I have ordinarily taken and engraved in my heart.
Think of the people of Israel in the wilderness. When God sent down manna, they gathered it and roasted it or boiled it in a soup and ate it. Likewise, in the 66 books of the Bible, countless words of life are scattered. Among them, we hold onto the word of life that is absolutely necessary for me. It is to hold onto even a single verse, meditate on it in the heart, and live believing that it will be done according to that word. If we hold onto the word, that word instead holds us, bringing us back to our proper place whenever we waver, and making us live by faith again.
And the Apostle Paul revealed the reason why we must take the full armor like this, saying, *"that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13).* A soldier who only looks for a weapon when the enemy invades is already too late. One must ordinarily have their waist girded with the word of God so that even when an attack comes, they can immediately block it and fight to win. And even after fighting that entire battle, they can stand firmly before the Lord without falling.

## The armed one stays awake and prays at all times

If we are armed with the full armor, what must we do now with that armor? The Apostle Paul immediately moves on to prayer. *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:18).* Spiritual warfare is ultimately fought through prayer.
Please hold onto the word *"in the Spirit"* here. Our prayer must not be a prayer offered following our own greed or fleshly thoughts, but a prayer offered following the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. For us who have received the removal of sins

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by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts. Only a prayer offered following that Holy Spirit becomes a prayer that God receives. Also, since it said *"always,"* it is not praying only at designated times, but constantly relying on God in every place of life.

It said, *"being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication" (Ephesians 6:18)*. We who live in the last days must always be awake. The devil tries to throw false condemnation into our thoughts and drive us into negative thoughts. Not one who falls asleep and is off guard, but only one who stays awake and prays, discerning whether my thought is a fleshly thought or a thought following the word of God, will not fall in that evil day. Since it is said that many people sleep in the last days, staying awake, being sober, and preparing with prayer is the proper attitude of one who fights the spiritual war.

Also, it said, *"supplication for all the saints—"* This prayer is not just for me alone. We are members who have formed the one body of Christ. We must pray for all the saints and co-workers who serve the gospel together. The fight of one person is exactly the fight of the whole church, and when we pray for each other, we win together.

## All this arming is to preach the mystery of the gospel

Then, what is all this work of us arming ourselves and staying awake to pray ultimately for? While asking to pray for him, the Apostle Paul clearly reveals the content of that prayer. *"That utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:19).*

Isn't it amazing? When the Apostle Paul wrote this letter, he was imprisoned while preaching the gospel. He called himself an *"ambassador in chains."* Yet, even while bound, what he most earnestly sought was not the comfort of his own body or his release. It was only to ask that he "*make known the mystery of the gospel, for."* Telling us to put on and take the full armor, and telling us to stay awake and pray, were ultimately to boldly propagate this gospel.

What is this gospel that the Apostle Paul called the *"mystery of the gospel"*? It is the truth that Jesus took upon Himself the sins of all mankind once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist at the Jordan River, was crucified and shed His blood to die while bearing those sins, and justified us by resurrecting in three days. That is, the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Beloved saints, the arming and prayer of spiritual warfare do not end at protecting myself alone. It advances to the work of propagating this gospel that saves people to the world. The reason we must arm ourselves with the word of God, and the reason we must stay awake and pray, is ultimately to boldly preach this gospel of the water and the Spirit. Our fight does not end with defense, but leads to a holy advance to save lost souls.

## The grace that comes upon all those who love Him unchangingly

The Apostle Paul concludes the entire book of Ephesians with this one word. *"Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." (Ephesians 6:23-24).*

Please hold onto the word *"Grace"* here. This grace exactly

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points to our salvation. After finishing all those exhortations and teachings of spiritual warfare, the blessing that the Apostle Paul wished for at the very end was exactly this grace of salvation. This shows that this grace was the foundation of all teachings. Putting on the full armor, and staying awake to pray, all stand upon this grace of salvation.

This grace is a pure gift to which not even a little of human effort can be added. If human effort or thought enters, this pure grace of salvation cannot remain. Just as one cannot hope for rainwater to be contained after turning a bowl upside down, one cannot receive this grace with a heart trying to establish one's own righteousness. To the one who confesses their state as a sinner, lays down their own righteousness, and relies on this gospel, the grace of salvation comes.

And the one who has received this grace comes to love the Lord unchangingly. Because of that grace which washed away all their sins once and for all and made them a sinless person, they come to love God and live for the righteousness of God. The one whose spirit retains that grace is bold as a lion, and a joy and peace that the world cannot know overflows in their heart. Ephesians concludes its end with a blessing wishing for the grace of salvation like this.

## Concluding words

Beloved saints, today we have held together the word, *"Put on the whole armor of God."* We are called into a battle in the last days. Our fight is not directed toward visible people but toward the evil spirits of darkness, and the decisive battlefield of that fight is the place of our thoughts. The devil tries to destroy us by throwing false condemnation into our thoughts.

However, we have the full armor prepared by God. The reality of that full armor is the word of God, and the gospel of the water and the Spirit that the word testifies to. When we put on and take with faith the truth of that salvation which Jesus accomplished once and for all through His baptism, cross, and resurrection, the lies thrown by the devil become vain tricks, and we can ably withstand in the evil day and stand firmly.

Now, I desire that we all stand as the Lord's soldiers who put on this full armor, stay awake and pray at all times, and boldly preach the mystery of the gospel. I bless in the name of the Lord that the grace of salvation may unchangingly rest upon all our saints who unchangingly love our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. ✉

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Sermon 3 by Paul C. Jong

# Living the life of a victor who puts on the full armor of God and stays awake to pray for the mystery of the gospel

**< Ephesians 6:1-24 >**

**"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.' And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor**

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**of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts. Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."**

## It is right to obey the father of faith

If we expand the principle of Ephesians chapter 6 to spiritual

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order, the Apostle Paul clearly teaches how all spiritual authority formed in the Lord should operate through the relationship between fleshly parents and children. If we summarize the reasons why it is right to obey and follow the father of faith within the order of faith established by God into three, they are as follows.

**1. Because it is a spiritual order established by God**

The Bible says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Here, being right contains the meaning that it is God's order of creation and holy law. Just as fleshly parents become the channel of life to their children, the spiritual leader, who is the father of faith, is a precious channel who delivered the gospel of the water and the Spirit to us and gave birth to us spiritually. Because God is a God of order, obeying the father of faith established by God becomes an act of faith that acknowledges the authority of the Lord who established him, going beyond following that individual person.

**2. Because they are the channel through which we receive the training and admonition of the Lord**

The crucial role of a father lies in bringing up children with the word of the Lord, not his own thoughts. The Bible exhorts to bring them up only in the training and admonition of the Lord. When the father of faith correctly speaks for and teaches the word of God, obeying that authority is exactly like dwelling under God's direct upbringing. When a spiritual child humbly follows the father's admonition, he can be protected from the temptations of the world or the wiles of the devil and grow safely until reaching the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

### 3. Because there is a promise that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth

The commandment to honor your parents is combined with God's special promise of blessing that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth. God grants the blessing of spiritual stability and prosperity to those who respect spiritual order. Those who harmonize with the fathers of faith and follow their guidance will not wander spiritually. This life of obedience allows the roots of the gospel to go down deep, making the soul prosper, and allowing one to enjoy the grace of the vitality of faith becoming solid.

To summarize, the core standard of such obedience is exactly acting in the Lord. When the father of faith stands only on the gospel of the water and the Spirit and the word of truth, obedience toward him shines even more. This means an attitude of following with a sincere heart, as to Christ and not as to men, as emphasized in Ephesians chapter 6.

The appearance of a spiritual child respecting and following the father of faith is sure evidence that the kingdom of God is being built up orderly and beautifully. The heart that cherishes such spiritual order is also evidence of deeply loving the laws of the kingdom of God. I hope you live a life of fully enjoying the abundant spiritual inheritance promised by the Lord by achieving beautiful unity with the fathers of faith.

