

(Joshua Leadership Missions College Arusha Tanzania April 2004 – EKB)

Introduction

Jesus is at work building His Church, *Mat 16:18*, and He invites us to be a part of what He is doing.

The initiative of building the church is with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His work, His purpose, His plan. He calls us individually and corporately to be responsible for a small part of what He is doing. Christ is the Head of the Church, *Col 1:18*.

In our desire to serve the Lord, we must be careful not to try and establish our own desires for ministry. We are not able to do a **work of ministry for the Lord, we are to work with the Lord**. He must have the initiative. Cry out to God **to keep you from schemes and plans that He has not started, and from continuing in things He has finished with**, *Jn 5:17,19,20, 14:10*.

The church is the Body of Christ, *Eph 1:22,23, 5:23, Rom 12:5, 1Cor 1:2, 11:18,22, 12:12-28, 14:4,5,12, Col 1:18*. Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church. Christ lives in, and out through His Body to reveal Himself and His salvation to the lost of this world, and to establish His Kingdom.

The Greek word for church, **ekklesia**, from ek, out of, and klesis, a calling, (kaleo – to call), was used among the Greeks in a city state, as a body of free citizens, called out together to discuss the affairs of State and make decisions to govern its life, *Ac 19:39*.

The church is an assembly of believers who are called out of the “world”, *2Cor 6:11-18, 7:1*, and into life in Christ, *Col 3:1-3, 2Cor 5:17, Gal 3:27, 1Cor 1:30, 2Cor 5:21*, to serve Him and fulfil His will. The church is Christ’s governing body on the earth.

The Church Universal, of all the redeemed of this era, is referred to in *Mat 16:18*.

The Local Church, of a company of believers, is referred to in *Mat 18:17, Ac 20:28, Gal 1:13, 1Thes 1:1, 1Tim 3:5*.

In the New Testament there is **one local church to each town or city**, *1Cor 1:2, 2Cor 1:1, 1Thes 1:1, 2Thes 1:1, Col 4:16, Rom 16:1,5, Ac 11:22, Ac 13:1, Ac 18:22, Ac 20:17, Rev 2:1*. This has very major implications as to how leaders of the various “churches”, in a town or city, are to relate closely together in mutual respect, servanthood, prayer, outreach to the lost and service to the secular authorities.

From the New Testament it is clear that **God only sees one church in each locality**, and that each group of believers, (or church as we see it), is a part of that “one church”. Encourage leaders in a town or city to build relationships in Christ, so that the church of the town or city, which is made up of many different assemblies, may move as one in power in the Holy Spirit. But when **a whole province or district is being referred to, “churches” is used**, *1Thes 2:14, Ac 16:4,5, Ac 15:41, Gal 1:2, 1Cor 16:19, 2Cor 8:1*.

Ephesians can be divided into various sections:

Chapters 1-3 explain **the believer’s position in Christ**.

Chapters 4:1 – 6:9 describe the **practical daily outworking of our life in Christ**.

Chapter 6:10-24 reveals **the warfare that we are involved in and the importance of standing firm in Christ**.

Ephesians chapter 1

Chapters 1-3 explain our position in the Risen, Ascended, and Glorified Christ. To be able to work with Christ in building His Church, we have **to know and understand that we are one with Him in His present heavenly position of victory**, *1Jn 4:17*, triumph, authority and rule. We are “in Christ”, *1:3,4*, and have been raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, *2:6*. We have to know our position.

Many times in *chapter 1*, we are said to be “in Christ”. How many can you find? *Gal 3:27, Ac 2:38*.

V1,2 Jesus Christ called, chose, and sent Paul out as an apostle to build His Church, *Ac 26:16-18*. This was God’s initiative not Paul’s. We do not choose a ministry and decide we are going to do a work for God. God chooses, calls, equips and sends, as we seek hard after Him with all our heart, *Ps 63:1,8, Jer 29:11-13, Is 26:9*.

As believers, we are **sanctified**, (“saints”), or set apart to God, and faithfully serving Christ.

V3-8 In Christ we are **blessed with all the riches** of heavenly provision. We have been **chosen in Christ before the world was**, *Rev 13:8*, to be holy and without blame, before Him in love, *Rom 8:29, 1Pet 1:2, 2Thes 2:13*. He has **predestined us unto the adoption** of His children, *Rom 8:29, 1Jn 3:2, Ps 17:15*, to bring praise to His wonderful grace.

God has made us **“accepted in the Beloved”**, *v6*. The Greek is **charitoo** meaning **“highly favoured”**. *Lk 1:28* uses the same word. In Christ we are redeemed and forgiven. **God has made us His Own** by the purchase price of His Own Blood, *Col 1:13,14*. **No-one else has any claim over us**. We are twice His. He made us and redeemed us.

V9-14 The **“mystery” of God’s purpose**, which has been hidden by God for ages, but now revealed, is that God will gather together into one all things that are in Christ, *Eph 3:3-11, Col 1:26,27*.

