

to . . . hence the marks of (the Lord) Jesus, which Paul in Galatians 6: 17 says he bears branded on his body, are the traces left there by the perils, hardships, imprisonments, scourgings, endured by him for the cause of Christ, and which mark him as Christ's faithful and approved votary [one devoted], servant, soldier." If a man was suspected of being a run-away slave, or for any other reason his identity should be questioned, the matter could be settled by unclothing him and looking for the brands. Paul is making the point that it is unnecessary for any man to *trouble* about examining him; he freely admits that he is a servant of Christ, and that the brands could be seen on his body. As in many illustrations, there are some points that are exceptions. In the case of temporal slaves, the brands were stamped on their bodies by their masters, while Paul's marks were inflicted by the enemies of his Master. Also, Paul was not a run-away slave but was happy to admit his relationship of service to Jesus Christ.

Verse 18. Paul wished that the grace (favor) of Christ would be with the *spirit* of his brethren; if so, their temporal needs would be supplied also.

Ephesians 1

Verse 1. Unlike the preceding epistle, this one is addressed to a single congregation, which was located in the city of Ephesus. It is the same congregation that is mentioned in Revelation 1: 11, which had its start in Acts 18: 19. *Saints* and *faithful in Christ Jesus* are not different people. The second term is just one description of the first.

Verse 2. *Grace* and *peace* are commented upon at Galatians 1: 3. In every instance of this kind of passage the point is emphatic that God and Christ are the source of these good things.

Verse 3. When man blesses God it means he gives Him the credit for all blessings or happiness. It is important to note that God is called the Father of Christ. This refutes the doctrine of Rome which is followed by most of the denominational world, that God and Christ are one and the same person. It is foolish to imply that a father and his son could be the same person. *All spiritual blessings* denotes that no blessings of that kind can be obtained from any source but God and Christ. *Places* has no word in the original and it is not useful in this connection.

Heavenly is an adjective and used to describe the kind of blessings that are enjoyed *in Christ*. They are called *heavenly* because they originated in Heaven, and are unlike the favors produced on earth.

Verse 4. From this verse through 12, the passages have special reference to the apostles. This truth should be kept in mind in order to avoid confusion on the subject of predestination. God never decreed that any certain person should be saved, but He has predetermined what kind of character would be given salvation, then left it to the individual to qualify for the favor. However, God has predestinated certain official facts to be accomplished, and has selected certain ones to be His instruments in bringing about the predestined results. Among the persons who were chosen beforehand for special work were the apostles, referred to here by the pronoun, *us*, whom Paul says God has chosen *in him*, meaning Christ. This foreordained plan was formed before the foundation of the *world*, which means the inhabitants of the earth. The work for which they were previously selected will be named in the next verse, but this one tells the kind of character the apostles must have before they would be permitted to go on with the work. They must be *holy* and *without blame*, which pertains to their personal character. This may sound like the doctrine of salvation by predestination, but it is not since they were left as their own agents as to those qualities. If they chose not to qualify for the work they were put out of the plan as was done in the case of Judas.

Verse 5. The pronoun *us* stands for the apostles, whose work (not personal destiny) had been foreordained by the Lord. That work is designated by the phrase *adoption of children*. The term *adoption* is proper, since becoming children by birth can be accomplished only by the actions of the prospective parents. But it is possible for "outside" parties to work upon the individuals concerned, in persuading and arranging for them to be adopted into a family. The apostles did such work through the prospective Elder Brother, Jesus Christ. *Good pleasure of his will*. Sometimes a man will adopt an orphan from a humane motive or feeling for an unfortunate. But God has a pleasure in adopting the needy ones hence He *willed* it to be done according to the divine plan,

Verse 6. The *grace* or favor of being adopted into the family of God is a glory to Him as well as a credit of praise for His great benevolence. Receiving men into the close relationship of members in the divine family is an unspeakable blessing to man, but the Lord ordained that such a situation was to be fully acceptable to all parties concerned, and not merely one that was tolerated through a spirit of pity.

Verse 7. *Whom* is a pronoun that stands for *the beloved* in the preceding verse, who is Christ. The blood of Christ not only made men free from the bondage of the old law, but it brought forgiveness of sins to all who appropriated it through obedience to the Gospel. It is true that the servants under the law received forgiveness of their sins when they offered their sacrifices or animals, but that favor was given them on the merits of the one and final offering of the body of Christ. Hence when a man obtains the forgiveness of sins under the system put forth by Christ, that favor is done by virtue actually invested in the blood so applied. That is why Paul says it is *according to the riches of his grace*.

Verse 8. At verse 4 it is stated that many of these verses have special application to the apostles and their official work. It is also noted that even they had to develop certain personal qualifications in order to be retained for that special work. If they chose to maintain such traits (all of whom did except Judas), then the special and miraculous powers necessary for the work were given to them. Hence we have the statement here that God *hath abounded toward us* [the apostles] *in all wisdom and prudence*.

Verse 9. A *mystery* is anything not known, whether that is due to its never having been revealed to anyone, or that the story has not yet reached the ears of those to whom it is said to be a mystery. Hence the word does not necessarily mean something that is complicated or made up of ideas that cannot be understood by the human mind. The Gospel is a plain document, and its terms of salvation are within reach of the most ordinary understanding. But it was a mystery as far as the complete system is concerned, until it was made known by the Lord. He chose the apostles as the ones through whom the revelation was to be made, and it was done by giving them the Holy Spirit in great measure. All of this was according to God's *good*

pleasure, and it was a purpose which He formed in himself long before it was revealed to man.

Verse 10. *Dispensation of the fulness of times* means when the time has fully come for the final dispensation of religion. *Gather together in one all things in Christ*. God has always had people on earth that were His from a religious standpoint, some of them under the Patriarchal Dispensation and some under the Jewish Dispensation. It was the divine plan to discontinue both of these systems and form a new one in Christ. *Which are in heaven*. Angels are not required to obey the commands of the Gospel as men are, but they are called upon to recognize Christ as the King and spiritual Ruler through the centuries of the final Dispensation; in this way they are a part of the body of Christ and in that sense are *in Christ*. (See Matthew 28: 18; Philippians 2: 9; Colossians 1: 20; Revelation 5: 13.)

Verse 11. The *inheritance* has special reference to the honorable work of extending the knowledge of the Gospel to all mankind. This was the work for which the apostles were predestinated. *Worketh all things*. God is powerful enough to accomplish anything that is right, hence whatever he predestines he can bring to pass. *Counsel* means purpose and advice, and when God formed his purpose concerning the plan of salvation through his Son, *his own will* was that it should be carried out.

Verse 12. The pronoun *we* represents the apostles, who were chosen beforehand to be the instruments of God in making known to the world the Gospel. Even the decree that the apostles were to be these special agents of God, would not have been completed through them had they not personally become believers in Christ to begin with. This explains why Paul was not given the commission as an apostle until he had *first trusted* in Jesus, (See Acts 9: 6; 26: 16-18.)

Verse 13. *Ye also* refers to the Ephesian brethren in general, to whom the apostle is writing this letter. What he says to them as Christians applies to all others in contrast with the apostles. This italicized phrase is proof that what has been said so far in this epistle applies to the apostles officially, and hence does not teach predestination of any man's personal salvation. There are some truths that can be said of all Christians, whether they are apostles, elders, deacons or unofficial members

of Christ's body. That is why it will be well for the reader to go back and again take note of all that has been said in the comments on this chapter from the first verse on, then resume his study of the present verse, etc. *Trusted* has no word in the original at this place, but it is implied in the preceding verse and is therefore justified here. Note the brethren trusted *after* they heard the truth of the Gospel. This shows that becoming a disciple of Christ is not done by any miracle, except that the whole scheme of salvation is a miracle. *In whom* is a pronoun standing for Christ (last word of verse 12), in whom only is a Christian *sealed* (furnished with assuring evidence) by the Spirit which reveals the truth of salvation, by having dictated to the chosen writers (the apostles) the revelation of the Truth. The outward proof of being in the Spirit is the fruit borne by disciples (Galatians 5: 22).

Verse 14. This verse is an illustration drawn from a familiar business transaction involving a considerable value, in which one party makes a "down" payment as an evidence of good faith. It binds the parties to the contract until the time when full payment is to be made and the contract completed. God has promised eternal life to all who enter into this covenant with Him, which is to be bestowed in fact at the day of judgment. This, of course, is on condition that both parties fulfill all the terms of the agreement until the final time comes. This "down" payment is here called the *earnest*, which literally means a pledge. The pronoun *which* means that God's *earnest* or pledge payment is the favor bestowed through the Spirit as shown in verse 13. When the time arrives and God delivers the crown of eternal life to all the faithful "signers" of the agreement, all *praise* and *glory* will go to Him.

Verse 15. *Heard of your faith* does not indicate that Paul had never had personal knowledge of these brethren, for Acts 18: 19 shows he was present when they began their service to Christ. But some time had passed since he saw them, and hence his present knowledge of their continued faithfulness would come through some reliable report. *Love unto all the saints*. Faithfulness to Christ includes love for his people (John 13: 35). *Saints* is another name for disciples or Christians, because the word means those who

have been made holy or spiritually clean by obedience to the Gospel.

Verse 16. Paul was thankful for the encouragement of faithful brethren, for that was of more value than temporal favors. *Making mention of you*. It is a common thing for brethren to specify to God the "objects of their prayers" when asking for divine favors on their behalf, but it is seldom that personal mention is made of those for whose services we should be thankful. Paul's example should have our careful consideration, in which he not only thanked God for the faithfulness of these brethren, but also prayed for the continued favors of the Lord upon them as we shall soon see.

Verse 17. This verse states some of the things Paul requested of God on behalf of the brethren at Ephesus. The Almighty is called the *God of our Lord Jesus Christ*. This statement is not favorable to the heresy that God and Christ are the same person, for it would be nonsense to say anyone could be his own god. *Father of glory* means that God is the originator and protector of all true glory. *Spirit of wisdom*. Those were the days of spiritual gifts (chapter 4: 7-11), and the gift of wisdom was one of them (1 Corinthians 12: 8). *Revelation* was another gift (1 Corinthians 14: 26), and Paul wished the brethren to receive it to the extent that it would increase their *knowledge of him*, meaning God.

Verse 18. *Eyes* is used figuratively because the physical body gets its light through those organs. It is used to compare the *understanding* or mental man as being enlightened by the sources of information mentioned in the preceding verse. With such enlightenment the brethren would *know* or realize the value of their *hope* that was held out for them by *his calling*, which means the Gospel call to salvation. On the same principle, they would see how *rich* is the glory that the *saints* (this word is explained at verse 15) may inherit in Him.

Verse 19. A fundamental thought in this verse is that God's power is great *to usward who believe*. The power of God does not mean anything to a man who is an unbeliever in the Gospel, which rests upon the resurrection of Christ; but it has saving power to one who does believe (Romans 1: 16).

Verse 20. The particular *working* to which the preceding verse refers is here explained to be the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. But the mighty

work did not stop with the resurrection; others had been raised from the dead previously. In the case of Jesus, he was raised to die no more (Romans 6: 9; Acts 13: 34), and then was placed in a position of great honor and power at the right hand of his Father.