## Do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up with love

Ephesians 6:4 clearly presents the solemn and glorious mission that God has entrusted to the parents and spiritual fathers of this earth. The Bible exhorts fathers not to provoke

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their children to wrath, but to bring them up only in the training and admonition of the Lord. If we summarize God's deep will contained in this verse into three core principles, they are as follows.

**1. Do not provoke to wrath: Personal respect and love**

When parents or spiritual leaders put authority first and oppress children with their own emotions or stubbornness, the children get hurt and close the doors of their hearts. God defines children not as the property of the parents but as God's property. Therefore, those who have become fathers must personally respect and embrace their children with love, just as God treated us mercifully with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is because only when the child's heart is not captivated by anger and is at peace, can the word of God be planted as a seed of life in that spirit.

**2. Training and admonition of the Lord: Passing down only the truth**

The essence that those who have become fathers must pass down to their children is not the secret to worldly success or personal experiences. The core of upbringing lies only in the training and admonition of the Lord, that is, teaching the word of God and the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Making children learn how to fear God and be saved from sin, and equipping them with the wisdom to live like children of light is the essence of upbringing. When a father, as a proxy who delivers the word of God, teaches God's will rather than his own will, he can breathe eternal vitality into that upbringing.

### 3. Bring them up: Patience that cares for spiritual life

Here, the word “bring up” has the same meaning as Christ nourishing and cherishing the church in Ephesians chapter 5. Just as the Lord, who is the bridegroom, feeds and cares for the church, which is the bride, those who have become fathers have the responsibility to feed the pasture of the word and protect their children so that they do not starve spiritually. This does not end with a single teaching, but is a process that requires deep patience, enduring to the end and leading with love until the child reaches the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. To summarize, the office of a father in the kingdom of God is not a position of reigning, but a position of sacrificing and serving. Because children see and learn from the trajectory of the father’s life rather than his lips, it is more important than anything else for the father himself to first obey before the gospel and show an example of loving God. Also, in order not to provoke children to wrath, the father must always receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit and parallel the spiritual training of controlling his own vigor.

The final purpose of upbringing is not to make the child rely on the father, but to make them believe and rely on the God whom the father believes in for themselves. When fathers who have the holy consciousness that “I am a steward entrusted with God’s children” lead their children with love, that family and community will be built as a powerful fortress of the kingdom where the wiles of Satan cannot find a gap. I hope you joyfully undertake this beautiful mission of upbringing and realize God’s will on this earth.

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## Follow God's will like a servant of Christ

Ephesians 6:6 to 7 emphasizes the most correct and glorious attitude of life that a born-again saint must possess. The Apostle Paul exhorts us not to forget that no matter what position we are in the world, our true identity is a servant of Christ. The reasons why following God's will wholeheartedly and living for the purpose of spreading the gospel is the right path for a saint can be summarized in three points as follows.

### 1. A life conscious of the Lord, not men

A servant of Christ does not act like a men-pleaser with eyeservice only, but does the will of God from the heart. This is a sincere attitude that is not bound by people's opinions or reputations, and acknowledges that the Lord is watching even in places where no one sees. Because we have been born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have become the Lord's possession, now all our actions become a holy worship offered to the Lord. This very consciousness of living before God is the basis of the honesty possessed by a servant of Christ and an evangelical attitude of life.

### 2. The joy of serving with a willing mind

The Bible says to do service with goodwill, as to the Lord, and not to men. Here, a willing mind means a voluntary and joyful mind springing from gratitude, not a forced sense of duty. When we deeply remember the Lord's love that rescued me from eternal punishment, we can willingly become His servants and devote ourselves to the gospel. When I believe that the work I do is serving the Lord beyond a simple means of livelihood or duty, and is a precious opportunity to propagate the gospel, every

moment of life finally becomes holy.

### 3. A life looking forward to the reward of the kingdom of God

Worldly masters often fail to recognize our toil, but the Lord, who is our true Master, remembers exactly all the good we have done for the gospel and truth and repays us. Those who live as servants of Christ make the eternal inheritance they will receive in the kingdom of God the purpose of their lives, not the temporary rewards they will get on this earth. Because there is such a glorious hope, we are not shaken by the trends of the world and can endure and fulfill the mission of propagating the gospel to the end.

To summarize, becoming a servant of Christ is paradoxically the path to obtaining the greatest freedom a human can enjoy. Because we are no longer servants of men, we do not rejoice or grieve over the evaluations of the world, and because we have ended our slavery to sin within the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we now live for a holy purpose as servants of righteousness. When the purpose that my life is for the propagation of the gospel becomes clear, all the wandering of life puts a period.

A life of following God's will like a servant of Christ is the most valuable and right choice for a saint. The Lord expands His kingdom through faithful ones who follow His will with their hearts. Today as well, in the workplace, home, and all encounters, I must harbor the confident pride that I am a servant of Christ and fulfill God's will. The Lord is most joyfully watching that willing mind offered by the saint, and through that life, He will reveal His glory to the whole world.

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## Put on the full armor and be strong

The full armor of God, which is the climax and conclusion of Ephesians chapter 6, is a solemn declaration preparing born-again righteous people for the spiritual warfare they must inevitably fight in an evil age. The Apostle Paul's opening of the conclusion of his epistle with "Finally" reminds us that we must be duly armed as soldiers of God. If we summarize the spiritual meaning of the full armor we must put on to become strong and victorious within the gospel of the water and the Spirit into three points, they are as follows.

### 1. Being strong in the Lord and in the power of His might

The very first thing that must precede before putting on the full armor is the attitude of discarding one's own strength and relying only on the power of the Lord. The reason we can stand against Satan is not because our personal character or efforts are excellent, but because the perfect victory of Christ, who crushed the devil's head—the gospel of the water and the Spirit—is within us. The faith that is assured of this gospel is the foundational stamina of a saint and the source of spiritual strength.

### 2. The full armor of God: The practical arming of the gospel

God wants us to be covered from head to toe only with the gospel of truth. First, we need the belt of truth to gird our center with the unchanging truth of the water and the Spirit, not our own thoughts or emotions. Also, to protect our hearts from the devil's condemnation, we must take God's righteousness—that Jesus washed away all my sins forever—as the breastplate of

righteousness. The shoes prepared by the gospel of peace not only give us peace but also become the mobility to run anywhere to preach the gospel. When we are equipped with the shield of faith that blocks Satan's doubts, the helmet of salvation that protects our thoughts with the assurance of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the only offensive weapon and the word of God, we finally achieve complete armament.

### 3. Praying always in the Holy Spirit

Even if one is fully equipped with the full armor, a soldier cannot move without the spiritual breath called prayer. Prayer is the core energy that makes the full armor of God practically operate in the life of a saint. When we always strive to stay awake and pray in the Holy Spirit, and supplicate not only for ourselves but also for other members and the propagation of the gospel, the church finally becomes a powerful, victorious legion.
To summarize, the full armor of God is not something we newly manufacture, but something the Lord has already completed with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which we take and put on by faith. We must be assured that our armor is the holy armor of righteousness washed by the blood and water of the Lord. When we proclaim the word of God while wearing the full armor without being deceived by the devil's lies, the enemy will inevitably be defeated.
Standing as a victor before the Lord after having done all is the ultimate purpose of a saint. As soldiers of the kingdom wearing the full armor of God, we must fulfill the mission of destroying the wiles of Satan the devil and boldly making known the mystery of the gospel. In the end times, I hope you arm yourself with the strongest faith and become a victor who daily confirms the promised victory within the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

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## Know the object of the fight and take up the full armor

The core of Ephesians chapter 6 is to accurately know the identity of the target we must fight and to equip ourselves with the perfect armament prepared by God. This alone is the only secret to being able to withstand in spiritual warfare and to stand firm after having done all. If we summarize the spiritual principles that a victorious soldier must equip into three points, they are as follows.