In Christ, we have **obtained an inheritance**, eternal, unchanging, that will not fade away, reserved in heaven for each one who believes, *1Pet 1:4*. **An inheritance is a possession or blessing**, especially one bestowed as a gift. Our inheritance in Christ is a gift from God, through His grace, as we trust in the Blood of Jesus Christ.

The guarantee of our inheritance in Christ is the gift of the Holy Spirit, *v13,14*.

The “seal” of the guarantee is the indwelling Holy Spirit, *v13*, By giving us His Holy Spirit, **God has declared that we are His**. He owns us. Our salvation is guaranteed by the indwelling of His Spirit.

The “earnest”, down payment or pledge, *v14*, that guarantees the fulfilment of our salvation, is His Spirit within us. Our salvation will be complete when we have been delivered from the curse of death and raised up in His likeness, *1Thes 4:13-18, 1Jn 3:1-3*.

We are saved to bring glory to God, *v14*, and to tell the lost of His wonderful salvation and Kingdom, *Ac1:8, 20:24, 26:18, Lk 19:10, 1Tim 1:15*.

V15-23 God's will, and Paul's prayer for all believers, **is now expressed. It is the will of God the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give to you** the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, **v17. Everything starts here with the revelation of God, Ezk 1:1, Is 6:1, Rev 4:1-3.** You have to know three things to effectively build the church.

The Spirit of wisdom illuminates the eyes of our understanding or heart, v18 to reveal to us:

1. **The hope of His calling, 1Cor 2:9,10.** As we seek hard after God, *Ps 63:8*, He comes to us and reveals His plans and purposes for our lives, *Jer 29:11-13*. What are the calling, vision, gifts and ministry, from God for your life?
2. **The riches of the glory of His inheritance in you, 2Pet 1:3,4, 2Cor 9:8, Ps 84:11, Phil 4:19, Eph 1:3.** We have to know and live in fulness of service to God, and the abundant supply of every need, *Ruth 2:12, Mat 6:33, Mal 3:10, Lk 6:38, Ps 112:3, 3Jn 2*. If you have a need, as you serve the Lord, expect Him to meet that need, *Ps 36:8,9, Ps 62:5*.
3. **The exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe,** according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, *v19,20*. This power is in you. It is His "dunamis". God will give you faith for the release and working of His almighty power as you pray and seek His face in worship, *Ps 63:1,2, Ps 62:11, Ac 1:8, 2Tim 1:7, Gal 3:5, Rom 15:18,19, 1Cor 4:20, 1Cor 2:4, 1Thes 1:5, 2Cor 4:7, Jn 10:37,38, 14:12*.

God has raised Christ up FAR ABOVE ALL principality and power, and might, and dominion, and **EVERY NAME** that is named, not only **in this AGE, but also in the AGES to come, v20,21. Total authority is given to the Lord Jesus Christ, Mat 28:18.** Jesus Christ is Lord, *Lk 6:46*, and in a little while everyone will know it, *Phil 2:9-11, Tit 2:13, 2Tim 1:10, Jude 14,15, Rev 1:12-18*.

All things have been put under the feet of Jesus, v22, and He has been made head over all, *1Cor 15:25-27. The Lord Jesus Christ has been given as Head over all things to the church, v22. God has given Him to us as Head over all things, and has made Him Head of the church which is His Body, *v23*.*

He is the Head and we are the Body. The Head directs every movement of the Body. The Body cannot move without directions from the Head. (If the brain is "dead" the body cannot move.) The Head is dependent upon the Body to carry out His work. (If the body is paralysed the wishes of the head cannot be performed.) The Head needs the Body, and the Body needs the Head. Christ can only be known in this earth through the members of His Body. **You are absolutely important to Christ.** Every joy and pain in the Body is felt in the Head.

The Church or the Body of Christ **carries the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ, v23, Col 2:10.** The totality of Christ is in the Body, *1Jn 4:17, Jn 14:12*.

Ephesians Chapter 2

V1-10 explain where we have come from, and how God brought us into Christ and His salvation. We were dead in trespasses and sins, but God has made us alive, *v1*, in Christ.

In the past we lived in spiritual death, serving the devil and walking in the ways of the world, *v2*. We had no relationship to God, we were going in the wrong direction and living in disobedience, *2Cor 4:4*.

Our lives were centred on pleasing ourselves, our own desires and lusts, *v3, Gal 5:19-21, Rom 3:10-19*. We walked according to the ideas of our own souls, in disregard for God and His Word. We lived in disobedience to God and were the objects of His wrath, *v3, Ac 17:30, Ps 147:15, Mat 3:2, Mk 1:15*.