Verse 21. *Principality* is from a Greek word that has virtually the same meaning as our word "seniority," and is used of Christ because he existed before all other beings or things except his Father. *Power* especially means "authority," and Jesus said in Matthew 28: 18 that all "power" (same Greek word) was given to him in heaven and in earth. *Might* is a little stronger word in the original than the one for *power*, meaning not only the right or authority to do things, but also the ability to accomplish them. *Dominion* has special reference to the extent of territory over which one may rule. The statement of Jesus just cited in Matthew 28: 18 shows that His territory is heaven and earth. *This world* means this age or the Gospel Dispensation. Jesus will not rule as king after this age closes (1 Corinthians 15: 24, 25), but He will always be exalted above angels and men while the eternal ages roll.

Verse 22. This verse is virtually a repetition (in different words) of the thoughts expressed in the preceding verse. *All things under his feet* means that Christ was made superior to all things. The original word for *head* is used both for fleshly and spiritual things. When used for the latter, Thayer defines it, "supreme, chief, prominent, master, lord." *All things* is from one Greek word that is equivalent in meaning to "everything." *All things* that rightfully is connected with the church is subject to or is regulated by Him. Any movement or work or organization that cannot be shown to be directed by Jesus, has no scriptural relation to His church.

Verse 23. *Which is his body*. This is a fundamental statement, showing that the church of Christ and the body of Christ are one and the same. *Fulness of him* means that all the spiritual blessings of God are offered to man through the body of his Son.

Ephesians 2

Verse 1. *Hath he quickened* is in the Greek text in verse 5, and the King James translators have inserted the words in this verse to clarify the thought. To *quicken* means to make

alive, whether used figuratively or literally. It is in the former sense here as the last part of the verse indicates, for the Ephesians had been *dead in sins*, which is a figurative phrase. When two things are separated they are dead to each other. Hence when men are living in sin they are separated from God, for sin cannot have any connection with Him. (See Isaiah 59: 2.) This is the same kind of death and life that Jesus meant in John 5: 25, which will be noticed further in verse 5.

Verse 2. Absolute sinless perfection does not exist in any man (1 John 1: 8), but to *walk* in sin which is referred to here means to lead a life whose general practice is one of sin. Such a walk was done by the Ephesians prior to their obedience to the Gospel. Such a life is *according to the course of this world*, which means that when a man lives daily in sin he is "running true to form" for those following the ways of the world. *Prince . . . the air*. Many of the words of human language have their origin in the opinions of the people using the language. Thayer says in connection with this place: "in the air, i. e., the devil, the prince of the demons that according to Jewish opinion fill the realm of the air." Paul recognizes this popular impression and uses it to describe the former manner of life that was practiced by the Ephesians. *The spirit* means the spirit of the evil prince, who is considered as the leader of all who are living in sin. *Children of disobedience*. The first word is from *HYIOS* and is used figuratively; it is explained by Thayer to mean, "one who is connected with or belongs to a thing by any kind of close relationship." Before the Ephesians became Christians, their life as a whole was one of disobedience against the law of righteousness. Such a life would produce a class of offspring (*children*) of like character, hence Paul calls them children of disobedience.

Verse 3. The pronoun *whom* refers to the *children of disobedience* who are mentioned in the preceding verse. *Conversation* is from *ANASTREPHO*, which Thayer defines, "to conduct one's self, behave one's self, live." So the term means the Ephesians formerly behaved themselves after the manner of disobedient children. The apostle specifies by saying it was the desires and lusts of the flesh that they were gratifying. *By nature the children of wrath*. By following the desires of their fleshly

nature they did wrong, and that threatened them with the wrath of God.

Verse 4. *Rich in mercy.* Riches do not consist solely in the amount of one's possessions, but also in the character of them. The richness of God's mercy was indicated by the kind of love with which He regarded mankind while in the bondage of sin. This is the same thought that is the outstanding subject of the familiar but underestimated verse in John 3: 16, where the word "so" has reference to the *kind* of love God had for the world.

Verse 5. The first part of this verse is explained at verse 1, and the reader is requested to see that place again. This verse adds the information that the quickening is done *with Christ*, which means that it is through Him that we are made free from sin (Romans 6: 11). *By grace are ye saved.* This may be understood by the meaning of the second word. See the comments at 1 Corinthians 1: 3.

Verse 6. *Places* is not in the original as a separate word; it is explained at chapter 1: 3. The association of Christians with each other in the church of Christ is heavenly, because the entire arrangement originated in Heaven.

Verse 7. *Ages* often is used in the sense of eras or dispensations, but it is here more general and only means that "in the years to come," etc. Through the years, God was to show how rich is His grace in the form of kindness, and it was all to be accomplished through Christ Jesus.

Verse 8. The matter of being saved involves two parties; the one being saved, and the one doing the saving. God is the latter and is indicated by the word *grace*; man is the former and is represented by the word *faith*. Since grace is the unmerited favor of God (see comments at 1 Corinthians 1: 3), it includes the entire plan of salvation as far as the Lord's part is concerned. *Faith* is on the part of man, and it includes all of the things a man must do to prove his faith. *Not of yourselves.* Man could not have provided any plan whereby he could be saved. *It is the gift of God.* The subject under consideration is salvation, therefore it is the gift of God. A father might promise his son an automobile on condition that he work for him long enough to plant a crop. No boy can earn such an article in a few weeks, therefore the car would rightfully be considered a gift. Likewise, a lifetime of service to God could not merit eternal life, and

therefore it will truly be the gift from God.

Verse 9. *Not of works.* See the illustration in the preceding paragraph drawn from a father and his son. The merits of our work for Christ would never have obtained salvation for us; had they done so, then man could have boasted that he had earned his salvation by what he had done.

Verse 10. *Workmanship* is from POIEMA, which Thayer defines, "that which has been made." When a man makes a piece of mechanism, he does so with the intention of getting certain things done with it, and he so forms it that it will be equipped to turn out such work. When it is accomplished, the mechanism would not be entitled to any credit for the work, for its maker has formed it for that particular production. Likewise the *good works* a Christian may perform are but the products that God had in mind when He created or formed him in the great Assembly Plant, the Lord Jesus Christ. The word *ordain* has such a great variety of meanings that I request the reader to see the complete definition of it at John 15: 16, in the first volume of the New Testament Commentary. In our verse it is defined, "To prepare before, to make ready beforehand." It means that God in his wisdom foresaw what would be the best kind of works for His children to follow, and so prepared a plan in His Son whereby they would be furnished with all the necessary equipment for such work.

Verse 11. *Gentiles in the flesh* denotes that the Ephesians were in the class of mankind that was distinguished from the Jews, and that the distinction was a fleshly one. *Called circumcision.* This rite was the fleshly mark that designated the classification as to which nation a man belonged. Hence the terms *circumcision* and *uncircumcision* were used to identify Jews and Gentiles.

Verse 12. *At that time* means the time before the Gospel Dispensation was brought into the world. *Without Christ* because the Patriarchal Dispensation did not specifically show any connection with Him, even though the spiritual benefits which God bestowed upon the faithful members of that dispensation, were done in view of the part that Christ was to play in the salvation of any man in any age. The Gentiles were *aliens* or foreigners from the *commonwealth*, nation or government, of Israel or the Jews. *Strangers*

is from XENOS which Thayer defines, "without knowledge of, without a share in." Although the promises made to Abraham applied to the Gentiles (since Christ was to bless all nations), yet it was not known to them, hence in that sense they were *strangers* to the promise of Christ. *Having no hope* as far as the commonwealth or government of Israel was concerned. *Without God* is from ATHEOS; it is the origin of our English word "atheist." The Gentiles were without God as far as the provisions of the law of Moses were concerned, in the same sense that they were *without Christ* as explained earlier in this paragraph.

Verse 13. The ones *far off* were the Ephesians and all other Gentiles; they were far off as far as the Jewish Dispensation was concerned. *Made nigh by the blood of Christ*. This is said in contrast with the animal sacrifices that were offered under the Mosiac system, which were done for the benefit of the Jews only. It also is in contrast with the sacrifices that were offered upon the family altars under the Patriarchal Dispensation. It is to be understood that those sacrifices which were made under both the former dispensations, gave to the members thereof the favor of God, including the forgiveness of sins. But that was because God knew that the blood of Christ was to flow at the cross as a ransom, to make good the pledge of forgiveness that He had made to every Jew or Patriarch when he had performed his duty at the proper place of sacrifice. This is clearly shown in Hebrews 9: 15, which the reader should see in connection with the present verse.

Verse 14. *He is our peace*. The first word is a pronoun that stands for Christ, and the third is one that means the Jews and Gentiles. These two groups had been separated religiously by the partition wall of the Mosaic law which was given for the Jews only. This wall was removed by cancelling the religious function of the Jewish system, and giving a new one through Christ, adapted to the needs of Jews and Gentiles.

Verse 15. *In his flesh* refers to the crucifixion of Christ, whereby He nailed the old law to the cross and opened the way for the new law of the Gospel. Paul explains *enmity* to mean the "ceremonial" *ordinances* and *commandments*, which kept the Jews and Gentiles separated religiously. *Twain* means the two nations just mentioned,

and *one new man* is a figurative name for the church, in which all men of every nation may be united in Christ.

Verse 16. The original word for *reconcile* is defined by Thayer, "to reconcile completely," and he explains it to mean, "to bring back to a former state of harmony." A significant word is "back," which indicates that a state of harmony had existed before. That is true, for man was at peace with God until Satan persuaded him to sin. That separated him from God and made it necessary for something to be done before he could be received into the divine favor again. The *one body* is the church (chapter 1: 22,23), and the death on the cross made it possible for both Jews and Gentiles to serve God in one religious system. *Slain the enmity*. (Enmity is explained at verse 15.)

Verse 17. Jesus did this preaching through the apostles first, and then by other devoted evangelists. The *peace* applies to the relationship of mankind in general to God, and the Jews and Gentiles to each other, who had been separated by the Mosaic law. *Far off* were Gentiles and *nigh* were the Jews; explained at verse 13.

Verse 18. *Him* means Christ and *both* denotes Jews and Gentiles. *Access* means the privilege of approaching the Father to receive the divine favors. *By one Spirit*. The Holy Spirit gave the apostles their instruction for setting up the church, and also to fill that body (the church) as a divine Guest (the original form for Ghost). The same apostles were also enabled to furnish the members of the church the necessary information for their service to God, including their *access* or approach to Him for his favors.

Verse 19. *Strangers and foreigners* means the same as "aliens" and "strangers" as explained in verse 12. *Fellowcitizens* means they are all citizens of the same government. This government is composed of *saints* which means those who have been made righteous by obedience to the Gospel, and it is called a *household* because the group called the church is regarded as a great family of God and Christ.

Verse 20. *Foundation of the apostles and prophets*. It has been thought by some that these prophets were those of the Old Testament, who prophesied the coming of the church. It is true they did make such predictions, and in that figurative manner could be re-

ferred to in connection with the church when thinking of the basis of truth upon which the divine institution was founded. However, Paul declares these prophets were a part of the foundation itself, hence they were the spiritually-gifted prophets that the church contained in the first century. This is specifically stated in Acts 13: 1 and 1 Corinthians 12: 28. That these prophets in the church were among those who received spiritual gifts is declared in Ephesians 4: 8-11. *Chief corner stone* is from the one Greek word AKROGONIAIOS which Thayer defines, "placed at the extreme corner." He also gives the historical information, "For as the corner-stone holds together two walls, so Christ joins together as Christians, into one body dedicated to God, those who were formerly Jews and Gentiles."