### 1. The essence of the fight: Spiritual forces, not flesh and blood

We often consume a lot of energy fighting against visible people, circumstances, or fleshly problems. However, the Bible strictly warns that behind them are the rulers of the darkness of this age and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Behind hatred, jealousy, strife, and greed hides Satan's elaborate wile to distance us from God. Therefore, rather than attacking the other person, we need the attitude of facing the evil spiritual forces that shake our hearts and situations, and withstanding them using the spiritual authority of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 2. The necessity of arming: Take up the full armor of God

This fight is not of a nature that can be won by human wisdom or morality. We can only win if we are absolutely armed with God's things. Because the devil targets our weakest gaps, not a single one among the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit should

be missing. In fact, the reality of the full armor given by God is Jesus Christ Himself. When we abide in Christ by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, it is as if we have already put on perfect, impenetrable armor.

### 3. The assurance of victory: To be able to withstand and stand

The ultimate purpose of taking up the full armor is not simply to remain in defense, but to withstand and defeat the evil forces and stand as the final victor. This war is not a gamble we fight to win a victory, but a process of executing by faith the victory the Lord has already won. When we put on the full armor and endure with patience to the end, even if the world shakes violently, the righteous who are born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit will stand tall on the rock.

To summarize, a victorious soldier must check his armament every moment. I must gird my waist with the truth that I am a righteous person who has received the removal of sins by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and block the arrows of doubt thrown by Satan with the shield of faith that God is faithful. Also, in the face of the devil's temptation, we must respond by wielding the written word of God like a sword.

Our fight is a fight already won, and saints must have the confident pride that they are invincible soldiers wearing the full armor of God. When this faith dominates our lives, the rulers of darkness will tremble and retreat before us, and we will remain as final victors who reveal only the glory of the Lord. Engraving this magnificent spiritual principle shown in Ephesians in your heart, I hope you live a victorious life today by boldly proclaiming the mystery of the gospel.

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## Arm your whole body with the gospel

The full armor of God recorded in Ephesians chapter 6 is completed through the core truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The spiritual military uniform we must wear is not a vague abstract concept, but is solidly woven with the concrete gospel facts that Jesus washed away all my sins forever with water and the Spirit. If we summarize the spiritual principle of why this armament is the absolute condition for victory, it is as follows.

### 1. Head and waist: Catching the center with the assurance of the gospel

The devil constantly attacks the thoughts of the saints and tries to shake the assurance of salvation. When the doubt of condemnation arises, asking, “Are you still a righteous person after doing that?”, the confirmed helmet of salvation—that you have already received the elimination of sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit—protects our thoughts. Also, just as a soldier cannot use his strength if he loses his belt, the righteous lose their spiritual strength if they let go of the truth of the water and the Spirit. The belt of truth, stating that I became righteous not by my deeds but by the Lord’s merit, plays the role of firmly holding the center of our lives.

### 2. Chest and whole body: The breastplate of righteousness and the arming of the gospel

Satan pierces our emotions and conscience, shooting arrows of condemnation. At this time, the breastplate of righteousness—that it is not my righteousness, but God’s righteousness, which Jesus took over when He was baptized by John and completed

on the cross, that covers me—protects our hearts. Being covered from head to toe with the gospel of the water and the Spirit becomes a powerful armament proclaiming that I have been completely transferred from the domain of sin, which is Satan's ruling territory, to the kingdom of righteousness, which is God's ruling territory.

### 3. The shield of faith: Quenching the fiery darts of the wicked one

The devil shoots up fiery arrows of fear, anxiety, and disbelief. Only the shield of faith, believing the promise that God has already made me perfect and will keep me to the end, can quench those attacks. This shield is not based on variable emotions but on believing the facts of the written word. When we use the gospel completed by the water and the Spirit as a shield, no whisper of the devil can pierce us, and it becomes neutralized.

To summarize, the reason we win in spiritual warfare is not because we fight well, but because the armor we are wearing, which is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is the armor of victory that has already defeated the devil. Therefore, discarding the complacency of taking the devil's attacks lightly, we need thorough armament, tightening the armor by meditating on the truth of the gospel every morning. An armed righteous person does not run away before the darkness but boldly withstands and destroys the wiles of the devil.

The assurance that I am protected from head to toe by the gospel of the water and the Spirit is like a period that confirms victory. The devil can never inflict a fatal wound on one who is armed with the gospel. Enjoying true peace within this perfect armament today as well, I hope you live the life of an authoritative righteous person who makes the devil kneel under

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your footstool. The guidelines of this magnificent spiritual battle will become the actual banner of victory in the field of your life.

## Stay awake, pray, and preach the gospel

The final exhortation of Ephesians chapter 6 presents the supreme task of making prayer a lifestyle and preaching the gospel as the ultimate life purpose of the born-again righteous. In order for us to put on the full armor of God and win in spiritual warfare, the spiritual breath of staying awake and praying in the Holy Spirit and the clear mark of preaching the gospel are absolutely necessary. If we summarize the spiritual meaning of this part into three core principles, they are as follows.

### 1. Praying at all times in the Holy Spirit: The breath of a spiritual soldier

Praying by the Holy Spirit even in the unconscious means a state in which the entire existence of a saint constantly abides within God's rule. Praying in the Holy Spirit is not filling one's own greed, but seeking for God's will to be fulfilled following the guidance of the Holy Spirit dwelling within. Because the devil targets the moment we let our guard down, prayer is like setting up a spiritual antenna. When we always stay awake and pray, we can immediately discern the wiles of the devil and ably defeat them with the authority of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

### 2. Supplicating for the saints: The unity of the spiritual legion

Spiritual warfare is not a victory for myself alone, but a

legion-centered fight where we supplicate together for many saints. The reason we must pray for one another is that we are members of the body of Christ. Spiritual warfare is not something that can be won in a lone-wolf manner. When the members earnestly intercede for one another, the gaps in the full armor are filled, and the army of the kingdom of God finally equips itself with a powerful cohesion to block Satan's attacks.

### 3. The ultimate goal: A life that boldly makes known the mystery of the gospel

The Apostle Paul, even though he was in the body of a prisoner bound in chains, asked for prayer for only one purpose, that is, the work of opening his mouth to boldly make known the mystery of the gospel. The ultimate reason we are alive on this earth is not for personal comfort. The purpose for which God gave us the gospel of the water and the Spirit is to have us propagate the word of life as ambassadors of the kingdom entrusted with that gospel. Preaching the gospel is not an option but a natural word to speak and a holy mission bestowed upon the righteous. When we live embracing this purpose in our hearts, all our daily lives become a spiritual battlefield and at the same time a golden fishing ground to harvest souls.

To summarize, a life of wearing the full armor of God, praying in the Holy Spirit, and preaching the gospel is the greatest glory that a born-again person can enjoy. Since prayer is the essential energy that operates the full armor, we must not lose the heart of relying on the Lord even in our unconsciousness. The reason we open our mouths boldly without hesitation when making known the mystery of the gospel is because the power of the Holy Spirit is with us behind our lips.

The holy confession that my ultimate purpose is to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit must become the brilliant light

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that leads the remaining life of a saint. When we converge all the agonies of life into the question of "how can I preach the gospel?", God will fill all our needs and confirm our victory. I hope you live a blessed life expanding the kingdom of God by standing firm as a great minister of the gospel who destroys the wiles of Satan the devil and leads souls in darkness into the light.

## The secret to success is loving the Lord unchangingly

In the final verse of Ephesians, chapter 6 verse 24, the Apostle Paul concludes his epistle with the blessing, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." The secret for the righteous to truly succeed spiritually and in all areas of life on this earth lies in loving the Lord unchangingly within the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we summarize its core principles into three points, they are as follows.

### 1. Unchanging love comes from the assurance of the gospel

The fundamental reason a saint can love the Lord is because the Lord perfectly loved us first. When we believe the fact that the Lord was baptized with water, shed His blood on the cross, and resurrected, thereby washing away and removing all our sins forever, true love for the Lord springs up in our hearts. When we love the Lord based on the written word of the gospel rather than emotions that change according to situations, we stand in the position of a spiritual succeeder who does not shake before any hardship or Satan's temptation.

