

Paul's Letter to the Church in Ephesus – Part 1 (c. 60)

Ephesians 1–3

Greeting

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:
2 Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise to God for Our Spiritual Blessings in Christ

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:
4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:
5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,
6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.
7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;
8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;
9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:
10 That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:
11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:
12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.
13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,
14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Thanksgiving for the Ephesians' Faith and Intercessory Prayer for Their Increase in Knowledge

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,
16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;
17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:
18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,
19 And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,
20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*,
21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:
22 And hath put all *things* under his feet, [Ps 8:6] and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,
23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

New Life in Christ—Salvation By Grace Through Faith

2:1 And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;
2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.
4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved);
6 And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:
7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

God's New Creation—A Call to Good Works

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

The Inclusion of the Gentiles in the Promised Blessing

11 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye 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:
 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;
 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;
 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:
 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.
 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.
 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;
 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*;
 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:
 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

The Divine Mystery and Paul's Stewardship

3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,
 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:
 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,
 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)
 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;
 6 That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:
 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.
 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;
 9 And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:
 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,
 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:
 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.
 13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Intercessory Prayer for Power, Love and Spiritual Maturity

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;
 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,
 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;
 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.
 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,
 21 Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Scripture quotations are from The King James Version (KJV). The KJV is in the public domain.

Chronological Notes

1) Date.¹

- A) "The date for Ephesians depends on complex questions concerning authorship and provenance. If the letter was written during Paul's Roman imprisonment, then it dates to 58–60. Since Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon appear to have been written at approximately the same time and since Philemon belongs to the final phase of Paul's imprisonment (Phlm 1:22), a date of around the year 60 is reasonable."

¹ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, (B&H Academic, 2009), p. 585.

2) Provenance.²

- A) See Kostenberger's extended discussion of the provenance of Philippians (pp. 563–565) for more details. I will be following a Roman provenance for the Prison Epistles.

² Kostenberger, pp. 563–565.