Verse 21. Most of the buildings in old times were built of stones, and Paul is using such as an illustration of the church. *Fitly framed together*. We generally think of wooden buildings only as being "framed," whereas the church is here likened to a stone structure. The three words in italics are from one Greek word which Thayer defines, "to join closely together." The statement means that all of the building, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, is fitted into the structure of which Christ is the binding stone at the corner. Such a building becomes a holy temple in (or on behalf of) the Lord.

Verse 22. Every building is erected for some special purpose. This divine structure is no exception, and the present verse tells us the purpose. It is the dwelling place of God on the earth. Not that He is dwelling in it personally, for in that sense God dwells only in Heaven (Acts 7: 48, 49); but He dwells in the church *through the Spirit*, or in a spiritual sense. (See 1 Peter 2: 5.)

Ephesians 3

Verse 1. *For this cause* means as if Paul said, "in view of what I have told you concerning what God has done for us through Christ," etc. What the apostle intends to say *for this cause*, he does not mention until he gets to verse 14 which begins with the same three words, where he goes on and completes the thought he has in mind. All the other verses from these first three words at the beginning of the chapter through verse 13, are put in as explanatory information. As Paul was writing this epistle he was actually a

prisoner in Rome, and it was brought about by his preaching the Gospel to these and other Gentiles. (See Acts 21: 33; 28: 17, 20; Ephesians 6: 20.) Christ had taken possession of Paul or "apprehended" him for the very purpose of doing such work and receiving such treatment (Acts 9: 16; 26: 16-18; Philippians 3: 12).

Verse 2. *If ye have heard* has the sense of saying, "I take it for granted ye have heard," etc., yet Paul considers it well to give them further information on the important subject. *Dispensation* is defined in Thayer's lexicon, "the management, oversight, administration, of others' property; the office of a manager or overseer, stewardship." The phrase means that the apostle had been given charge of administering the *grace* or favor of God unto the Gentiles.

Verse 3. According to the lexicon, the word *revelation* means "a disclosure of truth, instruction, concerning divine things before unknown—especially relating to the Christian salvation—given to the soul by God himself, or by the ascended Christ." An outstanding thought in the meaning of the word is that the communication was done by addressing the intelligence of the apostle, and not by some impression made upon his emotions. By this intellectual method, God made known to Paul the truths of the Gospel, that he might be able to tell them to the Ephesians and others. It is called a *mystery* because that word merely means anything not known, whether that be something that is complicated or simple in its nature. (See the definition of the word at chapter 1: 9.) *Wrote afore* refers to chapter 1: 9 and 2: 11-13, where the apostle wrote about the call of the Gentiles to share in the benefits of the Gospel.

Verse 4. *Whereby* denotes that when the brethren would read what Paul had written, they also might understand his knowledge of the subject. All that Paul or any other inspired writer knew of the Gospel was what had been revealed to them through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when an uninspired man reads what has been thus written, he may have the same knowledge of the subject as does the inspired writer. This completely disproves the notion that people today cannot understand the Bible when they read it unless they have some miraculous assistance of the Spirit.

Verse 5. The promise made to Abra-

ham in Genesis 12: 3 and 22: 18 really meant that both Jews and Gentiles were to be blessed by the Gospel of Christ. That same truth was repeated in various forms by many writers in the Old Testament. But the system as a whole was never revealed by them, hence Paul here declares that it was not made known to men in those years *as it is now revealed* by the Spirit. That revelation was made through the services of the *apostles and prophets*. (See the comments on chapter 2: 20.)

Verse 6. This verse states the specific feature of the Gospel that was not realized by the people in Old Testament times, namely, that the Gentiles were to be placed on an equal footing with the Jews in the Gospel.

Verse 7. *Whereof* refers to the Gospel of which Paul was made a *minister*. This word is from DIAKONOS, and it is elsewhere translated "deacon." Thayer's general definition is, "one who executes the commands of another, especially of a master; a servant, attendant, minister." The word does not necessarily denote an official, and when it is so used, the connection in which it is found will determine it so. In the present verse it has a special application because it refers to Paul who was an inspired apostle, and possessed with that measure of the Holy Spirit that enabled him to execute his official position. Such is the meaning of *effectual working of his [God's] power*.

Verse 8. *Less than the least* is described by both Thayer and Robinson as a double comparison that is permitted on the principle of what today is called "poetic license." Paul uses it for the sake of emphasis, to describe his feeling of unworthiness in being entrusted with the Gospel. He regards it a great honor to be selected by the Lord to be the one to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, who had for generations past been "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." *Unsearchable* is defined in Thayer's lexicon, "that cannot be traced out, that cannot be comprehended." It is the *riches of Christ* that is unsearchable, not the terms on which a man may obtain them. A person could completely understand all of the conditions on which he would obtain possession of a fine automobile, without fully realizing all the wonderful perfection of its mechanism.

Verse 9. The *mystery* again is the truth that the Gospel was to be given to the world for the benefit of both Jews and Gentiles. *Fellowship* means

the mutual enjoyment of all nations in their equal relationship to Christ as their Saviour. *Been hid in God* is the same thought that is expressed by verse 5. *Created all things by Jesus Christ*. This was true of the creation of the material world (John 1: 1-3), but it is true also that all spiritual blessing are provided through Him. (Colossians 1: 16.)

Verse 10. *To the intent* denotes that God's intention in keeping the "mystery" hid through the past ages, was to let it be made known by the church. *Heavenly places* is from EPOURANIOS, which Thayer defines at this place, "the heavenly regions," and then explains his definition to mean, "heaven itself, the abode of God and angels." It is true that men in various ranks on earth were kept uninformed as to the complete system of righteousness to be brought into the world through Christ (Luke 10: 24), who would be benefitted by the fuller revelation. But even the angels in Heaven also were not given the information notwithstanding their desire to know about it. (See 1 Peter 1: 12.) *Might be known* is a verb and comes from the Greek word GNORIZO, which Thayer defines, "to make known." *Manifold wisdom of God* denotes that the many items of wisdom that God had in store for the world, were to be made known by the church. This wisdom includes all the religious instruction that mankind needs for proper service to God. He kept the full plan for such instruction from men and angels for four thousand years, in order that it might fully be made known by the church. It is the height of folly, therefore, for men to think they can establish educational and other organizations that can give this information "better than the church." Any human organization that pretends to give spiritual or moral benefits to man, is an infringement upon the exclusive rights of the church, for which God was making preparations through the centuries, and which He finally established through the blood of his Son.

Verse 11. *Eternal* is from AION, which means age or ages. Throughout the ages since the beginning of the world, God was planning for the complete plan of redemption for man, and that planning is here called the *eternal purpose*. It was to be perfected through Christ Jesus, who was promised to Abraham (Genesis 12: 3 and 22: 18).

Verse 12. *In whom* refers to Christ, who was foreordained of God to be the

one through whom this eternal purpose was to be accomplished. *Boldness* does not mean a spirit of self-importance, but a feeling of abiding faith because of one's confidence in Christ. This confidence is produced by our faith in Him, and it bids us enjoy access to the Father through the Son.

Verse 13. To *faint* means to falter or become downhearted. Paul bids the brethren not to become thus affected over his tribulations caused by being a prisoner at Rome. *Which is your glory*. It should be regarded as an honor to be the brethren of a man whose faith causes him to keep cheerful under such conditions. The disciples in Acts 5: 41 rejoiced in the honor of suffering such treatment because of their service to Christ.

Verse 14. *For this cause*. This phrase is commented upon at length in the first verse of the chapter; please read that again. The apostle now proceeds to tell what he will do on the basis of the wonderful story of Jesus as just described in the foregoing verses. *Bow my knees* is mentioned incidentally as far as the posture of the body is concerned. We know it is not intended as a binding example for general practice, thus disfavoring other positions of the body while in prayer. Such a theory would contradict too many instances where prayer was offered while in some other position, and where the prayer is recorded in a favorable connection. In Matthew 26: 39 Jesus "fell on his face" and prayed; the publican's prayer was acceptable though he prayed "standing" in Luke 18: 13; Jesus gave thanks while sitting (Luke 22: 14-17). The validity of prayer depends upon the condition of the heart and not the position of the body; a hypocrite could pray as well in one position as another. God is again called the Father of Christ, which disproves the foolish notion that God and Christ are the same person.

Verse 15. *Of* is from ΕΚ, which means the source or authority by which the naming is done; that source is mentioned in the preceding verse, namely, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Family in heaven and earth* includes saints on earth and angels in Heaven. (See comments on chapter 1: 10.) As to what name or names are meant is not the question. The point in this verse is that a father of a family has the right to name the members of it. That truth rules out all of the multitude of names that have been

applied by men to the professed children of God.

Verse 16. This verse begins the prayer that Paul proposed to offer to the Father. *According to the riches of his glory*. It would not be reasonable to ask a favor of anyone that is greater than the possessions of that person. The glory of God is so rich that Paul is encouraged to ask for enough of it to strengthen his brethren. God does his favors for the members of the divine family by the agency of the Spirit that fills the church. This is for the benefit of the *inner man*, which means the spiritual being, which can be affected only by spiritual help.

Verse 17. With two or three exceptions, the word *heart* in the King James Version comes from the Greek word ΚΑΡΔΙΑ, and it is not translated by any other word, which occurs 158 times in the New Testament. I shall quote Thayer's various definitions of the original, which will give the reader a fair view of the range that it covers: "The heart; the vigor and sense of physical life; the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors; of the understanding, the faculty and seat of intelligence; of the soul so far forth as it is affected and stirred in a bad way or good, or of the soul as the seat of the sensibilities, affections, emotions, desires, appetites, passions; the middle or central or inmost part of any thing, even though inanimate."

In this quotation I have copied only the words in italics, which means they are the direct definitions of the author of the lexicon. In this vast list of definitions, the reader can see just two real general meanings of the heart as used in the New Testament, namely, the literal or fleshly as one, and the mental or spiritual as the other. The one to be taken in each given case must be determined by the connection in which it is used. Since Christ does not dwell literally or personally in any place on earth today, we know this verse does not use the *heart* in the fleshly or literal sense. This is also shown to be correct by the phrase *by faith* which Paul uses. Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10: 17), and when a man receives that word into his heart, he has the teaching of Jesus constantly with him, which is the meaning of the apostle's thought that He is to *dwell in your hearts by faith*. *Rooted and grounded*.

There is virtually not much difference between these words, and they could well be used interchangeably. In a technical sense, the first means for a plant to take deep root, and that will give it a solid groundwork as a basis from which to make its growth. The soil in which this rooting is to take place is love—the love of God and Christ for this “plant” that was predicted in Ezekiel 34: 29. With such ever-fertile soil from which to grow, this divine plant is prepared to bring forth much fruit for the Keeper of the vineyard.