**2. Love is the driving force that moves the full armor**

No matter how solid the full armor prepared by God is, if the love for the Lord cools down, it only becomes a heavy burden. When we gird the belt of truth and wield the sword of the Spirit with a heart that loves the Lord, those weapons finally exert powerful vitality. Love becomes a voluntary energy that goes beyond the sense of duty to fight forcefully, making us joyfully stand against the devil for the glory of the Lord. This very joy is the core secret that makes the righteous ultimately victorious.

**3. Because loving the Lord directly leads to preaching the gospel**

If we truly love the Lord, we will set our life's purpose on preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which is what the Lord desires most. True success recognized in the kingdom of God depends on how many souls we have led to the Lord. One who loves the Lord comes to boldly make known the mystery of the gospel, and through that life, bears the beautiful fruit of the kingdom of God prospering. This is the most valuable form of success in God's eyes.

To summarize, the success the world speaks of sets its purpose on possession, but the success of the righteous has its essence in the relationship with God. Rather than striving to gain something, focusing on having conversations of love with the Lord within the gospel of the water and the Spirit that saved me must become the priority. The attitude of confessing that we love the Lord with an unchanging center, whether circumstances are good or not, becomes a powerful weapon that makes the devil most afraid.

The confession that my secret to success is only loving the Lord within the gospel of the water and the Spirit must be deeply

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engraved in the soul of a saint. To those who unchangingly love the Lord, all of God's spiritual blessings and grace are ceaselessly supplied. Empowered by this abundant grace, we must proudly walk the path of the great righteous who shine the Lord's glory upon the whole earth. When we keep our heart of loving the Lord within the gospel to the end, the fruit of victory and the clear evidence of success will appear in all fields of life. ✉

# Questions and Answers on Ephesians Chapter 6

## [Question] 1. In Ephesians 6:1-4, Paul says, "obey your parents" and speaks of obeying spiritual parents and following their will well. What does this word mean?

This is a question that accurately points out the core, in that you grasped that this text does not merely point to simple family ethics but to the spiritual order within the church. I will unravel who the *"parents"* Paul spoke of are, and why obeying them becomes the secret to blessings, according to the words of the text.

### 1. *"Parents"* refers not only to physical parents but also to spiritual guides.

Paul said in Ephesians 6:1, *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."* The target this word points to does not stop at physical parents. The parents, fathers, and mothers in the text first and foremost also refer to the spiritual guides who have been born again by receiving the gospel of the water and the Spirit and are walking ahead in faith. Namely, the core of this word is that a person whose faith is still young within the church should obey and honor the one who preached the gospel to them, the guide who was born again first.

The basis on which Paul can explain it this way lies in the overall flow of Ephesians. In chapter 5, he said, *"Wives, submit to your*

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*own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church" (Ephesians 5:22-23).* Because Ephesians is a letter that deals with Christ and His body, the church, from beginning to end, it is right to read the words concerning parents and children in chapter 6 as relationships within the church as well.

**2. In all obedience, there is a clear standard of *"in the Lord."***

Paul did not speak of unconditional obedience, but nailed it down to always obey *"in the Lord."* This is the very first expression you must grasp from the word *"in the Lord"* in verse 1. If physical parents are outside the Lord and prevent their children from believing in God and block their life of faith, one cannot follow them in those aspects. Doing well to parents who are not born again in a human and physical way is a proper duty, but blindly submitting to demands that make one leave God actually becomes a great sin.

Therefore, the word to obey spiritual guides also falls within this standard. A born-again guide does not lead a born-again person down the wrong path. Because the Holy Spirit dwells within them, even if their own deeds are not perfect, their guidance is righteous, so following that guidance becomes the very act of obeying in the Lord.

**3. This obedience connects with the *"first commandment with promise"* of the Ten Commandments.**

Paul said, *"'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth'" (Ephesians 6:2-3).* This commandment to honor one's parents is the very first of the

commandments dealing with human-to-human relationships among the Ten Commandments, and the promise *"that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."* is clearly attached to it.

This promise applies exactly the same to spiritual guides. Namely, honoring and obeying the one who guides you is the secret to doing well and receiving blessings on this earth. Conversely, taking the one who guides you lightly, going against them, and looking down on them humanly leads directly to the path of curses.

**4. The reason is because of the spiritual order established in the Kingdom of God.**

The reason Paul told us to obey guides is not to exalt a person, but to follow the order established by God. There is order in the Kingdom of God, and God flows His blessings through that order. Rather than unilaterally pouring down blessings on each individual one by one, God gives blessings through the order within the church.

Just as the word in Psalms says, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; just like the oil poured on Aaron's head running down his beard to the collar of his garments, God's blessings flow down equally to those who are within that order. Therefore, it is impossible to expect to receive blessings while ignoring the one who guides you.

**5. There is also a proper duty for those who guide.**

This word was not given only to those who obey. Paul said, *"And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4)*. If obedience is the duty of the one who comes

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later, raising them with love without provoking them to wrath is the duty of the one who comes first.

Even when assigning the same task, having them do it selflessly for their own sake, and above all, guiding them to serve and follow the Lord well is proper rearing. Just as the Lord has been longsuffering toward us and taught and raised us with love, a guide must treat the spiritual children entrusted to them in the same way. If you only take good care of them physically, things can go wrong later; therefore, you must open the way for how they can serve God so that their spiritual aspect is built up first above all else.

**6. All of this points not to salvation but to the proper life of a born-again person.**

Here, we must not lose the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The blessing promised in the text, *"that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."* is not salvation itself. Salvation is not obtained by the merit of deeds or obedience, but is a free gift given by Jesus taking all our sins upon Himself once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River, shedding blood and dying on the cross, and resurrecting on the third day.

The text teaches how a person who has already believed in this gospel and been born again—namely, the righteous who have received the removal of sins—should live. Those who have received the removal of sins do not live carelessly, but live by obeying and honoring their guides in the Lord and following the spiritual order. At that time, they come to enjoy blessings in both spirit and flesh together on this earth.

**7. To summarize and speak:**

The word Paul spoke, *"obey your parents"* goes beyond the teaching to honor physical parents and is a word to obey and honor the spiritual guides who were born again first within the church, in the Lord. This is the act of following the spiritual order established by God, and because God's blessings flow down through that order, it precisely becomes the secret to doing well and receiving blessings on this earth. At the same time, the one who guides must not provoke the children to wrath but must love and raise them in the training and admonition of the Lord. However, all this obedience and rearing are not conditions for salvation, but the proper way of life lived by the righteous who have already been born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have received the removal of sins. When those who have become one family through one gospel obey one another and build each other up with love, God's blessings flow down from head to toe upon that church and the life of each person.

## [Question] 2. What does the word in Ephesians 6:11 mean, which tells us to put on the whole armor to stand against the wiles of the devil?

This is a question that goes straight to the core of the text, in that you asked what its reality is without letting the word *"Put on the whole armor"* flow away as a vague spiritual analogy. I will unravel what the wiles of the devil are, and what the whole armor that stands against them ultimately points to, according to the words of the text.

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**1. First, it is the word to be strong *"in the Lord and in the power of His might."***

Paul said, *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:10-11)*. The very passage you must grasp before speaking of the whole armor is *"in the Lord and in the power of His might."* The victory or defeat in this fight does not depend on human will or determination, but depends solely on whether you rely on the power given by the Lord or not.

Therefore, the word to put on the whole armor is a command not to make something ourselves to arm with, but to arm ourselves by relying on what God has given. From beginning to end, there is not a single weapon made by our own strength.

**2. *"The wiles of the devil"* are the cunning tricks that enter into thoughts and minds to deceive.**

*"Wiles"* means the cunning methods by which the devil uses tricks to deceive. Rather than attacking head-on, the devil works in a way that secretly enters into a person's thoughts and mind to deceive them. We do not only live in the physical world but also live in the world of the mind and thoughts, and it is in that very unseen place that the devil wages war and leaves scars.