"But God" who is rich in mercy, for His great love, v4, Jn 3:16. God loves sinners. O praise God forever! O give thanks to the Lord for He is good: for His mercy endures forever, *Ps 107:1, 2Cor 1:3, Mic 7:18, 1Pet 1:3, Rom 5:10*. Even when we were dead in sins God made us alive together with Christ, *v5*.

He has raised up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ, v6. This is our spiritual resurrection and ascension. In our position in Christ we have victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. We are identified with Christ in His victory. **We are not fighting to win the victory, 2Cor 2:14, 1Cor 15:57, Col 2:15, Heb 2:14, 1Jn 3:8. Christ has already done that and God has placed us in Christ.**

There are ages to come after this age, *v7*, and in these, **the believer will be in the presence of the Lord.** God's grace and kindness to us will be shining forth.

We are saved by grace, through faith, v8. Even our faith is not ours, it is given to us by God. Our salvation is provided by God as a free gift to be received by faith.

We can't earn or merit God's gift of salvation, v9. All we can do is accept it as He offers it to us.

We are God's workmanship, v10, in Christ Jesus. His purpose for us is to fulfil and walk in the good works he has planned for us. **Good works cannot save us, but should flow out of our salvation and relationship with God and Christ.** Grace is like the root and good works are the fruit. If there are no good works to see, then we question if there is any true root, *Tit 3:1,8, 2:7*.

V11-22 explain how **God has brought Gentile and Jew together in Christ,** to make "**one new man**", "**one Body**", to be God's house and dwelling place. This is the Israel of God, *Gal 6:16*.

In the past the Ephesian **Gentiles were widely separated from the nation of Israel,** from the covenants of promise and from God. They had no hope of eternal life and salvation, *v11,12*, and were without Christ.

But now you, who were far from God, are brought into God's near presence by the Blood of Christ, v13. Now you can call God your Father. His Blood, by faith in His Blood, has taken away the separation. You are now children of God. Only the Blood of Jesus can cleanse the heart of man from sin and bring him into a righteous relationship with God.

Christ has removed the wall of separation between God and man, **and also between Jew and Gentile, v14-22. HE IS OUR PEACE.** The middle wall of partition, *v14*, which kept Jews and Gentiles apart, was the Law of Moses and the commandments, *v15*. Jesus Christ has removed that wall, for it is only through Him, and His Blood, that both Jew and Gentile can come to God, *v16,18*. All who are **IN CHRIST** are now **ONE NEW MAN, v15, THE BODY OF CHRIST.** This is **THE ISRAEL OF GOD, Gal 6:16, Eph 2:15, Mat 21:43.**

Now, through Jesus Christ, both Jew and Gentile are in the **household of God**, which is built upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone, *v20, 1Cor 15:3,4*.

Every believer is a living stone fitted into the Holy Temple of the Lord, *v21*. Every single believer is essential, each one with their calling, giftings and ministry. Each stone is a different shape and fits closely against others who support it. The Church, or Household of God, grows rapidly, *v21, Ac 2:41, 4:4, 5:14*, as each member fulfils their ministry, supports the others around them and maintains oneness and unity, *Ac 2:1,46, 4:32*. **This is the habitation of God through the Spirit**, *v22, Ps 132:13-16*.

Ephesians Chapter 3

VI-6 In the world, “a mystery” is something no one understands.

In the Word of God, “a mystery” means something that has been hidden away in the counsels of God, but which is now revealed, *Eph 3:3-5, Col 1:26, Mk 4:11,22(AMPV)*. In this case the “mystery” God revealed to Paul, *v3,4,5,6*, is the “mystery” of the church. **Now the church, or the Israel of God, is comprised of both Jews and Gentiles in Christ**, by His Blood, through faith. Both Jew and Gentile are now partakers of the Promise of the Holy Spirit, in Christ by the Gospel, *v6, Ac 2:38,39, Gal 3:14*. The Israel of the Old Testament consisted only of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, “the Jews”.

It took sometime for this truth to be accepted, *Ac 15:1-29, Ac 10:45, Ac 11:1-18*. For some years there was much argument.

V7-9 God chose, called, appointed, anointed, equipped and sent Paul out into the ministry of the Gospel with His mighty power. *v7* Not that Paul was worthy, *v8*. **His message was the unsearchable riches of Christ**, *v8*. The riches of Christ grow in value day by day. There are no disappointments. Thieves cannot steal them. They do not rust away, *Mat 6:20*. Death cannot take them from us. They are eternal. Paul was once Saul the Christ hater, *Ac9*. What a mighty Saviour we have. The chief of sinners, *1Tim 1:15*, saved to serve. Paul’s message was to cause all to see the truth of this “mystery” of full salvation through Christ for Jew and Gentile, *v9, Ac 20:24, Ac 26:16-23*.

V10-13 God’s manifold wisdom and wonderful plan of salvation for all, hidden for ages, but now revealed, is being **made known by the church, to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies**, *v10*, as the church grows and gathers in God’s harvest of souls. The church is making known the coming triumph of Christ’s Kingdom and the dark powers tremble, *v10, Rev 11:15*.