Verse 18. *Comprehend* is from a word that has different shades of meaning. In the present instance the first two definitions of Thayer are the most appropriate. “1. to lay hold of so as to make one’s own, to obtain, attain to. 2. to seize upon, take possession of.” Our word, therefore, does not mean that the human mind may fully know all about the greatness of God’s loving system, but that it can take full possession of it under the terms that are offered by the Lord. The reader should see the comments on the word “unsearchable” in verse 8. *With all saints* (or Christians) means that no partiality is shown by Christ for any portion of His followers, but each has the same privileges to enjoy the great love exhibited in the Gospel. All solids have only three dimensions literally, so that *depth* and *height* would be the same. However, in the illustration Paul is thinking of a building which is the divine structure. Its *length* and *breadth* are important because it takes in the entire territory of human existence, both Jews and Gentiles. And its *height* signifies that it towers above all other institutions in dignity and efficiency. Also its *depth* means that its foundation is laid deep, even down to the rock of Truth.

Verse 19. *To know . . . which passeth knowledge* may seem to be a contradiction, but it will be clear in the light of the comments on the preceding verse and those on verse 8. The love of Christ is indeed so great that it surpasses all human knowledge. However, that need not prevent man from having some knowledge of it. *Filled with all the fulness* is a phrase so formed for the purpose of emphasis. When a man complies with the terms of salvation, he becomes the possessor of all that God has provided for him in this life. There is nothing lacking in his spiritual needs (Colossians 2:

10), even though he does not fully understand all its divine greatness.

Verse 20. This verse should be regarded as an inspired comment on Romans 8: 26, as they mean virtually the same thing. It does not say that God will do for us all that we ask, for He knows better than we what is good for us. The thought is that God *is able* to do whatever He deems best; also, God will even do us such favors in a better form than we are able to express it. *Power* is from DUNAMIS, one of the strongest words in the Greek language for the thought of might or ability. That power is used by the Lord as he answers our prayers, and it is *in us* or on our behalf.

Verse 21. The pronoun *him* stands for God, whose name is mentioned in verse 19. *Glory is from DOXA*, which occurs about 163 times in the Greek New Testament, and is rendered by “glory” 144 times. The outstanding definition in Thayer’s lexicon as it applies to God, is expressed by the three words, “praise, honor, glory.” Men are expected to honor God, but they are not left to follow their own devices in offering honor to Him. Unless they proceed in the way that God has directed, their pretensions of honor will not be recognized by Him. It is stated by the apostle that the glory (or honor and praise) that is offered to God is to be done *in the church*. This decree rules out all other attempts, devised by man. Even admitting that the show of honor performed by men outside the church are as expressive as any that are done in the church, yet it will not be accepted because He has ruled that it must be done through the divine organization. This is in agreement with the divine purpose that all religious instruction must be done by the church (verse 10). The further stipulation that the glorying must be done *by Christ Jesus* is not done arbitrarily, but is logically necessary if it is to be done *in the church*, for chapter 1: 22 declares that Christ was given to be head over all things to the church. Therefore, anything that is done in the church is done by Christ Jesus, and vice versa. *Throughout all ages*. There are men who teach that the church was sufficient for the Lord’s purposes in the beginning of the era, but that modern conditions make it necessary for new methods to be used. This italicized phrase disproves that heresy, for it declares the honor given to God in the church must be so done through-

out all ages. As a matter of further emphasis Paul adds *world without end* which is the same as saying "to the end of the world." *Amen* is explained at Matthew 5: 18 in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary.

Ephesians 4

Verse 1. *Therefore* means that a conclusion is being drawn from the truths stated at the close of the preceding chapter. *Prisoner of the Lord* is explained in the comments on chapter 3: 1. To *beseech* means to entreat very earnestly. To *walk worthy* is to walk or conduct one's self in a manner suitable to his *vocation*. The last word technically means first the divine call or invitation to serve the Lord, and next it denotes that service itself. The same Greek word is used in 1 Corinthians 7: 20, where it is rendered "calling" and where the connection clearly shows it means a man's chief occupation. A Christian's chief occupation or *vocation* is service to the Lord.

Verse 2. *Lowliness* and *meekness* are virtually the same in meaning, but when used in combination, the first pertains to the state of mind and the second denotes the manner of approach. The phrase as a whole denotes a spirit of humility, which is indicated by the rest of the verse. *Longsuffering* does not indicate the least degree of compromise where principles of right and wrong are involved. It means patience in dealing with those who are uninformed and who thereby are led to make things unpleasant for others. *Forbearing* means about the same thing, and the apostle names the motive that will cause Christians to treat each other as he has been instructing them to do, and such motive is accounted for by the fact they have love for each other.

Verse 3. The "seven units" as they are so familiarly termed will be itemized soon, and in view of that combination the apostle gives a significant exhortation in this verse. All who are in the church are partakers of the one Spirit that animates the spiritual body. (1 Corinthians 12: 13; Ephesians 2: 18.) In this formal sense all members of the body of Christ are a unit since they are in the one and only institution that has been organized by the Lord. However, members of the church sometimes make their unity "doctrinal" only, and while maintaining a "united front" against the encroachments of false teachings and organizations of

men, they may not observe the degree of love for each other that they should. As a result, there will not be the *peace* with that organic unity that is so necessary for the welfare of the cause of Christ.

Verse 4. Having introduced the subject of unity in the preceding verse, Paul now names the items involved in the setup, consisting of six or seven, depending on the classification named in verse 6, to be considered when we come to that verse. *One body and one Spirit*. This is logical, for it is universally admitted that there is but one Spirit, hence if there were more than one body (which is the church) then all but one would be without a Spirit and hence would be dead, since a body without a spirit is dead. There can be but *one hope* because God has called us with only one purpose in view, namely, the life eternal beyond this age.

Verse 5. The primary meaning of *Lord* is "ruler," and God is generally thought of as the Ruler of the universe. At the same time we commonly think of Christ as Lord; why, then, does Paul say there is *one Lord*? There is a special sense in which Christ is Lord, in that he is "head over all things to the church" (chapter 1: 22); hence He is this *one Lord*. Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10: 17); since there is but one inspired Word there can of necessity be but *one faith*. We frequently hear people speaking about the various "faiths" in the world. Doubtless there are many systems of religious doctrines in the world, but they can only be those produced by human wisdom, and are thus vain beliefs since the apostle definitely declares there is *one faith*. *One baptism*. The simple meaning of this word is "immersion" or "an overwhelming," regardless of who is baptized, the element in which it is done or the purpose for the act. The New Testament tells us of four different baptisms; that of suffering (Matthew 20: 22, 23), of fire (Matthew 3: 11), with the Holy Ghost (same reference), and with water (Acts 10: 47, 48). We are sure that Paul was aware of all these, yet he says there is *one baptism*. The apparent difficulty will clear up by observing that the first three are not commanded of sinners while the fourth one is. Whatever the Lord wished to take place by His action, whether that be some kind of baptism or anything else, was sure to happen without the cooperation of man. But

something that must be done in response to a divine commandment, requires the willing act of needy mankind. Of such kind of baptism there is but one, and that is water baptism. Hence we find it here in a list of things that pertain to man's *endeavoring* in response to the apostolic command. More information on the meaning of the word *baptism* is given at Acts 8: 38, in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 6. God and the Father are actually the same person, and hence give only one item of the "units" referred to at verse 4. The first term refers to Him as a deity, a fact applying to him regardless of all other persons in the universe. The second states His relation to other individuals as the Heavenly Parent. The words *above*, *through* and *in* are used for the purpose of emphasis. Paul wishes us to think of God as the one supreme Being who is superior to all others in existence.

Verse 7. Several verses following this one deal with the spiritual gifts that Christ caused to be given to disciples in the first years of the church. This verse refers to them as *grace* because the possession of them was certainly a favor, which is the meaning of *grace*. *According to the measure* denotes that not all disciples received the same kind or amount of this spiritual favor. (See 1 Corinthians 12: 4-7.) But whatever degree of this grace that was bestowed upon the various members of the church, it was all a part of *the gift of Christ*.

Verse 8. *Wherefore he saith* indicates a quotation is about to be made, which is from Psalms 68: 18, and it is a prediction of the ascension of Jesus to Heaven, which is the meaning of *on high*. *Captivity* is from a Greek word that is translated "a multitude of captives" in the margin of many Bibles. This rendering agrees with the definitions and comments of both Thayer and Robinson. The fact that Jesus did this leading of the captives *when he ascended up on high* indicates it applies to some special group. Evidently that consisted of the saints who are mentioned in Matthew 27: 52, 53, who came from their graves after the resurrection of Jesus. It will be well for the reader to see the notes on Romans 8: 29, 30, in volume 1 of the New Testament Commentary. These saints had been prisoners (captives) in Hades, but they were released from

their "narrow chambers of death" by the resurrection of Jesus, who then led them with Him *when he ascended* to the Eternal Abode of those who are never to die again. As soon as Jesus arrived in the presence of his Father, he prayed that the Holy Spirit (Comforter, John 14: 16, 17) would be sent down upon the apostles. That was done, enabling them to bestow spiritual gifts upon them who had obeyed the Gospel (Acts 8: 15-18). The purpose of these gifts will be explained a little farther on in this chapter.

Verses 9, 10. These verses are a break into the direct line of thought that the apostle is discussing. However, are related to it in that they show the importance of Him of whom so much is being said. Having just referred to the ascension of Jesus, the apostle deems it well to say a few words about that subject. There have been two persons who have ascended to Heaven before: Enoch (Genesis 5: 24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2: 1, 11). But these persons were natural men prior to their ascension, hence that experience would not prove them to be divine. Paul at once meets that situation by declaring that this one who was said to have *ascended*, had before that time *descended*, and of necessity we would understand the descension to have been from the same place to which he afterwards ascended, which was Heaven, and that proves the divine origin and character of Jesus. *Lower parts of the earth*. Some explain this to mean the grave; it could not mean Hades since that is no part of the earth. Others teach that it refers to the lowly state which Jesus took upon himself and the humble life that he lived. I believe the statement embraces all of these and any other facts that were true of His stay on this earth. As proof that Paul has these great facts in mind, I will use the space to quote as follows: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2: 6-8). The first half of the tenth verse virtually repeats the statement of the preceding one, and then adds the phrase *above all heavens*. Since the heavens were all created by Christ in cooperation with God, it follows that in going back to his

Father, Jesus would be raised above those things he had assisted in making. *Fill all things* is said in the sense of fulfilling all things that He had promised to do, including the bestowal of the Comforter (promised in John 14: 16) to give to the apostles miraculous power, and the work of conferring spiritual gifts upon others, which gifts will be discussed soon.

Verse 11. *And he gave some.* Many translators and commentators insert the words "to be" after this italicized phrase. But the grammatical inflection does not require nor justify it, so that the words must be regarded as an insertion upon no inspired authority. On the other hand, the word "unto" is in the text in verse 8, where the subject matter is the same as it is in our present verse, and thus the word may be inserted after the phrase with inspired example. It is true that bestowing the office of apostleship and the other offices mentioned, could be regarded as an honor and hence as a gift. But if that is the gift Paul meant, then we are confronted with the thought that the apostleship and eldership were to be discontinued after the first ages of the church, for verse 13 shows the gifts were not to be permanent. In truth, that very heresy is today advocated by some extremists. No, it means that Christ bestowed some of the spiritual gifts upon the various persons named. That is not strange, for even the apostles needed miraculous qualifications while the New Testament was in the making. But the office of the apostleship itself was not to cease after the miraculous gifts ceased, but they (the apostles) were to continue in authority unto the end of the world (Matthew 28: 20).

