

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

Paul said, “But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (Eph 4:7). I praise you today as the God who gives spiritual gifts to your people. You have showered us with your love and grace, and you delight to see your gifts used in a spirit of love and unity to build up the body of Christ. Truly, how marvelous are the riches of your grace! Glory to God!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you shared with me the last half of Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus. Having reminded them of their new identity in Christ, Paul now exhorted them to walk worthy of their high and holy calling. Once again, this reminds me that theology matters, for right thinking must come before right living. Paul consistently presented doctrinal truth first and then urged his readers to live out this truth in their daily lives. Paul began with a plea for love and unity, and he called the Ephesians to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3). This teaches me that I must treat my fellow believers with patience and gentleness, bearing with them in love and humility. When I put unity above personal interest, my life becomes a living image of the unity and love that exists within the Trinity! Paul went on to say that within the unity of the church, there is a diversity of gifts, and when these gifts are exercised properly, the Spirit will lead the church to maturity. I was struck by Paul’s statement that the apostles and shepherds and teachers were given “to equip the saints for the work of the ministry” (Eph 4:12). This means that the work of the ministry is *my* responsibility. I should not expect my pastor to do all the work while I take a passive role. Instead, I should be actively seeking to use my own gifts to build up the body of Christ. Paul then pointed out the impact that individual holiness has on the health and growth of the church. If I’m not taking off the old man (my old way of self-centered living) and putting on Christ (living for you and others), then my ability to build up the church is compromised. This shows me that the church depends on my consistent obedience to your Word in order to succeed. You have taken me from darkness to light, and I must now do only what pleases you. This means speaking the truth to my neighbor, working hard to earn my own living, speaking only what is good and fitting, and refusing to take part in the unfruitful works of darkness. Above all, I must yield each day to the desires of the Holy Spirit. Rather than being “drunk with wine,” I am to be under the Spirit’s influence, allowing him to guide and control all I do and say (Eph 5:18). As I walk in the light, the Spirit will lead me to submit “to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph 5:21). If I’m a wife, I’ll submit to my husband; if I’m a child, I’ll submit to my parents; if I’m a servant, I’ll submit to my master. Conversely, if I’m a husband, I’ll love my wife and cherish her as Christ does the church; if I’m a parent, I’ll bring my children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord; if I’m a master, I’ll treat my servants with dignity and respect, knowing that I have a master in heaven. Paul concluded by saying, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might” (Eph 6:10). This teaches me that the battles I face are ultimately spiritual battles. I must take up the belt of truth, the shoes of gospel-readiness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit in order to win the victory for Christ. This, combined with a spirit of watchful prayer, will enable me to persevere to the end.

### *Reflection*

Paul said, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph 4:32). Am I holding a grudge against a fellow believer? Is there anyone I need to forgive?

### *Request*

Father, help me to walk carefully, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of my time, because the days are evil. Keep me from being foolish, and enable me to know and understand your will (Eph 5:15–17).

### *Thanksgiving*

Thank you for all that you have done for me in Christ! I want my life to honor your precious Holy Spirit, by whom I am sealed for the day of redemption (Eph 4:30). Praise the Lord!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn:* “[Soldiers of Christ, Arise](#)” – Charles Wesley.

*Meditation Verse:* Ephesians 6:18.