The eternal purpose of God, *v11*, through Christ Jesus our Lord, is that God’s eternal purpose for man and creation will be fulfilled, by the church *Gen 1:26-28, Num 14:21, Hab 2:14, Dan 2:35, Is 2:2, Ps 86:9, Ps 66:4, Rev 11:15, Is 11:9, Lk 11:2*.

The Church is the vehicle to bring in the Kingdom of God. The Church is not an afterthought. It is in God’s eternal plan. God has a full perfect plan for the universe and for you personally, *Rom 8:28*. God’s plan for you is older than the universe, *2Tim 1:9*.

Abraham and his descendants were chosen to show God’s glory and laws to the world. They were to prepare mankind for the coming Messiah.

The Church is chosen to show Christ and His provision of redemption to the world, *Ac 1:8, Ac 20:24, Mat 28:18-20, Lk 19:10*. Nothing, but nothing, can prevent God’s eternal purpose from being fulfilled.

In Christ Jesus our Lord, we have boldness and access with confidence, by the faith He gives to us, *v12, Heb 10:19*, (at Sinai they were afraid, *Ex 19:16, 20:19, Heb 12:19*). Our access to God is free, continuous, individual and corporate, unrestricted, by the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our High Priest and His Blood. So, writing from prison and chains, *13, 6:20*, Paul encourages the believers not to be concerned at his sufferings for them, which is for their glory, *Ac 5:41*.

V14-19 In this passage Paul reaches out in prayer for the believers. **Paul comes in humility to God the Father, v14, from whom the whole family**, (patria or fatherhood), **in heaven and earth is named**, *v15*. The Church, the Body of Christ is God’s family or Fatherhood. Family is God’s idea forever. God sets the solitary in families, *Ps 68:6*. Father, Mother, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, loving and serving one another, *Eph 4:32*. **Now in God’s family, He purposes for you**, according to the riches of His glory, to be **strengthened with might by His Spirit, in the inner man**, *v16, Zech 4:6, Ac 1:8, Hag 2:5, Eph 5:18,19, Jn 14:26*. This is our heart, *Pro 4:23, Pro 23:7, Mat 12:34,35*.

That Christ may dwell in your heart by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in LOVE, may be able to comprehend, (know and understand), with all the saints, what is the breadth, length and depth and height, and **to know the love of God that passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fulness of God**, *v17,18,19*.

Make sure you have Christ living in your heart all the time, by prayer, reading the Word, being in the fellowship of the saints to worship God, by witness and abundant rejoicing in Him. Avoid the TV, unclean books, wrong music, ungodly friends. Seek hard after God, *Ps 63:8*. **Be filled with all the fulness of Christ and God and His Spirit. Be filled with God**. Avoid evil. As we are filled with God we understand His love more and more, *Jn 3:16*. We need this in daily living and when death comes.

All we have, and are, and will be, of the goodness of God, is because of HIS LOVE.

V20,21 This is an explosion of praise, “a doxology”, because of God’s GREAT LOVE.

Now, unto Him, **WHO IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDINGLY, ABUNDANTLY, ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO HIS POWER THAT WORKS IN US, YES, UNTO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH, BY JESUS CHRIST, THROUGHOUT ALL AGES, WORLD WITHOUT END, AMEN!**

Get full of God. This is a holy life, a fruitful life, a peace filled life, a satisfied life. Be an overcomer. Live totally for God. Serve Him.

Second Section of Ephesians Chapters 4:1 – 6:9

In this section the focus is upon **the practical, day to day outworking of our glorious inheritance in Christ**.

Ephesians Chapter 4

VI-6 These verses, and those that follow, show us **how to live and serve Christ, and His Church, in His fulness**. Our calling is to **walk worthy of the Lord**, *VI, Col 1:10, 2Thes 1:11*, so that we **please Him in all we do. This walk is one of humility** in serving God, and others out of a secure identity, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, *v2, Gal 5:13, Mat 20:28, Phil 2:5-8, Jn 13:3-15*. Together with humility is **meekness, longsuffering and bearing up with one another in love** mercy, forgiveness and kindness, *v2, Eph 4:32*. (Pastor Notes No 30)

Be quick to keep the unity of the Spirit in the peace of God, v3, *Ps 133*. **Forgive, release** from judgment, hand the problem(s) over to God, and **pray** for those who are causing you hurt, *Mk 11:25,26, Mat 7:1,2, Rom 2:1, 1Pet 5:7, Ps 55:22, Lk 6:27,28,35-37*. Refuse bitterness and resentment. The enemies of unity are selfishness, pride and self righteousness.