These *prophets* were the ones referred to in chapter 2: 20. *Evangelists* is from EUAGGELISTES, which Thayer defines, "a bringer of good tidings, an evangelist," and he adds this comment: "This name is given in the New Testament to those heralds of salvation through Christ who are not apostles." Robinson defines it, "In the New Testament, an evangelist, a preacher of the Gospel," and adds the explanation, "not fixed in any place, but travelling as a missionary to preach the Gospel and establish churches." Groves defines it, "an evangelist, preacher of the Gospel." Greenfield gives the definition, "one who announces glad tidings, an evangelist, preacher of the Gospel, teacher of the Christian religion." I

have quoted from a number of lexicons because of the confusion that some are under concerning this word. The general trend of the various definitions, together with the connections in which the word is found in the King James Version, gives us the conclusion that it means a preacher whose special work is to preach the Gospel in new fields, then call the converts into assemblies for regular services, take charge of their development until men have been qualified for the eldership, then after appointing the elders to take himself from the management of the congregation and go on to other fields of labor. (See Titus 1: 5; 2 Timothy 4: 5; 1 Timothy 5: 19-21.) *Pastors* is from POIMEN and Thayer's definition is, "a herdsman, especially a shepherd; the presiding officer, manager, director, of any assembly." It applies to the elders of a congregation. This is shown in 1 Peter 5: 1-5 where the elders are mentioned in connection with Christ whom the apostle calls the chief Shepherd, thus representing the elders as shepherds, that being one of the words in the definition of our word *pastors*. *Teachers* is indefinite and applies to any disciple engaged principally in giving instruction to others.

Verse 12. This verse is a general statement of the purpose of spiritual gifts mentioned in the preceding verse. *Perfecting* means the strengthening of the saints (or Christians). *Work of the ministry* denotes the service of Christ in general. *Edifying* means upbuilding or making firm and being braced against attack.

Verse 13. *Till* is a preposition and denotes the termination of something. As used in this place it means that the things named in the preceding two verses will cease at the accomplishment of those mentioned in the present verse. *In the unity*. The first word is from EIS and may more properly be rendered "into." *Of the faith*. Verse 5 declares there is *one faith*, hence it is always a unit, and the statement of Paul does not mean that something was to be done to bring the faith into a unit, for it is already so. The thought is that *all* professed disciples would come into or embrace that unity. *And of the knowledge*. The word *unity* has already been introduced in connection with *faith*, and it is implied in connection with the phrase about knowledge. That would make it mean as if it said "and into the unity of the knowledge," etc. Since not all kinds

of knowledge is desirable, Paul specifies the kind he is writing about, namely, that of the Son of God. *Perfect man* is a figure of speech and means a full-grown man in contrast with an immature child. The illustration is to show the difference between the time when the church had to depend on spiritual gifts, and when it would have the complete New Testament. The contrast is likened to the immature thoughts and activities of a child, as against those of a man. *Stature* is from *HELIKIA*, which Thayer defines, "age, time of life; adult age, maturity; stature." It refers both to the age and size of a person, hence is a fitting illustration of the subject at hand. *Fulness of Christ* denotes that completeness of spiritual advancement that Christ makes possible through the complete revelation of the New Testament. I shall urge the reader to consider again the comments on 1 Corinthians 13th chapter.

Verse 14. The preceding two verses and several following the present one, show what is to be accomplished affirmatively by the complete New Testament. The present one states some of the things to be avoided by the complete volume. The original word for *children* is defined "untaught, unskilled," in Thayer's lexicon, and it is used to illustrate the unreliable standing of disciples who have no complete volume to guide them. *Tossed to and fro* is another figure for the same purpose, representing the untaught disciples as a frail raft tossed about by the waves. Waves are usually caused by *winds*, and the ones Paul has in mind are the false doctrines of men. Without the help of special guidance, the disciples would not be able to detect the false doctrines. *Sleight and cunning craftiness* refers to the trickery and deceptive language that false teachers use to mislead the untaught.

Verse 15. *Speaking the truth in love*. It is possible for one to be very strict in his compliance with the demands of truth from a "doctrinal" or technical motive, and yet not manifest the proper spirit toward those whom he addresses. Paul speaks of certain ones who received not the *love* of the truth (2 Thessalonians 2: 10). Those people would outwardly admit the truth because it is so evident they could not deny it, yet they had no real love for it and hence did not profit by it. In our passage the apostle teaches that full-grown Christians will love to speak

the truth. Truth is the substance upon which the disciple of Christ may grow—*grow up into Him in all things*. Physical bodies will not thrive unless they are under the control of the head where all the directing impulses originate. Likewise it is necessary for the spiritual body (the church, chapter 1: 22, 23) to have its growth and activities controlled by Christ its head, which will be considered in full detail with the next verse.

Verse 16. This verse as a whole may be regarded as a compound-complex sentence, but the central thought is expressed by the words *the whole body maketh increase*. All the rest of the verse is related to these words, enlarging and explaining how the body (the church) makes this increase. It is one of the most informative passages in the apostolic writings on the subject of "mutual edification," otherwise and more accurately termed mutual ministry; let us analyze the verse very carefully. *From whom* means from Christ who was named in the preceding verse as the head of the body. *The whole body*. If any part of a human body is thrown out of connection with the head, a state of ill health will result. Likewise the entire body or church must be subject to Christ the head, or spiritual illness will develop. *Fitly joined together*. In 1 Corinthians 12: 18 Paul is using the fleshly body as an illustration where he says: "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." The same is true of the spiritual body or church, of which he is writing in this verse. *Compacted* is similar in meaning to the last italicized phrase, only it is a stronger term. The phrase means the members are so constructed that they fit each other, while the word *compacted* denotes a closer knitting of the parts as if they were welded together to compose this body of which Christ is the head. *Every joint supplieth*. The joints are the members of the body, and the phrase clearly teaches that each member of the church is expected to contribute something toward the edification of it. Any discrimination that is made against a member of the body is wrong, and any member who fails to contribute whatever he can to the advancement of the church is a dead joint that is a detriment to the body of Christ. This *effectual working* must be according to *the measure* or ability of the parts, since the members do not all have the same

talents. When all of this process is observed, it will result in the increase or growth of the body, and it will be edified or built up in love for the Head and for each other as members.

Verse 17. *Testify in the Lord*. The first word means to exhort, and Paul is doing it in the Lord or by His instruction. The Ephesians were Gentiles mainly and had previously walked after the ways of the ungodly world. Having accepted Christ and started in His service, they were exhorted to discontinue their life of sin. *Other Gentiles* means those who had not become Christians.

Verse 18. This and the following verse describes the unrighteous way of life that the Gentiles practice who are still under the darkness of heathenism. It is much like the description of them in Romans 1: 18-24. *Understanding* means the mind, and it was darkened by their being *alienated* or separated from Him. The situation is accounted for by the fact of their *blindness* of heart. The other word for blindness is hardness of heart, or stubbornness.

Verse 19. *Being past feeling* all comes from the one Greek word *APALGEO*, and Thayer defines it, "to become callous." They were so hardened by sin that the truth had little or no effect on them, until they were even not concerned whether a thing was right or wrong. Such a state of mind would cause them to abandon themselves to the grossest kind of practices. *LASCIVIOUSNESS* means vile and vicious thoughts and desires. *All uncleanness* would include both physical and mental kinds. These people not only practiced such things, but did it *with greediness*, which denotes an active appetite for that kind of life.

Verse 20. *But ye have not so learned Christ*. The thought of this verse is as if it said, "you did not learn such practices from Christ." The Ephesian brethren had evidently become tinctured with such corruptions, for the exhortations so common in the rest of this chapter, as well as in many other places in the epistle, indicates such a conclusion. We recall this is the same church that is accused by John of having "left its first love" (Revelation 2: 1-4).

Verse 21. *If so be* is not said in the sense of any doubt, but it means that it really was true they had heard about Christ, and had been given the truth concerning Him. That being true, the apostle would repeat what he had said

in the preceding verse, then go on and give his readers some exhortations concerning righteous living in Christ.

Verse 22. To *put off* means to cease doing things that belong to men of the world. *Conversation* refers to the general conduct including the speech used with their fellowmen. *Old man* is a figurative name for the fleshly desires that people of the world try to satisfy. It is the same "old man" that is described in Romans 6: 1-6. *Deceitful lusts*. Such lusts are deceitful because they lead a man to think he is enjoying genuine pleasure, and yet they will be disappointing in the end.

Verse 23. *Spirit* and *mind* means virtually the same thing in a sentence like this, but the two are used for the purpose of emphasis. Paul wants them to realize that he is not writing about things that the fleshly body desires, but of those that are higher, and of a spiritual character. To be *renewed* denotes a change in their mind from an interest in carnal things, to desire the things that are spiritual.

Verse 24. *Put on* is the opposite of *put off* that is used in verse 22, and *new man* is the opposite of *old man* in the same verse. In ordinary language it means to cease doing worldly things and begin doing those that are spiritual. God is the creator of the material universe and also gives man his fleshly body. And He also is the creator or originator of the spiritual life that is to be practiced in Christ. *True holiness* does not imply there could be such a thing as false holiness. The phrase means that holiness is that kind of life that is according to truth.

Verse 25. Genuine repentance means a reformation of life, and it includes both the ceasing of practices that are wrong, and the doing of those that are right. Hence Paul teaches that lying should be put away, and truthful speaking be done instead. *Members one of another* is true because all Christians are members of the one body, namely, the body of Christ. (See Romans 12: 5:) It would not be good for the different parts of the physical body to oppose each other, for that would have a bad effect upon the whole body (1 Corinthians 12: 26). On the same principle, the members of the church should be interested in each other to such an extent that they would not do each other any harm by being untruthful in their dealings together.

Verse 26. The mere fact of being angry does not constitute sin, for

Jesus looked upon the people with anger (Mark 3: 5), and God is angry with the wicked every day (Psalms 7: 11). The sin consists in what one allows his anger to lead him into doing. That is why the apostle adds the warning not to let the sun go down upon one's wrath. That is, do not harbor the angry thoughts, but banish them before the day comes to a close, lest they finally tempt us into committing some sin.

Verse 27. *Neither give place to the devil.* Do not furnish the devil any room in your heart, for he will be sure to occupy it and go to work with his schemes. If a person harbors wrath from day to day, he is making an opportunity for the devil, and that is the same as giving him place.

Verse 28. Many of the admonitions throughout these verses deal with the two sides of practices, namely, the wrong and the right. The reader is instructed to avoid the first and do the second. The thief must cease obtaining property by stealing, then go to work that he may obtain it in an honest way. This is not only to supply his own needs, but also those of others. There are persons who are unable to support themselves, and that makes it the duty of the strong to help them in their need.

Verse 29. *Corrupt* is from *SAPROS*, which Thayer defines, "Of poor quality, bad, unfit for use, worthless." Robinson defines it, "Bad, decayed, rotten; corrupt, foul." *Communication* is from *LOGOS*, and it has been rendered by "word" in the King James Version at least 220 times. Hence the first sentence of this verse means that Christians should not use any language that is filthy and useless. Paul gives his explanation of what constitutes *good* language, namely, that which will edify or build up and strengthen the hearer. Such speech will further help the hearers by ministering or serving them with *grace*, which means favor of a spiritual kind.