The way the devil works is by taking advantage of a person's frailties and weaknesses. Through that weakness, the devil drives us to be even weaker and into a deeper sense of guilt. Toward the righteous who have already been saved, he constantly whispers, "You are a person without faith, you are a person who betrayed God, you are a person who goes in the exact opposite direction of God's will," and tries to falsely establish it as fact. This is the wile of the devil.

**3. Our fight is not against people but against evil spirits.**

Paul clearly reveals the nature of this war. He said, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12)*. The target we fight against is not visible people, namely flesh and blood.

As we live our life of faith, it may seem like we are clashing with people and wrestling with circumstances, but behind that, there are unseen spiritual forces. If we do not know this truth, we will make the people next to us our enemies and pour all our strength into vain fights. Therefore, the real opponent we must hate and stand against is not people, but the forces of darkness working behind them.

**4. *"Put on the whole armor"* is precisely the word to accept the word of God with faith.**

If so, what the whole armor is is the most important thing. Paul clearly nails down the answer in Ephesians 6:17. He said, *"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;"* so the reality of the whole armor is the word of God. *"Put on"* points to accepting the word of God heard in the church with faith.

Everyone has thoughts, but it diverges based on whether one thinks according to the word of God or according to one's own fleshly judgment. If you follow the thoughts of your own flesh, all the works of God will look uncomfortable and wrong, and eventually, without even realizing it, you will stand in a position that opposes God. Therefore, the word to put on the whole armor is the word to align our thoughts with the word of God and follow that word by faith.

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**5. The core of that armament converges into the gospel of the water and the Spirit.**

Each part of the whole armor ultimately converges into the truth of salvation testified by the word of God. The "of the gospel of peace" that give true peace to our hearts, the *"breastplate of righteousness"* that guarantees us as righteous, the *"shield of faith"* that blocks the devil's false condemnation, and the *"helmet of salvation"* that protects the assurance of salvation—all come from one gospel.

That gospel is the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in which Jesus took all our sins upon Himself once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River, paid the full wages of those sins by shedding blood on the cross, and justified us by resurrecting on the third day. The only way true peace can come upon a person's heart is by believing in this gospel. Therefore, arming oneself with the whole armor means firmly holding onto this gospel of the water and the Spirit by faith.

**6. Therefore, the decisive point of this fight is the place of our faith.**

If the wiles of the devil are throwing false condemnation into our thoughts, the way to stand against them is also decided in the place of thoughts. The core is not accepting the lies thrown by the devil as your own truth, but holding onto the truth of the removal of sins proclaimed by the word of God.

It is not our feelings or thoughts that call us righteous, but the written word of God that calls us righteous. Therefore, when we hold onto that word by faith, no matter how much the devil whispers, "You are a sinner," it becomes nothing more than a vain prank. The devil enters the place of condemning oneself with a single dirty dream or a single negative thought, but if you hold onto the salvation guaranteed by the word of God, those

arrows are easily extinguished.

**7. To summarize and speak:**

The word, *"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"* is the word to stand against the cunning tricks of the devil—who secretly enters our thoughts and minds to falsely condemn us—by arming ourselves with the word of God. Our fight is not against visible people but against the evil spirits of darkness, and that fight must be fought not by our own strength but solely in the Lord, by the power of His might.

The reality of the whole armor is the word of God, and the gospel of the water and the Spirit testified by that word. When we firmly hold onto the salvation accomplished once and for all by Jesus through baptism, the cross, and resurrection by faith, the false condemnation thrown by the devil becomes a vain prank, and we can ably stand against it in the evil day and stand as victors.

## [Question] 3. Ephesians 6:13, *"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."* What is the curiosity about this word?

That is a good curiosity. It is a question that goes straight to the core of this word, in that you grasped the difference where, regarding the same whole armor, verse 11 says *"Put on"* and verse 13 says *"take up."* I will unravel what *"take up"* means and what "to withstand in the evil day" points to, according to the words of the text.

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**1. The command to *"take up"* is an active attitude of faith that holds onto the word of God for oneself.**

Paul said to *"Put on"* the whole armor in verse 11, and said to *"take up"* in verse 13. These two expressions are distinct. *"Put on"* points to a passive attitude of accepting the word of God heard in the church with faith. Namely, it is believing the word when it is preached to you.

In contrast, *"take up"* is an active attitude of holding onto that word for oneself. It means personally opening the Bible and holding onto each and every verse within it as one's own. Not stopping at believing the preached word, but directly holding onto the word that is absolutely necessary for me and engraving it in my heart is the very act of "taking up."

**2. If you do not take up the word of God, faith is not maintained.**

There is a reason why Paul did not stop at *"Put on"* but went further to *"take up."* You can become filled when you attend church well and hear the word, but with that alone, there are many times when you are weary and lack strength. As you live a life of faith, there are good times and bad times, but no one can always be by your side to hold you up.

At such times, what holds us up is precisely the word we have taken up. When we hold onto the word of God, that word instead holds us up. Even if the circumstances are not good and our thoughts waver a little, that word I held onto brings me back to my place, makes me come to my senses again, and makes me live by faith. Therefore, the act of taking up the word is absolutely necessary to maintain faith.

**3. Like the manna in the wilderness, it is holding onto the necessary word among the scattered words.**

This "taking up" can be understood by comparing it to the manna in the wilderness. In the Old Testament, when the people of Israel lived in the wilderness, God sent down manna, and they gathered it, roasted it, boiled it in soup, and ate it. Likewise, countless words of life are scattered throughout the 66 books of the Bible.

Among them, we hold onto the word of life that is absolutely necessary for you and me. Holding onto even a single verse that is appropriate for me, meditating on it in my heart, and living believing that it will be done according to that word is the very act of taking up the word, and this is also the way to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

**4. The *"evil day"* is the day the devil attacks.**

Paul revealed the reason for having to take up the whole armor as *"that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."* The *"evil day"* is the day the devil attacks us with his wiles. The devil secretly enters our thoughts and minds, throws false condemnation, and tries to drive us into negative thoughts and a sense of guilt.

In order not to fall but to ably withstand in such an evil day, we must take up the word in advance. We should not look for weapons only when the enemy invades, but we must usually have our waists girded with the word of God. Only then can we immediately block, fight, and win even when an attack comes.

**5. *"Having done all, to stand"* is to stand firmly on the word until the end.**

The word *"having done all, to stand"* means standing firmly

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without falling even after fighting this battle to the end. Our goal is not to endure for a moment, but to stand firmly before the Lord at that final place.

This connects with the attitude of the righteous living in the last days. Since Paul started this paragraph with the word "*Finally,*" this armament is for standing before the Lord by keeping the faith to the end while living in the last era. When we take up the word and let that word hold us, we can stand without wavering even after having done all.

**6. The core of the word to take up is the gospel of the water and the Spirit.**

Here, we must not lose the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The word of God we take up ultimately converges into one truth. That is the gospel in which Jesus took all our sins upon Himself once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River, paid the full wages of those sins by shedding blood on the cross, and justified us by resurrecting on the third day.

The devil attacks our thoughts to shake this very confirmed salvation. Therefore, the center of the word we must take up and hold onto is this gospel that guarantees the fact that I am a righteous person who has already received the removal of sins. Because the written word, not our feelings, calls us righteous, when we actively take up and hold onto the word of this gospel, we can ably withstand in the evil day and stand firm.

**7. To summarize and speak:**

The word "*take up the whole armor of God*" is a word telling us not to stop at believing the preached word, but to open the Bible, hold onto the word of God that is necessary for me for

myself, and engrave it in my heart. When we hold onto the word, that word instead holds us up, bringing us back to our place whenever we waver and making us live by faith.
We must take up the word in advance like this so that we can ably withstand in the evil day when the devil attacks, and stand firmly before the Lord even after having done all. And the core of the word we must take up and hold onto is the gospel of the water and the Spirit accomplished once and for all by Jesus through baptism, the cross, and resurrection, namely the truth that guarantees the fact that I am already a righteous person.