We have a heavenly calling. **Our earthly conduct must match it. The Holy Spirit is like a dove.** He can easily be frightened away. He will stay with us in love, peace, joy, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self control, *Gal 5:22,23*. God has made us **ONE. We are to maintain ONENESS,**

V4-6 One Body One Lord One God and Father of all
 One Spirit One Faith
 One Hope One Baptism

V7-16 These verses explain God's gifts to equip each believer, and the whole Body, unto oneness and fulness of Christ.

Every believer has received grace, as Christ has distributed it to them, v7. Not every member of the Church has the same gift. Christ gives different gifts to different people. **It is Christ who decides what gifts we receive**, so that together we make up the full Body of Christ, the Church. What we have is given to us. **We cannot boast of what we have.** We have not earned or deserved it. It has been given to us. Money can't buy it. **It was paid for by the Blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary.**

V8 is a quote of *Ps 68:18*, and refers to **Christ's victorious resurrection and ascension over all His enemies**, death, hell, satan, this world and all sin, *Rev 1:18, 2Cor 2:14, 1Cor 15:57*. Jesus took our enemies captive. **After His ascension He received from the Father, and poured out the Holy Spirit on His disciples and gave precious gifts to each one**, *Ac 2:33*.

Do not ever say, or let another believer say, "The Church does not need me." **Every believer is a living member of the Body of Christ with gifts given to them by Jesus Christ, 1Cor 12. Every member is essential to the whole Body.** Some gifts are public and easily seen but others are not so visible. God chooses. Some of the most necessary parts of our own body are not seen. Use your gifts to honour Christ, for the good of the whole Body. As you use what you have been given, Christ will give you more. Before Jesus ascended to the Throne of God, He first descended into the lower parts of the earth, *v9,10, Ac 2:27,31, Rev 1:18*. (Pastor Notes No 29, chart).

In His ascension, Jesus Christ gave the five ministries of *v11*, **apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher.** These people are gifts of Christ to the church. **Their function is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry and to edify the church**, *v12*. Every believer is essential and is to be equipped and edified. Assist believers to find their calling, vision, gifts and ministries, *v11,12*.

As well as the people given as gifts by Christ to the Church, the Holy Spirit also gives nine gifts to strengthen and bless the Church, *1Cor 12:8-11*. Desire these gifts earnestly, *1Cor 14:1*. God does not give useless or profitless gifts.

As well as the already mentioned gifts and ministries, *1Cor 12:28* mentions helps and administrations. Gifts from God can only be properly exercised in love and by the continuous anointing of the Spirit.

In *Rom 12:5-8*, serving, exhorting, giving, leading and mercy are mentioned, which are additional to all the above mentioned gifts.

As the Church is built up it will come to the **unity of the faith, the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ**, *v13*. As with our physical bodies, every member or believer in the Church, is necessary and important, *Ps 102:13-16*,

As the Church comes to maturity, it is no longer tossed about by various winds or ideas of doctrine and teaching, or evil schemes of men, *v14, Ac 20:30*.

But by speaking the truth in love the whole church grows up in all things into Christ, the Head, *v15*. Each believer has a close relationship with Christ, the Head of the Body. This union with the head unites us to one another. Physically, the brain directs the actions of the body. The members of our body relate in oneness to each other through the directions of the head.

It is from Christ, **working through EVERY MEMBER OF THE BODY**, that **ONENESS** comes, *v16*. This causes growth through every part and the Body is edified in love.

V17-32 These verses follow *4:1-3*, and emphasise the need to live and walk in the Spirit, and not in the flesh of the old nature of sin.

V17-21 **Do not go on living and walking in the old ways** you lived in before you came to Christ, *v17,18-20*. Now you have learned of Christ, heard Him, been taught by Him through the Spirit in you, *v20,21*, **refuse to live in sin any more.** All the truth is in Jesus, *v21*.

Put off the old sinful nature and its evil ways, *v22*. Be renewed by the Spirit in your mind, *v23, Rom 12:2, 1Cor 2:16, Rom 8:29, 2Cor 3:18, Rom 6:1-14*. Christ has set you free.

Put on the new nature of Christ which you have been given. His righteous, holy nature is given to you. you have been crucified with Christ and now Christ lives in you, *v24, Gal 2:20, Gal 3:27, 2Cor 5:17, 2Cor 5:21*.

So get rid of lying and speak truth, *v25*. **Be angry but do not stay angry**, *v26*. Forgive, release from judgment, hand the problems over to God, pray blessing on those who hurt you, *Mk 11:25,26, Mat 7:1,2, Rom 2:1,2, Ps 55:22, 1Pet 5:7, Lk 6:27,28,35-37, Col 1:9,10*.

Do not let the devil get in, *v27*. Keep him out, *Jam 4:7*. **Do not steal**, but work and give to those in need, *v28*.

Do not use dirty words, but say things that bless, *v29*.

Do not hurt your Best Friend, the Holy Spirit, *v30*. He is your seal of salvation and redemption, *v30*.