Verse 30. A part of Thayer's definition of the original of *grieve* is "to offend." The Bible was given to the world through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If we show any disrespect for the Sacred Volume, then, we will *grieve* or offend the Spirit. *Whereby ye are sealed* means they are furnished with assuring evidence by the Spirit which reveals the truth of salvation through the apostles. *Day of redemption* refers to the day of judgment when all faithful servants of God will receive

their eternal crown of redemption from sin.

Verse 31. *Bitterness* is the same as strong hatred. The three words, *anger*, *wrath* and *malice* are used in this one verse, indicating that there is some distinction between them, although they have a similarity of meaning and may generally be used interchangeably. The three words are used in immediate succession in Colossians 3: 8. The difference is chiefly in the degree of their intensity. *Anger* is the temper when stirred up, but which should not be retained beyond the sunset. If it is so retained it may develop into a more fixed state and then it is *wrath*. If it is still cherished against another it will become *malice* which is a form of hateful spite. *Clamor* means a disorderly outcry or noisy demonstration against someone whom we consider as being in the wrong. *Evil speaking* refers to unfavorable remarks against another that are made from the motive of injuring him. All of the evils named in this verse must be *put away* or avoided by those who have become Christians.

Verse 32. *Kind* and *tenderhearted* does not require any compromise of the right, but it means that we should be considerate in our criticism of others in view of our own weaknesses. (See Galatians 6: 1.) *Forgiving one another, even as.* The point is that God has given us a divine example of the act of forgiveness, and we should be influenced by that example also to forgive our brethren.

Ephesians 5

Verse 1. *Dear children* means beloved or favorite children. If a child could think of his father only as a tyrant, and a man who regarded his offspring merely as subjects whom he could rule with a cruel hand, it would be an unpleasant task to obey his commands. On the other hand, if he believed that his father was directing his conduct because of a deep love for his child, it would certainly be a joy to obey such a parent. God has given numerous evidences of His love for the children in the divine family, and Paul asks the Ephesian brethren to obey Him from that motive.

Verse 2. *Walk in love* is along the same line as the preceding verse; love to walk so as to please the loving Father. An additional motive is in the fact that Christ as well as God loved us—even before we loved Him. The

love of Christ for us was proved by the supreme sacrifice that He made for us by the death on the cross. *Sweet-smelling savor* is said in view of some sacrifices that were offered to God under the law of Moses, in which sweet incense was burned as an odor that was sweet.

Verse 3. *Fornication* is the unlawful intimacy of the sexes. For a detailed explanation of the word in its relation to "adultery," see the comments at Galatians 5:19. *Uncleanness* means impurity in general, whether of the body or the mind. *Covetousness* is from PLEONEXIA which Thayer defines. "greedy desire to have more." A reasonable desire for the good things of the world is not wrong, for they are necessary to man's existence in this life. But a greedy desire for them will take a man's mind away from spiritual matters and may lead him back into a life of sin. *Not be once named*. We should not interpret any statement in the Bible in such a way as to contradict some other plain one. The fact that Paul just named these things shows he is not forbidding his brethren even to mention them, for that would be condemning himself. The explanation is in the last three words of the verse, namely, *as becometh saints*. Hence he means these things should not be mentioned with approval.

Verse 4. The Greek word for *filthiness* in this *passage* does not appear in any other place in the New Testament. It means something that is low grade in character, either in word or deed. *Foolish talking* and *jesting* mean virtually the same thing, but the two are used for the sake of making a stronger impression. Christians are not required to be glum and unhappy, yet they should not indulge in conversations that are undignified and meaningless. *Not convenient* means unbecoming; anything that would be out of place in a Christian. *Rather giving of thanks*. The children of God have so much to be thankful for, that such a frame of mind should influence their speech.

Verse 5. Even one single act of unlawful sexual intimacy constitutes fornication or adultery, but a *whoremonger* is a man who makes it a common practice; especially one who patronizes a woman who receives men for money. *Unclean person* means one who is corrupt either in body or mind. *Covetous* is explained in the comments at verse 3. Paul does not say that such a man is merely as bad as an idolater,

but says he is one. That is because idolatry consists of being devoted to any thing or person except the one true God. A man who is greedy for the temporal things of this world will be chiefly interested in them, and will give his greatest devotion along that line, hence is an idolater. An *inheritance* is a share in the property of another either through a relationship with him, or by some provision in his will. God has offered to adopt any person who will, into His family, and thus make him an heir of the Heavenly Estate. Paul states that such evil characters as the ones just mentioned will be denied any share in the good things of God. It is called the kingdom of Christ *and* God, because both the Father and the Son are one in spirit and purpose. Christ is the active king, ruling under his Father, but at the last day he will give up the rule that the Father may be the exclusive King. (See 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.)

Verse 6. *Vain words* are those that sound very well on the surface, but which are deceptive in reality. Some men might be able to speak in such a way as to make it seem that the things Paul had just mentioned were not wrong; he is warning his brethren against such false teachers. God's wrath is never shown against anything that is right, yet it has been expressed concerning these practices; therefore they must be wrong. *Children of disobedience* is a figurative term that means a group of persons who do not have enough faith in their professed father to obey Him.

Verse 7. A *partaker* with a person is one who either actually joins with him in doing the same things, or who encourages him in it by friendship with him.

Verse 8. *Were sometimes darkness* refers to the time when these Ephesians were in the darkness of heathenism. Having been led into the light of divine truth in Christ, their *walk* or general conduct should be in harmony with such divine truth. *Children of light* is a figure similar to the one in verse 6 except that it applies to truth instead of unbelief.

Verse 9. A tree is known by its fruit (Matthew 7:16-20), and the kind of character a man maintains can be known only by the fruit or outward deeds in his life. The Spirit cannot produce anything but that which is *goodness and righteousness and truth*.

This important subject is treated also in Galatians 5: 22, 23.

Verse 10. When men walk according to the truth that has been given to them by the Spirit (through the inspired writers), it produces the good fruit of righteousness just mentioned. That will *prove* (make a practical demonstration) the Lord's way is best.

Verse 11. To *have fellowship* has the same meaning as being a partaker, which is commented upon at verse 7, but Paul adds another command in this verse, namely, to *reprove* the evil. The word is from ELEGCHO, and Thayer defines it at this place, "by conviction to bring to light, to expose." According to the laws of the land, even, "to conceal a crime constitutes another crime." If the servants of God know of the existence of sin and do not condemn it, they thereby become partakers thereof. All active things whether good or bad produce some kind of fruit (Matthew 7: 17), hence the word *unfruitful* in our verse means that it does not bear any proper fruit. *Works of darkness* refers to the evil practices that are performed under the cover of the darkness of error and the absence of spiritual light of truth.

Verse 12. The workers of darkness mentioned in the preceding verse are the persons meant by "them" in this verse. To *speak of* cannot mean the mere reference to the things done, for Paul has just done that very thing. The word *speak* is from LEGO, and one part of Thayer's definition is, "to enumerate, recount, narrate, describe." *In secret* denotes that the things they were doing were not open to the public, not that no people knew anything about it. Paul had to know about it, else he could not have spoken of it as he did. Neither is that because he was an inspired man, for some historians have given accounts of such proceedings. But they were often so vile and immoral that it would be a shock to the decent mind to describe them in detail.

Verse 13. *Reproved* means to be exposed or made known to all, and that would be done by turning on the *light* of truth. That is why those deeds were done "behind closed doors." This subject is treated in John 3: 19-21, which shows the same spirit of men who do not want their actions to be known, because they fear that good people would refuse to have any fellowship with them.

Verse 14. The terms used in this verse are figurative or spiritual, and pertain to the proper conduct of Christians. Divine truth is referred to as light, because it makes known many things that could not be known otherwise. Isaiah 60: 1-5 is a passage that deals with the subject of light, and our verse evidently refers to that. Paul is exhorting the brethren to bestir themselves from their spiritual slumber, and arise from their spiritually-dead condition so as to be ready for the light that Christ offers.

Verse 15. The original for *circumspectly* is defined by Thayer, "exactly, accurately, diligently." To *walk* in such a manner, it is necessary for one to see or take heed to the divine law that is given to direct his steps. Jeremiah 10: 23 says "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Hence it is necessary for the Lord to give the directions, which He has done in his word of truth. The sentence may well be expressed by the familiar phrase appearing in many public places, "watch your step." The original for *fools* does not appear in any other place in the Greek New Testament. It does not mean a person without intelligence, for such an individual would not be responsible and hence should not be given any religious commands. The word is defined in the lexicon, "unwise, foolish," and Robinson explains it, "without true wisdom in Christ." This shows the word means a person who does not consult the Lord's instructions as to the proper way to walk; the *wise* person is the one who does give them heed.

Verse 16. *Redeeming* is from EXAGORAZO, and Thayer's definition (the part in italics) at this place is, "to make a wise and sacred use of every opportunity for doing good." *Time* is from KAIROS, and Thayer defines it at this place, "opportune or seasonable time," then adds the comment, "with verbs suggestive of the idea of advantage." This definition fits in well with the meaning of redeeming just explained. We should make use of every advantage that comes before us for doing something good. If that is done, it can be said that the time we spend is not in vain. *Days* is from EMERA, and it has such a wide range of meaning that Thayer uses two pages of his lexicon in defining it. Paul means there is much evil present in these days, and Thayer's definition of *evil* at this place is, "bringing toils, annoyances, perils."

To overcome these *evils* and make the time count ~~for~~ good, we are exhorted to "redeem the time."

Verse 17. This verse is related to the preceding one in that it recognizes the contrast between wisdom and the lack of it. The man who understands the will of the Lord is regarded by the apostle as a wise man, and vice versa. Such wisdom is necessary to enable one to walk in the ways of righteousness.

Verse 18. *Excess* is from ASOTIA. Thayer and Robinson agree on the meaning of this word, but I shall quote the definition of the latter because he uses a more common language. "Debauchery, revelry, riot." The American Standard Version also renders it "riot." The heathens generally filled themselves with wine and then engaged in their idolatrous performances, which often were disorderly even to the extent of being immoral. In contrast to that, Paul instructs his brethren to be filled with the Spirit. That can be done by drinking deep from the fountain of truth as it is produced by the Spirit through the preaching and teaching of the apostles. Instead of making them drunk and leading them into riotous actions and filthy conversations, it will produce the kind of thought exchange that is indicated in the next verse.

