

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

Ephesians 1–3

Greeting

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

Praise to God for Our Spiritual Blessings in Christ

3 Blessed *is* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,
4 just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, *that* we should be holy and blameless before him in love,
5 having predestined us to adoption through Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will,
6 to the praise of the glory of his grace that he bestowed on us in the beloved,
7 in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,
8 that he caused to abound to us in all wisdom and insight,
9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in him,
10 for the administration of the fullness of times, to bring together all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in him
11 in whom also we were chosen, having been predestined according to the purpose of the One who works all *things* according to the counsel of his will,
12 *that* we who hoped beforehand in Christ should be for the praise of his glory,
13 in whom also you, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also when you believed you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,
14 who is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

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

15 Because of this I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,
16 do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention in my prayers,
17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him
18 (the eyes of your hearts having been enlightened), so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what *are* the riches of the glory of his inheritance among the saints,
19 and what *is* the surpassing greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his mighty strength
20 which he has worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*,
21 above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,
22 and he subjected all *things* under his feet [[Ps 8:6](#)] and gave him *as* head over all *things* to the church,
23 which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all *things* in every *way*.

New Life in Christ—Salvation By Grace Through Faith

2:1 And you, although you were dead in your trespasses and sins,
2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience,
3 among whom also we all formerly lived in the desires of our flesh, doing the will of the flesh and of the mind, and we were children of wrath by nature, as also the rest of *them* were.
4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love *with* which he loved us,
5 and we being dead in trespasses, he made *us* alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved),
6 and raised *us* together and seated *us* together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,
7 in order that he might show in the coming ages the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness upon us in Christ Jesus.

God's New Creation—A Call to Good Works

8 For by grace you are saved through faith, and this *is* not from yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;
9 *it is* not from works, so that no one can boast.
10 For we are his creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we may walk in them.

The Inclusion of the Gentiles in the Promised Blessing

11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in *the* flesh, the so-called uncircumcision by the so-called circumcision in *the* flesh, made by hands,
12 that you were at that time apart from Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, not having hope, and without God in the world.
13 But now in Christ Jesus you, the ones who once were far away, have become near by the blood of Christ.

14 For he himself is our peace, who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of the partition, the enmity, in his flesh,
 15 invalidating the law of commandments in ordinances, in order that he might create the two in himself into one new man, *thus* making peace,
 16 and might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in himself.
 17 And coming, he proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to the ones who were near,
 18 because through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.
 19 Consequently, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God,
 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,
 21 in whom the whole building, joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,
 22 in whom you also are built up together into a dwelling place of God in *the* Spirit.

The Divine Mystery and Paul's Stewardship

3:1 On account of this I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles
 2 —if indeed you have heard *about* the stewardship of God's grace given to me for you.
 3 According to revelation the mystery was made known to me, just as I wrote beforehand in brief,
 4 so that you may be able when you read to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ
 5 (which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit):
 6 *that* the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body, and fellow sharers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,
 7 of which I became a servant, according to the gift of God's grace given to me, according to the working of his power.
 8 To me, the least of all the saints, was given this grace: to proclaim the good news of the fathomless riches of Christ to the Gentiles,
 9 and to enlighten everyone *as to* what *is* the administration of the mystery hidden from the ages by God, who created all *things*,
 10 in order that the many-sided wisdom of God might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places* through the church,
 11 according to the purpose of the ages which he carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,
 12 in whom we have boldness and access in confidence through faith in him.
 13 Therefore I ask *you* not to be discouraged at my afflictions on behalf of you, which are your glory.

Intercessory Prayer for Power, Love and Spiritual Maturity

14 On account of this, I bend my knees before the Father,
 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
 16 that he may grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner person,
 17 *that* Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith (you having been firmly rooted and established in love),
 18 in order that you may be strong enough to grasp together with all the saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and height, and depth,
 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, in order that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.
 20 Now to the one who is able to do beyond all measure more than all that we ask or think, according to the power that is at work in us,
 21 to him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

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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.”

2) Provenance.²

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

- 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.