Put away all bitterness, anger, rage, shouting, evil speaking and hate. **BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER, TENDERHEARTED, FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, EVEN AS GOD FOR CHRIST'S SAKE HAS FORGIVEN YOU**, *v32*.

Ephesians chapter 5

This chapter follows on the same theme.

VI-7 **Be like God and Christ** to whom you now belong, *v1*. **Walk and live in love**, as Christ has demonstrated to us, *v2*.

Humble yourself to God to obey Him, *Lk 9:23*, and humble yourselves to serve others, out of a secure identity by the leading of the Holy Spirit, *Gal 5:13, Mat 20:28, Phil 2:5-8*. (One main way of serving or loving others is by forgiving and praying for them.)

Get rid of all wrong sex, *v3*. Keep sex pure in your marriage relationship, *Job 31:1, 1Thes 4:3,4*. Refuse all uncleanness, *v3, 2Cor 7:1, Is 52:11*. Remove all covetousness, *v3, Col 3:5, 1Tim 6:6-11, Heb 13:5,6*.

Also keep your language pure and clean, v4, *Mat 12:34-37*.

To have an inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and God, we must be getting free from sin, and seeking to live holy lives, v5, *1Jn 3:3-11, Heb 12:14, 2Tim 2:19-26, Heb 10:14, 1Thes 4:3, Rom 6:1-14, 1Cor 6:9,10*.

God's wrath and judgment is upon those who wilfully practise and live in sin and disobedience to God, v6. Do not be a partaker with them, v7.

V8-14 The old life without Christ was darkness, and was in the darkness. **But now, in Christ, we are light in the Lord and live in the light,** v8, *Mat5:16, 1Thes 5:5*.

Walk as children of light, producing the fruit of the Spirit in all goodness, righteousness and truth, and you will find what is acceptable to the Lord. Your life will be pleasing to the Lord, v9,10, *2Cor 5:9, Col 1:10, Heb 11:6, Mat 7:24,25, Jn 6:38*.

Separate yourself from the works of darkness and reprove them, v11, *2Cor 6:14-18*. Refuse even to speak anymore of the wicked works of evil, v12. Do not watch wickedness on TV, *Is 33:15*.

It is the light that challenges, reproves and exposes the works of darkness, v13, *Jn 8:12-59, Jn 3:19-21*.

V15-21 **Walk with your eyes wide open,** and alert as you go ahead, v15, *Gal 5:16*. **Use your time wisely** and do not waste it, v16. Time is precious. Buy up your opportunities. When God speaks to you, respond immediately and positively to Him. Do not put it off. Say, "Yes, Lord!" Believe and obey. Write down what He has said.

Make sure that you know what God wants you to do, v17. Find your calling, gifts, place and ministry. Know your identity, significance, security and self worth in God. (Pastor Notes Nos 25,91,95,127) **Go back over the prophecies you have received** and your spiritual diary to build your faith confession, *Heb 10:23, 3:1, 4:14*.

Avoid excess wine but **be filled with God's Spirit,** v18. **Keep rejoicing in the Word with songs and praises from your heart to the Lord,** v19.

Be filled with thanksgiving for all things unto God the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, v20, *Rom 8:28, Col 3:17*.

When you see "all" in Scripture, it usually means "all" of a particular category of things. In this case, the category is those things of which God is the Author. It can include things we would rather avoid, *Mk 14:36, Heb 12:5-13, Ps 34:1*.

Submission starts for all of us, in submitting to one another in the fear of the Lord, v21, *Gal 5:13, Mat20:28, Lk 22:27, Jn 13:3-17, Gal 6:10, Mat 23:8-12*. We all stand equal before the Lord, despite the different callings, giftings and ministries we have been given. Jesus set us the example of humility and servanthood that we are to follow, *Phil 2:5-8*. Knowing our identity, significance, self worth and security in God, our ministry operates on the basis of humility and servanthood to God and man, *Lk 18:9-14*, by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

V22-33 Following the basic principle of mutual submission to one another in the fear of God, **the Word now describes the ordering of three basic relationships in society,** between 5:22 - 6:9. **These are husband/wife, parent/child, master/servant. In this section. 5:22-33, we consider husband/wife.** Wives are instructed to fit in with the order God has ordained for the family, v22, *1Cor 11:3, Col 3:18, 1Pet 3:1*. The husband is to take responsibility to guide and lead his marriage and family in the ways and will of God.

The husband has been appointed to this position by God, as Christ has been appointed to be Head of the Church, As Christ is to minister God's full salvation to His Body, the Church, so too **the husband is responsible to bring his wife to full spiritual maturity and ministry,** v23,24. (Pastors' Notes No 100.)

This is only possible as the husband loves his wife as Christ loved the Church, and gave His life for the Church, v25, *Col 3:19, 1Pet 3:7*. The husband is to give himself in obedience to God, to serve his wife and children with the love and goodness of God.