Verse 19. There is so much misunderstanding in the religious world over the proper kind of "music" to be used in the services of the Lord, that I believe it will be well to go into much detail at this verse. I shall first give the meaning of the different words in the passage. *Speaking* is from LALEO, which means words uttered by mouth, regardless of whether it is done merely as expressions of speech, or performed by singing. In the present verse it is used only in the form of singing. *Psalms* is from PSALMOS, which Thayer defines, "a pious song, a psalm." *Hymns* is from HUMNOS, and the same lexicon defines it, "a sacred song, hymn." *Songs* is from ODE and Thayer defines it, "a song, lay, ode," and explains it to mean, "in the Scriptures a song in praise of God or Christ." *Making melody* is from PSALLO. This word originally referred to a musical instrument and is defined in Thayer's lexicon, "to cause to vibrate by touching, to twang; to touch or strike the chord, to twang the strings; to play on a stringed instrument, to play the harp; to sing to the music of a harp." Many words in the old classical language

came later to have a more restricted meaning, and that is the case with PSALLO. Hence, Thayer defines it further as follows: "In the New Testament, to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song." Since the word literally has reference to a musical instrument, but Paul uses it figuratively, he tells us what instrument Christians are to play, namely, the heart. *Spiritual songs* means those exhibiting the effects and character of the Holy Spirit as taught in the New Testament. Any composition that combines the qualities of PSALMOS, HUMNOS and ODE would be a scriptural song, and such a composition is possible according to a footnote in Thayer's lexicon.

Verse 20. In Colossians 3: 16 Paul writes a passage on the same subject as the preceding verse at this place, but there is some difference in the wording as to what is to be accomplished by the singing. The brethren are to teach and admonish each other, and in the next verse they are told to give thanks to God, after having told them to do everything in the name of Jesus. We should consider our present passage in the same light as the one in the letter to the Colossians. *Whatever* ye do is directly connected with the command in the preceding verse to "teach" themselves in song, hence they were to speak on the subject of doing things for the Lord's cause, just as the instructions are given in our present passage. *In the name* means by the authority of Jesus, and all of the deeds performed for Him will prompt the true disciple to offer thanksgiving for the privilege of doing things for the Lord.

Verse 21. Whatever the New Testament says in one place must be considered in the light of what it says elsewhere on the same subject. We know there are certain men in the church who have ruling authority over others (1 Thessalonians 5: 12, 13; Hebrews 13: 17). By this we must understand our present passage does not teach a promiscuous exercise of rulership, for that would be divisive in its results. Thayer explains the original for *submitting* in this place, "to yield to one's admonition or advice." Such an explanation is correct since Paul adds the proviso *in the fear of God*. If a brother fears or reverences God, he will not give another disciple any admonition that is not in harmony with God's will. Therefore, if any member of the body of Christ, whether

official or private, gives another some admonition that is according to the will of the Lord, it is the duty of that person so admonished to heed the advice. Such an attitude if manifested by the various members of the church would prevent much of the confusion that so often divides the body.

Verse 22. This verse should be understood on the principle set fourth in the preceding one. A wife must *submit* to the authority of her husband as long as he requires nothing that is contrary to the will of God. When she does that, she is doing so *as unto the Lord*, for He has willed the husband is the head of the wife.

Verse 23. A comparison is made between a husband as head of his wife, and Christ as the head of the church. No institution or organization or body, whether temporal or spiritual and whether physical or moral, can prosper without a head, and the body must be under the control of the head. *Saviour of the body*. Chapter 1: 22, 23 says the body of Christ is his church. Hence, unless a person is a member of the body or church of Christ, he has no promise of salvation.

Verse 24. All normal human bodies are subject to and controlled by their head, and likewise the church is subject to Christ its head. Since the husband is the head of the wife (verse 23), she is to be subjected to him. *In every thing* is modified by the proviso mentioned and explained at verse 22.

Verse 25. When a man asks a woman to become his wife, it is presumed that he loves her; but too often he ceases to have the affection that prompted his proposal, and he may even become "bitter" against her as the companion passage in Colossians 3: 19 expresses it. The love of Christ for his church is cited as an example of the love a true husband has for his wife. Christ proved his love by giving his life for the church, and a devoted husband will do all he can for the sake of his wife.

Verse 26. The comparison between a husband and wife on one hand, and Christ and the church on the other, is used for the purpose of illustration as far only as the two are similar. However, the case of Christ is far more extensive than is required of a husband. Christ literally died to produce the cleansing blood for the purification of the institution that was to become His bride. *Washing of water* refers to the ordinance of baptism, by which men and women are made members of the

divine body. (Acts 2: 38, 41, 47; Titus 3: 5.) *By the word*. *Baptism* will mean nothing to a man unless he submits to it in obedience to the ~~word~~ of the Lord (Romans 6: 17).

Verse 27. *Present it to himself*. When a man looks upon a woman who is to become his bride, he delights in seeing her properly attired, with garments that are suitable for the occasion, being unsoiled and free from wrinkles. Jesus wished his bride (the church) to be thus qualified, and the phrase in italics first applies to the way the church appears to Him in this world if it is what it should be. But the actual marriage is to take place at the judgment day, and Christ desires that when the time comes, the bride will have adorned herself properly, in character and appearance (2 Corinthians 11: 1, 2; Revelation 19: 7, 8). To enable her to be so adorned, He has provided her with garments that have been cleansed from all blemishes by his own blood. *Spot* or *wrinkle*. A wedding garment should be free from stains, and be smooth in its physical form. The figure means the church should be "unspotted from the world" (James 1: 27), and free from such evil blemishes as *wrinkles* that may be caused by contact with the pressure of sin. To be *holy* denotes a life that is righteous according to the rules that have been left by the bridegroom.

Verse 28. The apostle continues his comparison that was started at verse 22, because there are so many points of likeness between the family and the church, the two and only divine organizations on earth today. *Wives as their own bodies*. When a man joins himself to his wife they become one flesh (Genesis 2: 24; Matthew 19: 5, 6). That is why it is said that *he that loveth his wife loveth himself*.

Verse 29. Self-interest will cause a man to be concerned about his own body, and if he is neglectful of his wife's welfare, it indicates that he does not realize she is a part of him. Christ never forgets the relationship between Himself and the church, hence he has always been mindful of its needs.

Verse 30. The terms of this verse are literal as they pertain to the members of the fleshly body. That is why the blood of Christ is not mentioned, for He did not have any blood even after coming from the grave (John 19: 34; Luke 24: 39). However, the application is to our relationship with

Christ and with each other (Romans 12: 4, 5; 1 Corinthians 12: 27).

Verse 31. *For this cause.* Since the union of a man and woman makes them one flesh, the man should *leave his father and mother*—consider himself no longer under their authority as a specific part of their group—and should give undivided faithfulness to the new union he has formed with his wife.

Verse 32. A mystery is anything that is not known, whether complicated or simple in its character. It is also something that could not be discovered by human investigation alone. No uninspired man would have thought that the joining of a male and female in sexual intimacy would actually merge their bodies into one. But the word of God has declared it so, and the fact will be acknowledged by all who respect Him. Paul recognizes the great reality, but says he is referring to it as an illustration of Christ and the church.

Verse 33. *Nevertheless.* Because of his statement as to why he was referring to the great *mystery* of the marriage relation, some people might conclude that what the apostle said on that subject was of minor importance. He here avoids such an error by direct instructions on the duties of a husband to his wife, repeating what he said in several preceding verses on that subject. He then adds instructions for the wife in her proper attitude toward her husband. *Reverence* is from *PHOBEO*, which Thayer defines at this place, "To reverence, venerate [regard with respect], to treat with deference [court-cous regard] or reverential obedience." It does not have the sense of regarding her husband as a superhuman or divine being, as the word "reverend" generally (but erroneously) is thought to mean.

Ephesians 6

Verse 1. The fundamental commands by which one becomes a Christian are the same for all persons, regardless of their place in society and the nation. But there are various duties assigned to Christians that are adapted to them in the different relations of life. The preceding chapter deals with husbands and wives, while the present one starts with the special duties of children toward their parents. The original word for *children* means offspring, regardless of age or sex, and whether temporal or spiritual. But the connection here shows it means fleshly children of either sex, but old

enough to have become Christians and thus subject to the religious instructions from the apostle. We learn also that a son or daughter may be old enough to obey the Gospel while still under the control of the parents. *In the Lord* means they are to obey as long as the parents do not require them to do something contrary to the word of the Lord. The proviso is similar to "in the fear of God" in chapter 5: 21. *For this is right* states the highest motive that can prompt anyone in obeying the commands of the Lord.

Verse 2. *Honor* does not contradict the preceding verse. If a parent asks his child to do something that is contrary to the word of the Lord, then he is not required to obey it. But while refusing to obey the request of his parent because it is unscriptural, he should do so in a manner that does not show disrespect for the parent. The overbearing attitude that so many boys and girls manifest toward their parents is never right under any circumstances. *With promise.* (See next verse.)

Verse 3. This is the promise referred to in the preceding verse. It pertains to a temporal reward consisting of long life on the earth, particularly that part given to the Lord's ancient people. The promise is not literally extended to Christians, but it is mentioned to indicate the importance of the command. If children obey this command (together with all others given to Christians), they have the promise of sharing in the new earth promised the righteous. (Matthew 5: 5; 2 Peter 3: 13.)

Verse 4. *Provoke not . . . to wrath* all comes from *PARORGIZO*, which Thayer defines, "to rouse to wrath, to provoke, exasperate [vex bitterly], anger." Parents who fail to control their children sometimes try to find justification by this passage. The rest of the verse shows they are wrong in such a course. The phrase means for a father to correct his child firmly, but in a spirit that shows he is doing it for his good. *Bring them up* refers to the supporting and rearing of one's children. *Nurture* is from *PAIDEIA*, and in the King James Version it has been rendered by chastening 3 times, chastisement 1, instruction 1, nurture 1. Thayer defines it, "the whole training and education of children." He adds by way of explanation, "which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employes for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punish-

ment." Robinson's definition and comments are virtually the same as Thayer's. The correction that is included in the word *nurture* is to be accompanied with *admonition* or exhortation, which means an earnest plea for the children to give heed to the correction administered by the parent. *Of the Lord*. The third word is in the possessive case, and makes the phrase mean, "such as belongs to the Lord or proceeds from him." This would apply to a father's duty to discipline his children (including minors) in a way acceptable to the Lord.

Verse 5. The word *servant* in the King James Version comes from a number of Greek originals. The one in this verse is the most frequently used, and it means a slave or servant as we commonly use the term. It is from *DOULOS*, and Thayer defines it, "a slave, bondman, man of servile ["slavish"] condition." In the time of Christ and the apostles the Roman Empire contained millions of slaves. These were not all inferior persons as to intelligence, but were the victims of war or other conditions over which they had no control. The prevalence of these persons explains why so many references are made to them in the New Testament. Jesus did not intend to interfere with the relation of master and servant, but He did give many instructions about the duties of each to the other when either became a Christian. Hence our verse commands the servants to obey their masters. *According to the flesh* denotes they were their masters in temporal things only. *With fear and trembling*. Not fear of punishment from the master, for that would be equivalent to "eyeservice" which is condemned in the next verse. Following his definition of the original for *trembling*, Thayer gives the following comment: "Used to describe the anxiety of one who distrusts his ability completely to meet all requirements, but religiously does his utmost to fulfill his duty." *Singleness* means with sincerity from the heart. *As unto Christ*. A faithful servant of Christ will strive to do his duty because it is right, and a slave also should be conscientious in serving his master.

Verse 6. Both Thayer and Robinson explain *eyeservice* to be "service performed only under the eye of the master." Such service would not spring from a conscientious motive, and would indicate that if the master were absent the servant would come short of his

duty. *Doing the will of God*. It is the Lord's will that all men who are employed by others shall fulfill their obligation with a pure motive.

Verse 7. *As to the Lord* is the same as the preceding verse.