## [Question] 4. Ephesians 6:24, *"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in."* What is the meaning of this word?

This is a question that goes straight into the conclusion of this letter, in that you grasped the final sentence that concludes the entirety of Ephesians and asked for its meaning. I will unravel what *"Grace"* is here, and who "those who love unchangingly" are, according to the words of the text.

### 1. Here, *"Grace"* points precisely to our salvation.

Paul concludes the entirety of Ephesians with the blessing, *"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in."* The word you must grasp most in this final word is *"Grace."* The grace of Jesus Christ spoken of here points precisely to our salvation.
This grace of salvation is not something a person obtained through effort, but a free gift given by God. The fact that the blessing Paul prayed for at the very end as he concluded Ephesians was this very grace of salvation shows that this grace

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was the foundation of all exhortations and teachings.

**2. The content of that grace of salvation is the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.**

If so, the text clearly points out what this grace of salvation is. It is the event where Jesus, who is God, came to this earth in the flesh, took over all the sins that you and I commit throughout our entire lives once and for all by receiving baptism from John the Baptist in the Jordan River, received the punishment for sins in our place by shedding blood and dying on the cross while bearing those sins, and resurrected on the third day.

Namely, the gospel of the water and the Spirit itself is the grace of God. The greatest grace God has given us is precisely washing away and eliminating the sins of you and me once and for all. He washed away all those sins committed from morning until sleep, and even in dreams, once and for all, so there is no greater grace than this.

**3. This grace is a pure gift to which human effort cannot be added in the slightest.**

This grace of salvation is a gift of God given without price from beginning to end. If human effort or thoughts enter even a little bit, this pure grace of salvation cannot remain. Just as not a single drop will be contained if you turn a bowl upside down while hoping for rainwater to be contained in it, you cannot receive this grace with a heart that tries to establish its own righteousness.

Therefore, this grace is very pure, it is truth, and it is true. When you receive this grace of salvation, you become a child of God, gain eternal life, and go to Heaven, and while living on this earth, you receive answers when you pray to God the Father. So this

grace of salvation is precisely the key that opens the door to Heaven.

**4. This grace comes upon those who confess themselves.**

The text also teaches how this grace comes upon the heart. This grace of salvation comes upon those who honestly confess that they are sinners before God, like David. David confessed, *"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me,"* and acknowledged that he was one who could not keep the law and had no choice but to go to hell.

Only those who do not try to establish their own righteousness, acknowledge their shortcomings, frailties, and sinfulness, and rely on the preached gospel of the water and the Spirit can receive this grace. Namely, the Lord's grace of salvation comes upon those who honestly confess themselves before God and acknowledge the blessing of being born again.

**5. "Those who love unchangingly" is the way of life lived by those who have received this grace of salvation.**

Paul prayed for this grace upon *"all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in."* A person who has received the grace of salvation comes to love the Lord unchangingly. Because of that grace that washed away all their sins once and for all and made them a sinless person, they come to love God and live for the righteousness of God.

Namely, unchanging love is not a condition for receiving grace, but a fruit that flows out from those who have already received grace. Those whose hearts the grace of salvation dwells in are deeply moved by that grace, walk with the Lord, love the Lord, and live boldly in this world.

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**6. The heart where this grace of salvation dwells is the word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that dwells in the mind of a sinless person.**

A person whose heart the grace of salvation dwells in lives as a person without sin in their mind. A person who recognizes by faith that there is no sin in their mind is as bold as a lion, and a joy and peace that the world cannot know overflows in their heart. They were lacking yesterday, are lacking today, and cannot help but be lacking in the future, but still, they are considered a righteous person without sin before God, so how great a grace is this?

Conversely, if this grace of salvation is not in the heart, the mind is nothing but emptiness and chaos, and they live and depart a life like walking in a desert. Therefore, the blessing "Grace be with you" that Paul prayed for at the end was an earnest desire hoping that this very gospel of the water and the Spirit would unchangingly dwell in the hearts of the brethren.

**7. To summarize and speak:**

The word, *"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity"* is an earnest blessing where Paul concludes the entirety of Ephesians and prays for the grace of salvation to unchangingly dwell in the hearts of the brethren. Here, grace is precisely our salvation, and its content is the gospel of the water and the Spirit accomplished once and for all by Jesus through the baptism in the Jordan River, the blood of the cross, and the resurrection.

This grace is a pure gift to which human effort cannot be added in the slightest, and it comes upon those who confess their sinfulness and lay down their own righteousness. Those who have received that grace come to love the Lord unchangingly,

and enjoy the boldness of a sinless person and a joy that the world cannot know. Ephesians thus concludes its end with a blessing praying for the grace of salvation. Hallelujah! I give thanks to the Lord who has given us this precious word of Ephesians. A servant in the Lord. ✉

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### ◇ The Next Series: "The Apostles' Creed"

Following this book, **Paul C. Jong's sermon series** revisiting the Apostles' Creed from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be published soon.

> ***The Apostles' Creed, Read Anew through the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit***

We sincerely hope that through the books that Pastor Paul C. Jong will continue to publish, your faith will be strengthened and that they will become spiritual nourishment for you.

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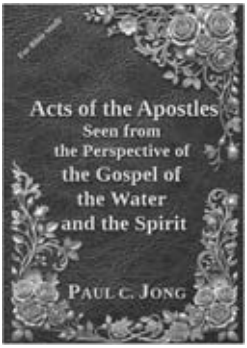
## *Paul C. Jong's Biblical Exposition & Sermons*

### Acts of the Apostles Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit



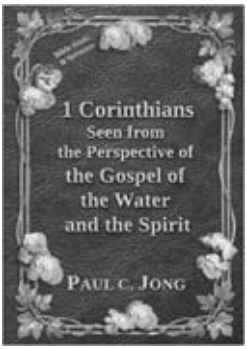

*"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).*

The Acts of the Apostles is commonly read as a record of the growth and miracles of the early church. However, the core that the Bible intends to say through the Acts of the Apostles does not lie only in testifying to the work of the Holy Spirit. How the already completed gospel of the water and the Spirit was testified to the whole world, that is the central message of the Acts of the Apostles.

This book explains the Acts of the Apostles from Chapter 1 to Chapter 28 from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is a record following how the gospel of Jesus Christ—who had the sins of the world transferred to Him by receiving baptism from John, received the punishment of those sins on the Cross, and then resurrected from the dead—was testified.

By reading this book, we come to confirm how the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord is propagated to the end of the earth. Furthermore, we will clearly receive testimony on how this gospel saves sinners from the sins of the world through the two structures of the baptism and the Cross.

### 1 Corinthians Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit




*"For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified"(1 Corinthians 2:2).*

1 Corinthians is commonly read as a practical epistle dealing with church problems. However, the core that the Bible intends to speak through 1 Corinthians does not lie in the order of the church or the arrangement of spiritual gifts. Upon what gospel the church in the midst of division and confusion must stand again, that is the central message of 1 Corinthians.

This book explains 1 Corinthians from chapter 1 to chapter 16 from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is a record that follows how Jesus Christ—who had the sins of the world transferred to Him by receiving baptism from John, received the punishment of those sins on the Cross, and then resurrected from death—and that gospel answer all the problems of the church.

By reading this book, we come to confirm the fact that only the gospel of the water and the Spirit makes the church become one and establishes the saints truly holy. Furthermore, how this gospel completely saves sinners from the sins of the world will be clearly testified through the two structures of baptism and the Cross.

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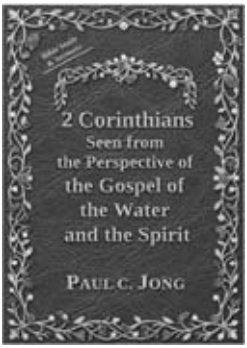
## 2 Corinthians Seen from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit




*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

2 Corinthians is commonly read as a personal letter containing the Apostle Paul's hardships and defense. However, the core of what the Bible intends to say through 2 Corinthians does not lie in the apostle's personal explanation or the restoration of his relationship with the church. How God's power is fully revealed in the midst of weakness—that is the central message of 2 Corinthians.