The most important way the husband is to help his wife to become a fully mature minister of Christ, is by the sanctifying and cleansing washing of the water of the Word, v26. This is the way Christ is bringing His Church to purity, holiness and fulness of God's glory, v26,27, *1Thes 5:23,24, Jn 8:31-36, Ezk 36:25-27, 1Pet 3:7*.

As Christ loves His own Body, the Church, so husbands are to love their wives, v28. God made husband and wife one flesh, v28,29. The husband's love for his wife nourishes and cherishes her as Christ does the Church. As he does this he is also bringing blessing upon himself, v28.

The love and goodness of a husband to his wife and family is a picture of Christ and the Church, v30-33.

Ephesians Chapter 6

The first nine verses follow on from chapter 5.

VI-4 **The first commandment with promise,** *Ex 20:12*, **is for children to be obedient to their parents and honour them,** v1-3, *Col 3:20*. The promise is for God's blessing and long life on the earth.

Parents, be willing to listen to your children and explain to them why you are requiring them to do certain things. Be patient, kind, tender, loving, gentle and understanding, *Gal 5:22*. **This is the way our Father in heaven treats us. Also be firm.** If a child is disobedient, **do not discipline in anger.** Take time to get still before God. Explain that God requires parents to discipline their children for bad behaviour, *1Sam 3:13*. **Do not be harsh, violent, angry but firm and controlled,** v4. Parenting by fathers and mothers is a very godly ministry, probably the most important ministry of serving God in the earth. It is a high and holy calling. Do not let anything cause you to neglect it or abuse it. Parents have given life to their children and are responsible to be a godly example and bring the children up in God's ways. Children are a gift from the Lord, *Ps 127:3-5*. (Pastor's Notes No 100)

Look after your children for God. He has lent them to you as babies and children, so that you can care for them as He would, and train them in His ways. **Have a family time each day,** to sing praises to God, read His Word, pray to God and explain the ways of God. **Be together in God's House, the Church each week.** Pay your tithes. Set an example of putting God first, always. Pray with children **to accept Christ at an early age.** Encourage them to be baptised in water and with the Spirit. **Take them out with you as you go to serve God,** visiting the needy, witnessing to the lost, helping the sick. Supervise the magazines, books, TV, videos, friends and activities the children have.

V5-9 In Paul's day it was slaves and masters. Today it is employees and employers. **Whether slave or employee do what you are told to do as if you were doing it under the direction of Christ Himself**, *v5-8, Col 3:22-24, Col 3:17, 1Pet 2:18-23*. Do all you do as unto Christ, and Christ will give you His full reward. How wonderful! **If you are an employer or businessman** be just, fair, honest and pay the labourer, worker, technician, graduate or manager, what he is worth. The labourer is worthy of his hire, *Jer 22:13, Jam 5:4, Deut 24:14,15, Lev 19:13, Lk 10:7, Mat 10:10*.

The third section of Ephesians is Chapter 6:10-24 and it describes the **spiritual warfare of the believer and the need to stand firm in the victory of Christ** against all attacks.

V10-18 Every believer is in a spiritual battle against the powers of darkness headed up by satan, *v11*. Satan is against God and righteousness and all who seek to obey God.

But thanks be to God, that through Christ's life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension, satan has been totally defeated, *Heb 2:14, Col 2:15, 1Jn 3:8*. The victory of Christ over all evil **has been given to all who believe in Him**, *1Cor 15:57, Lk 10:19, 2Cor 2:14, 1Jn 4:4, Rev 12:11*. So that we can stand firm in the victory of Christ, Scripture explains to us **the spiritual armour we have been given by God**, *v13-18*.

The armour of victory covers the front not the back. We are to stand firm, go forward, and not retreat, *Lk 9:62*. The Christian is to think in terms of victory only, for Christ has already overcome in victory.

V10 Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, *v10*. **Be made powerful in the Lord** is the meaning. Be powerful **in the Word, in God's Spirit, in prayer, in the authority of the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Blood of Jesus**, *Rev 12:11*.

V11-13 **God does not put the armour on us, we have to put it on**. We need the lot, every piece. Every area of our life needs protection. In *v11,13,14*, it says, "stand" and to be unmoved.

In *v13*, it says "withstand", and that is to resist by force and fight back strongly. **We stand by faith**, *2Cor 1:24*. **We resist and fight back through prayer**, *Ac 4:23-33*, **by faith confession of the Word**, *Mat 4:4*, **by the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit**, *Mat 12:28*, **by the Blood of Jesus**, *Rev 12:11*, **by the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ**, *Ac 16:18, 1Jn 4:4, Mat 28:18, Mk 16:17*, **by fellowship with other believers**, *Mat 18:18-20*, **by powerful preaching, proclamation and witnessing**, *Ac 1:8, Ac 4:31,33*, **and by resisting all temptation to sin**, strongly and immediately, *Jam 1:12*.