This book explains 2 Corinthians from Chapter 1 to 13 from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is a record that traces how Jesus Christ—who had the sins of the world transferred to Him by receiving baptism from John, received the punishment for those sins on the cross, and then resurrected from death—and His gospel become true comfort and power in the midst of tribulation and weakness.

By reading this book, we come to confirm the fact that only the gospel of the water and the Spirit sustains the apostle's ministry and establishes believers as new creations. Furthermore, we will clearly receive testimony, through the two structures of baptism and the cross, of how this gospel calls sinners as workers of the new covenant and ministers of reconciliation.

## Galatians seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

*"Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage." (Galatians 5:1)*

Galatians is often read as a textbook of the Reformation that cried out "faith alone" against legalism. However, the core that the Bible intends to speak through Galatians does not lie in the religious debates or theological slogans of an era. How the righteousness that can never be obtained by human deeds settles upon a soul at once—that is the central message of Galatians.

This book explains Galatians chapters 1 through 6 from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is a record that follows how Jesus Christ—who had the sins of the world transferred to Him by receiving baptism from John, received the punishment for those sins on the cross, and then resurrected from death—and His gospel become true freedom and eternal righteousness to souls shaking under the yoke of the law.

By reading this book, we come to confirm the fact that only the gospel of the water and the Spirit sustains the ministry of the apostles and establishes the saints as eternal children. Furthermore, through the two structures of baptism and the cross, it will be clearly testified how this gospel moves sinners from being slaves of the law to heirs of the promise, and from the yoke of slavery to free people working through love.

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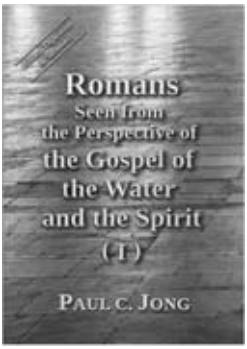
## Romans seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (I)




When Looking at Romans from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit,

A person who embraces the gospel of the water and the Spirit in their heart comes to read Romans completely differently. The moment one opens this letter holding onto the gospel that Jesus had the sins of the world transferred to Him by receiving baptism from John, completely received the judgment of those sins on the cross, and resurrected, it finally begins to be seen why Paul introduced himself as a "debtor to the gospel" and so boldly declared, "I am not ashamed of the gospel."

The Apostle Paul, after revealing the sins of the Gentiles and the hypocrisy of religious people in turn, proclaims the righteousness of God manifested apart from the law. That righteousness is not a righteousness built up by human moral effort, but the righteousness completed by the baptism Jesus received from John, the blood of the cross, and the resurrection. The righteousness Abraham received when he was uncircumcised is the evidence of it, and the "blessing of not imputing sin" that David sang of is the result of it.

A person who believes this gospel knows that he is one who has already been justified. Only upon that conviction does peace with God reside, and the path opens where even tribulation leads to perseverance, character, and hope. This mystery—that a life which was placed under the reign of death over sin through one man, Adam, has received the removal of sins through one person, Jesus Christ, and has been transferred under the reign of righteousness—takes its place within us.

Salvation has already been completed at once. Now, what remains is the matter of receiving that gospel with the heart and living as a righteous person.

## Romans seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit (II)

When Looking at Romans from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit,

Even while saying they have received the eradication of sins, there are many people who still look at their own sins and condemn themselves. However, if you open this text holding onto the gospel that Jesus received the transfer of the sins of the world by receiving baptism from John, received the judgment for those sins on the cross, and then resurrected, you will finally begin to see why the Apostle Paul asserted, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."

The Apostle Paul reveals that our old man, who was baptized into Christ, died together and was made alive together with Him, and honestly exposes the fact that the law cannot make us holy. Upon that, he proclaims the confirmed salvation of the one whose condemnation has disappeared, and through his sorrow toward Israel, he testifies that salvation comes not by human zeal but only by God's mercy.

A person who believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit knows that they themselves are already dead to sin and alive to God. Even if the flesh is still weak, that weakness cannot turn them back into a slave of sin again. The person who lays down the zeal to establish their own righteousness and accepts with their heart the righteousness that God has already accomplished will not be put to shame and will enjoy the richness of the Lord's grace.

Salvation has already been completed once and for all. What remains now is to accept the gospel of the water and the Spirit with the heart, and to live preaching that gospel in newness of life.

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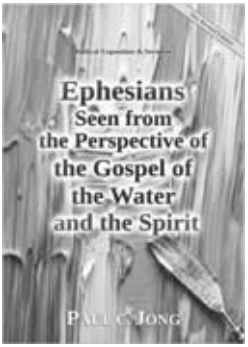
## Ephesians seen from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit [New Revised Edition]




Ephesians is a letter that sings of "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" which God has bestowed upon us in Christ. Into this single letter the Apostle Paul poured the highest and deepest truths of the gospel—from the love of God, who chose us before the foundation of the world, to His raising us by grace when we were dead in our trespasses and sins, and finally to His eternal plan of uniting all things into one in Christ. This book expounds that Epistle to the Ephesians from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit—the gospel through which Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the whole world by being baptized by John, paid the full penalty for those sins on the Cross, and, by rising again, gave us eternal life.

Above all, Ephesians is "the letter of the Church." God has built His Church upon the faith of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Church of God is none other than the gathering of those who have been saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Therefore, if faith in this gospel dwells in your heart, you can live a life of true faith. And such a life of faith is possible only within the Church of God. It is my earnest hope that, through this book, all of you will hold fast to the gospel of the water and the Spirit in your hearts and live a life of true faith worthy of that grace within the Church of God. All thanks be to God.

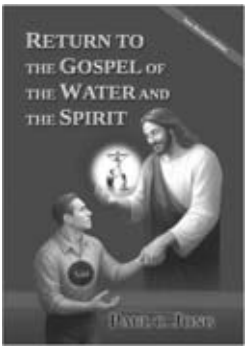
Paul C. Jong's writings, which continue to be published, comprise an ongoing series of more than 75 volumes, translated into more than 110 languages and read in over 160 countries around the world. The e-books and audiobooks are available free of charge at www.bjnewlife.org, and the paperback editions can be purchased on Amazon.

## *Paul C. Jong's Sermons*

**HAVE YOU TRULY BEEN BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT? [New Revised Edition]**

Among many Christian books written about being born again, this is the first book of our time to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit in strict accordance with the Scriptures. Man can't enter the Kingdom of Heaven without being born again of water and the Spirit. To be born again means that a sinner is saved from all his lifelong sins by believing in the baptism of Jesus and His blood of the Cross. Let's believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and enter the Kingdom of Heaven as the righteous who have no sin.

**RETURN TO THE GOSPEL OF THE WATER AND THE SPIRIT [New Revised Edition]**




Let's return to the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Theology and doctrines themselves can't save us. However, many Christians still follow them, and consequently have not been born again yet. This book clearly tells us what mistakes theology and doctrines have made and how we can believe in Jesus in the most accurate and certain way.

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**HOW CAN WE RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT AS A GIFT? [New Revised Edition]**

In Christianity, the most significantly discussed issue is salvation from sins and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. However, few people have the exact knowledge of these two topics. Nevertheless, in reality people say that they believe in Jesus Christ while they are ignorant of true redemption and the Holy Spirit.

Do you know the true gospel that makes you receive the Holy Spirit? If you want to ask God for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, then you must first know the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have faith in it. This book will certainly lead all Christians worldwide to receive the Holy Spirit through the washing away of all their sins.

**Our LORD Who Becomes the Righteousness of God (I) & (II) — The Righteousness of God that is Revealed in Romans**

The teachings in these books will satisfy the thirst in your heart. Today's Christians continue to live while not knowing the true solution to the personal sins that they are committing daily. Do you know what God's righteousness is? The author hopes that you will ask yourself this question and believe in God's righteousness, which is dealt with in detail in these books.