We all go through the "evil day", at times, *v13*. It may be a great trial or temptation. As we seek hard after God, He upholds us with His right hand, *Ps 63:8*, and we are able to **STAND**, *v11, 13,14, Rom 10:13, Jam 4:7*, and **WITHSTAND**.

Our wrestling match is not against persons with bodies but against unseen spiritual beings of evil and wickedness, which are organised in various levels of authority, *v12*. These evil beings seek to bring lies and untruth, oppression, feelings of discouragement, evil thoughts, strife between believers, lust and condemnation, *1Pet 5:8, 1Thes 3:5, Mk 4:15, Ac 5:3, Eph 2:2, 2Cor 4:4, 2Cor 2:11, 2Cor 11:14*.

V14 For the Roman soldier, the belt held the breastplate and other garments in place. For the believer, **the belt is the truth of God's Word**, and it secures the breastplate and all the rest of the armour of the Spirit. **Truth is the foundation of God's Kingdom**. What is not of truth is not of God, *Jn 14:6, Jn 17:17, Jn 8:31,32,36, Jn 16:13, Phil 4:8*. Be strong in God's Word. Keep in the Word, *Ps 1:1-3, Ps 119:9-11, 2Tim 3:15-17*.

The breastplate of righteousness, *1Thes 5:8*, covers the **heart which is the source of all we think, say and do**, *Pro 4:23, Mat 12:34-37, Mat 15:18,19, Pro 23:7, Pro 18:21*. For this reason we need to **make sure that our hearts are pure and righteous before the Lord**, *Jam 4:8, Ps 24:4, Ps 51:10, 2Cor 7:1, Ps 139:23,24, Mk 12:30,31, Mat 5:8, Ezk 36:25-27, Deut 30:6, 1Sam 16:7*. **What is righteousness?**

1. It is to be **justified** before God by repentance and faith in the Blood of Jesus, *Ac 2:38,39, Rom 5:1, Rom 3:22,24,25, Gal 2:16*.
2. It is to be **sanctified** or **set apart** from all evil unto God, His truth, goodness and life. *Ac 26:18, 1Thes 4:3,4,7*.

The first is our **right standing before God, imputed to us** from God, by faith in Christ, *Rom 5:1*.

The second is our **right behaviour before God** imparted to us by God, through faith in the promises of God, *Rom 6:1-14*. This is referred to as sanctification or holiness, *Gal 2:20, Lk 9:23, 1Pet 1:16, 1Thes 4:3,4,7*.

V15 **Our feet are covered with the shoes of the Gospel of peace**. Because of the Gospel, our Christian walk is to be a walk of peace, *Phil 4:6,7, Is 26:3,4, Jn 14:27, Gal 5:22, Rom 5:1*. (Pastor's Notes No 30). God's peace **is the peace of the heart and is inward**, *Col 3:15*. Outwardly there may be much conflict and storms as we serve the Lord.

As we walk through this world, we go with, and share the Gospel of peace. Peace with God. Carry tracts at all times, and believe God for opportunities to witness for Christ, to the lost, *Lk 19:10, Ac 1:8, 1Pet 3:15, Ps 68:11, Ac 8:4, Ac 11:19, Jn 4:38, Mat 10:7,8*.

V16 **The shield of faith quenches all the fiery darts of the devil**. The shield is faith in **God's Word, the Blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit** and the **Name of the Lord Jesus Christ**. By believing and confessing the rhema words the Holy Spirit gives us, we are able to overcome and defeat every fiery attack of fear, lust, doubt, wrong belief, pain, weakness, resentment and anger.

V17 **The helmet of salvation**, *1Thes 5:8*, **the helmet of the hope of salvation**, covers the mind, with the assurance of victory in Christ in the end, *Mat 24:13, Lk 21:19, Rom 8:38,39, Rom 8:28*, despite the tests and trials. **The helmet of salvation covers the mind so that our minds can be focused on the truth of the Lord**, *Col 3:1-3, Phil 4:8, 2Cor 10:4,5, 1Cor 2:16*, and not on the sea of problems that may surround us.

The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. It is living and powerful, *Heb 4:12*, sharper than any two edged sword, piercing and dividing what is of the soul and what is of the Spirit, and separates out the thoughts and the intentions of the heart. The truth of the Word in our heart enables us to avoid temptation and cut it off, *Ps 119:9-11*. The Word defeats satan and temptation, *Mat 4:4*.

V18-20 Prayer, and increasing prayer in the Spirit, with perseverance and request for oneself and others, releases the Hand and power and blessing of God. Never give up on prayer. Press through! Keep praying. Paul asked for prayer, for himself, that God would give to him words and boldness to declare the Gospel. He was in Rome in prison, in chains, because of his faithful preaching of the Gospel and he requested prayer support for his ongoing evangelism. He was being effective, *Phil 4:22*.

V21-24 Paul's closing remarks.