The Doctrines of Predestination, Justification, and Incremental Sanctification are the major Christian doctrines, which brought only confusion and emptiness into the souls of believers. But, dear Christians, now is the time when you must continue in the Truth which you have learned and been assured of.

These books will provide your soul with a great understanding and lead it to peace. The author wants you to possess the blessing of knowing God's righteousness.

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**— Commentaries and Sermons on the Book of Revelation —**

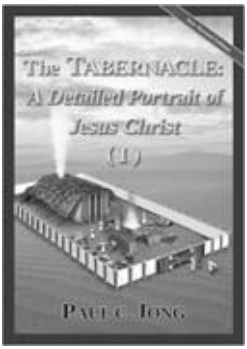
## IS THE AGE OF THE ANTICHRIST, MARTYRDOM, RAPTURE AND THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM COMING? (I)

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, traffic to "www.raptureready.com," an Internet site providing information on the end times, is reported to have increased to over 8 million hits, and according to a joint survey by CNN and TIME, over 59% of the Americans now believe in apocalyptic eschatology.

Responding to such demands of the time, the author provides a clear exposition of the key themes of the Book of Revelation, including the coming Antichrist, the martyrdom of the saints and their rapture, the Millennial Kingdom, and the New Heaven and Earth-all in the context of the whole Scripture and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This book provides verse-by-verse commentaries on the Book of Revelation supplemented by the author's inspired sermons. Anyone who reads this book will come to grasp all the plans that God has in store for this world.

## The TABERNACLE : A Detailed Portrait of Jesus Christ (I) [New Revised Edition]




How can we find out the truth hidden in the Tabernacle? Only by knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the real substance of the Tabernacle, can we correctly understand and know the answer to this question.

In fact, the blue, purple, and scarlet thread and the fine woven linen manifested in the gate of the Tabernacle's court show us the works of Jesus Christ in the New Testament's time that have saved the mankind. In this way, the Old Testament's Word of the Tabernacle and the Word of the New Testament are closely and definitely related to each other, like fine woven linen. But, unfortunately, this truth has been hidden for a long time to every truth seeker in Christianity.

Coming to this earth, Jesus Christ was baptized by John and shed His blood on the Cross. Without understanding and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, none of us can ever find out the truth revealed in the Tabernacle. We must now learn this truth of the Tabernacle and believe in it. We all need to realize and believe in the truth manifested in the blue, purple, and scarlet thread and the fine woven linen of the gate of the Tabernacle's court.

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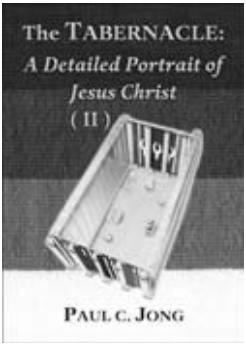
## The TABERNACLE: A Detailed Portrait of Jesus Christ (II)




As God had commanded Moses to build the Tabernacle in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, God wants us to also build a Sanctuary in each of our hearts so that He may dwell in us. The material of faith with which we can build this Sanctuary in our hearts is the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. With this gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must wash away all our sins and be cleansed. By telling us to build Him a Sanctuary, God is telling us to empty our hearts and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must all cleanse our hearts by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When we cleanse away all the sins of our hearts by believing in this gospel Truth, God then comes to dwell in them. It is by believing in this true gospel that you can build the holy Temples in your hearts. It is highly likely that until now, at least some of you have probably been offering your prayers of repentance to cleanse your hearts, trying to build the Temples by yourselves. But now is the time for you to abandon this false faith and be transformed by the renewing of your minds by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

## IF YOU HAVE CONFUSION AND EMPTINESS IN YOUR HEART, SEEK THE LIGHT OF THE TRUTH (I) & (II)

This book explains how much the Nicene Creed, produced at the Council of Nicaea in Late Antiquity, has had a bad influence on Christians today.

In this age, in order to meet the truth of being born again, you must study a little more. And you need to know more deeply about the creed of faith that you have believed so far.

Now you must find in this book the meaning of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist that was omitted from the Nicene Creed. So, it should be an opportunity to receive true salvation and peace in your heart.

Now you will discover the true value of the gospel of the water and the Spirit in the baptism that Jesus received. You will come to know more deeply and clearly how the Word of the baptism Jesus received from John the Baptist has affected your soul and you will therefore give glory to God by faith.

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## Return from the Nicene Creed TO THE GOSPEL OF THE WATER AND THE SPIRIT! (I)

-Why must we return from the Nicene Creed to the gospel of the water and the Spirit? –

The gospel that the early church preached was precisely the gospel of the water and the Spirit. That gospel was the gospel that Jesus actually shouldered and washed away the sin of the world through the baptism He received from John.

The baptism Jesus received from John was to fulfill the law of the sacrificial system found in Leviticus. That is, just as sin was transferred to the sacrificial offering through the laying on of hands, the substance of that sacrificial law was fulfilled through Jesus's baptism.

However, in the process of the Nicene Creed's formation, the ministry of Jesus having the sin of the world transferred to Him by being baptized by John was deleted from the creed's contents. As a result, this truth has been passed down in a hidden state within Christianity for about 1,700 years, reaching the present day.

Today, many people are struggling to receive the removal of their sins without knowing when their sins were transferred to Jesus. Because of this, even while saying they believe in the gospel of the cross, they fail to reach true assurance of salvation and live amidst repetitive repentance and the pangs of conscience.

The reason we must return to the gospel of the water and the Spirit is clear. This is because only this gospel allows us to meet the Jesus who became the sacrificial offering as the sin of the world was transferred to His body, and thereby have assurance of salvation.

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Sincerely,
The New Life Mission

# Pastor PAUL C. JONG

**Currently, Pastor Paul C. Jong leads 'The New Life Mission', where he and his fellow workers are spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit.**

**Although he believed in the crucified Jesus, he suffered for a long time because his problem of sin remained unresolved. In the midst of this agony, he came to believe that Jesus took upon Himself the sins of the world through His baptism by John the Baptist, and subsequently bore the judgment in our place on the cross.**

**For the past 40 years since then, he has been preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to those who only believe in the cross, documenting his actual sermons in writing. The compilation of these manuscripts has given rise to today's 'Biblical Exposition Series from the Perspective of the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit.'**

**His works, comprising an ongoing 75-volume series, have been translated into more than 110 languages and are read in over 160 countries. E-books and audiobooks are available for free at www.bjnewlife.org, while physical books can be purchased on Amazon.**

You can download Rev. Paul C. Jong's Christian Books to Computer, Tablet or Smartphone.

# When looking at Ephesians from the perspective of the gospel of the water and the Spirit,

Are you living now with the assurance of salvation?

Many people, while saying they believe in Jesus, cannot lay down the guilt in a corner of their hearts, and constantly doubt whether they are indeed a person who can stand before God. The root of that anxiety mostly originates from one misunderstanding. It is thinking deep in the heart that one must still add something through one's own deeds and efforts, even while knowing in the head the fact that salvation is God's perfect gift.

This letter that Apostle Paul sent to the Ephesian church directly tears down that misunderstanding. God already chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and Jesus bore all the sins of the world at once by receiving baptism from John, paid the full price for those sins on the Cross, leaving none unpaid, and completely justified us by resurrecting. To the one who believes in this gospel of the water and the Spirit, there is no longer any condemnation. Salvation is God's work from beginning to end, and we are those who have received that completed gift by faith.

Only when standing upon this assurance does life change. Instead of shrinking back crushed by a sense of guilt, one stands up confidently with the status of God's child. One embraces members different from oneself and goes on to achieve oneness within the church. One serves at home and the workplace as to the Lord, and does not waver by holding onto God's word even before the devil's false condemnation.

This book expounds the entire book of Ephesians, and connects it in one flow from the root of the gospel to the fruit of life. I recommend this book to those who want to regain the assurance of salvation, those who want to rebuild the foundation of faith, and everyone who wants to know how the gospel changes life.

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