Verse 8. Earthly masters may not always reward their slaves fully for their services, nor even give them due credit for the good work done; but one wrong act does not justify another. The slave who does his duty from the heart will not be forgotten by the Lord, and will be duly rewarded in the day of Final Accounts.

Verse 9. *Do the same things*. The masters were to conduct themselves as the servants were exhorted to do, namely, remembering their obligation to the Lord. *Forbearing threatening*. The first word means to cease using threats as a means of forcing the servant into obedience. This would not bar all reference to possible punishment for disobedience, for the apostle makes direct reference to the Heavenly Master in connection with the subject, and we know He has threatened to punish all of the disobedient servants. (See 2 Corinthians 5: 11.) The phrase is clarified by the one at the close of the verse, namely, *neither is there respect of persons with him*. Doubtless there were masters who felt superior because of their relation as masters, and took advantage of it to frighten their slaves. Also there were certain slaves for whom they had a personal dislike, and would be influenced thereby to utter spiteful threats against them. Paul instructs them that the Master in Heaven will not make any distinction between any *persons* in the exercise of His judgments, whether between masters and slaves, or between one slave and another.

Verse 10. *Finally*. In this and the preceding chapter Paul gives special instruction to husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants. He now addresses his words to them all as his brethren, and the instructions he is about to deliver will apply to them all, as well as to other disciples of Christ. *Be strong in the Lord*. The apostle is about to introduce an illustration from a soldier in the Roman army. One of the first things to be considered when a war is being planned or expected, is to make sure that every possible preparation has been made to strengthen the forces soon to engage in battle. Accordingly, Paul tells his brethren to obtain such

a strength from the Lord. *Power* and *might* mean virtually the same thing, being items added to the general instruction to obtain strength from the Lord. It is as if the apostle had said, "equip yourselves for the war by calling upon the Lord, for he is powerful and mighty."

Verse 11. A few verses are devoted to general remarks about warfare, after which Paul will specify the parts of equipment that make up the armor and fighting implements for the conflict. It is necessary to put on the *whole* armor, not merely the parts that may be the most agreeable to wear. *Wiles* is from a Greek word that Thayer defines, "cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery." The *devil* (from *DIABOLOS*) uses all sorts of tricks in his warfare against Christians, hence it is necessary to have on the whole armor, for there is no way of knowing just which piece will be needed most.

Verse 12. Paul likens the Christian warfare to a wrestling contest which was a common form of athletics in those days. In that bout the winner was required not only to throw his rival, but must hold him down with his hand upon his neck. A Christian must not only "win a point" against the devil, but must continue his victory until the antagonist acknowledges his defeat. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4: 7). *Not against flesh and blood* means the warfare is not a temporal one, but one in which the issue is religious or spiritual. (See 2 Corinthians 10: 3-6.) *Principalities* means rulers with seniority, and *powers* denotes that these rulers have authority from some effective source. The source is denoted by the phrase *darkness of this world*, which is a figure for the doctrines of error taught by false leaders. *Spiritual wickedness* is rendered "spiritual powers of wickedness" by the Englishman's Greek New Testament. *High places* is rendered "heavenly" in the margin. The Greek word *OURANOS* is the word for the three heavens—the air, the starry region, and the dwelling place of God. In our verse it means the first heaven, because the devil and his angels were said to have that region for their dominion. Hence we read of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (chapter 2: 2).

Verse 13. After describing the kind of warfare the Christian is to fight, the apostle repeats his exhortation for

taking on the *whole* armor, which is necessary for him to withstand the enemy. *Evil day* means any day in which the enemy appears. *Having done all* comes from the Greek word *KATEBCAZOMAI*, and it is defined by Thayer, "to perform, accomplish, achieve; to work out, i.e., to do that from which something results." Hence the last five words of the verse means, "having taken on the whole armor and thus made full preparation, then make good the use of it and *stand* firm against the enemy." The Christian soldier who avails himself of this complete armor, then follows up with faithful use of it, is assured of final victory (Romans 8: 31, 37).

Verse 14. *Girt* is from *PERIZONNUO* which Thayer defines, "to fasten garments with a girdle," and he explains it to mean, "to fasten one's clothing about the loins with a girdle." Robinson defines it, "to gird oneself around, to be girded around," and his explanation is, "spoken in reference to the long flowing garments of the orientals [people of the East], which they gird up around them while engaged in any business." Further light will be shed on the passage by a similar word in 1 Peter 1: 13, which Thayer explains by the following information: "A metaphor [illustration] derived from the practice of the Orientals, who in order to be unhampered in their movements were accustomed, when about to start on a journey or engage in any work, to bind their long and flowing garments closely around their bodies and fasten them with a leathern girdle. Robinson gives the same definition and explanations. It explains the words "loins girded" in Exodus 12: 11, and "cast thy garment about thee" in Acts 12: 8. Paul uses the circumstance as an illustration; that truth will help the Christian to "get himself together" and be unhampered for the service at hand. The *breastplate* was a piece made of metal, covering the body from the neck to the hips, thus protecting the heart and other vital parts of the body. If a Christian's life is one of *righteousness*, the attacks of Satan cannot harm him. O, he might be put to death physically, but that will not injure his soul. (See Romans 8: 31, 38; Philippians 1: 20.)

Verse 15. *Feet shod*. The Israelites were told to have their shoes on their feet as they ate the passover. That was in order to be ready to travel on a moment's notice (Exodus 12: 11). The Christian is to be *prepared* to

travel as a spreader of the Gospel (Isaiah 52: 7) by means of the story of peace—peace in the great warfare for all the forces in the enemy's ranks if they will surrender to Christ.

Verse 16. The *shield* was a protective instrument supplementary to the breastplate, but smaller, and was carried by one hand and could be turned toward various danger spots independent of the general movements of the body. Firebrands in the form of darts were hurled by the hand in the close-up conflict. The shield was made of metal and could receive the *fiery darts* without any harm. The shield of the Christian is his faith in the great Commander, who has given assurance of victory. When a disciple of Christ gives up to the attacks of the enemy, it is because his faith is weak, and he acts as if the experience had come upon him as an unforeseen incident. Such is not the case, for 1 Peter 4: 12 warns Christians not to look upon the circumstance as some strange thing that has happened to them.

Verse 17. The *helmet* was a cap for the head, made of metal as a protection from the darts of the enemy. The term is more definite in 1 Thessalonians 1: 8, where it is called "the hope of salvation." A Christian can face any foe and even rejoice in the presence of death, because of his hope for salvation after death. Mohammed inspired his soldiers to "fight to the finish" by his assurance that faithful servants who died on the field of battle, would be taken to a land filled with the things that gratify the lusts of the flesh. Christ promises that faithful soldiers of the cross will live after earthly death in a country that will give unending enjoyment of spiritual pleasure. This completes the armor, all of which is for the forepart of the body, indicating that Christ expects his servants to be always facing the foe.

The only weapon that is furnished the Christian soldier is a sword, which denotes that the struggle is to be one of close contact—no long distance fighting. The sword consists of the word of God, which Paul declares is "sharper than any twoedged sword" (Hebrews 4: 12). It is the sword that Jesus used against Satan in the wilderness (Matthew 4: 4, 7, 10). Paul calls it the *sword of the Spirit* because the word of God is inspired by that source. Since the days of the apostles the Holy Spirit operates and speaks to

man only by means of the Bible, hence the Christian soldier can "fight the good fight of faith" only if he knows what that Volume teaches.

Verse 18. *Praying always* is a general phrase, denoting that the soldier of the cross must never cease to be a praying man. *With all prayer* is rendered "with all manner of prayer" by Moffatt, and the lexicons agree with it. That is because the addresses offered to God are of various kinds and degrees of intensity, and Paul mentions some of them here. The simple word *prayer* is general and means any request or plea. *Supplication* is a more intense pleading for the thing desired. *In the Spirit* denotes the prayer must be spiritual, which means it is in harmony with the teaching of the Spirit in the word of God. *Watching*. Jesus taught his disciples to "watch and pray" (Matthew 26: 41). The soldier of the cross must always be on the alert against the tricks of the enemy. *Perseverance* means patient continuance in the service of Christ, even when conditions might seem to be unfavorable. *For all saints*. We should pray for ourselves and likewise for our brethren everywhere.

Verse 19. *And for me*. If an inspired apostle needed the prayers of his brethren, it is certain that other disciples need them also. However, Paul was not so much concerned about his personal welfare in the present instance. He was in Rome and was a prisoner, having been taken there upon his appeal when in the court of Festus (Acts 25: 9-12). He was anxious that *utterance* (opportunity to speak) might be given him to preach the Gospel boldly. *Mystery* is explained at chapter 1: 9.

Verse 20. *Ambassadors* is from *PRESBEUO*, which is used only twice in the New Testament (here and in 2 Corinthians 5: 20). Both Thayer and Robinson give us the simple word that is used in our verse as their definition, which shows they understand the Greek term to mean the same as the English, namely, "the official representative of his own government or sovereign." The term is never used in reference to any person but the apostles in the New Testament. Hence there are no ambassadors for Christ living on earth today, for the apostles are still in authority (Matthew 28: 20). *Bonds* is from *ALUSIS* which Thayer defines "a chain, bond," then adds the explanation "by which the

body, or any part of it (the hands, feet), is bound." It is an apparent contradiction that an ambassador would be shackled with a prisoner's chain. But we need to observe that the chain attached to Paul was not placed there by the government of which he was an ambassador. Hence, while bound in a literal chain by an enemy government, he might be able still to represent the sovereign in a foreign land. "The word of God is not bound" (2 Timothy 2: 9). Paul's mouth was still free, and he wished the brethren to pray for divine help that he might speak the Gospel of Christ with boldness.

Verse 21. Thayer says TYCHICUS was "an Asiatic Christian, friend and companion of the apostle Paul." Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary gives the same information, with additional notes that he carried the epistle of Paul to the Ephesians.

Verse 22. Tychicus was near Paul much of the time and was acquainted with the state of affairs concerning the apostle. He could comfort the hearts of the brethren by the information that Paul was standing firm in his faith.

Verse 23. Paul's manner of salutation was not always the same as it pertained to the persons addressed. Sometimes he singled out certain individuals, at others he made it general as he does in this verse. Hence there is nothing significant in the form used.

Verse 24. Paul wishes the *grace* (favor of the Lord) to be with the brethren; that is, with those who professed to love Him and who were sincere.

Philippians 1

Verse 1. The account of starting the church at Philippi is given in Acts 16, and the reader should now take time to study that entire chapter before going further with these comments. This epistle was written in Rome, under circumstances similar to those connected with the one to the Ephesians, for Paul was a prisoner in chains on account of the persecution of the Jews in Palestine (Acts, chapters 22 to 26). *Timotheus* is another form for Timothy, who was a faithful companion of Paul in his travels (Acts 16: 1-3), and hence with whom the brethren at Philippi would have some acquaintance. Paul mentions him as joining in the loving salutation to the church. The epistle is addressed to *all the saints*, which means all the Christians

in Philippi since the two words mean the same. The salutation includes both official and unofficial members, because the quality of being a saint is not an official one. However, the apostle makes special mention of the two and only classes of officials in the New Testament church. *Bishops* is another name for the elders or rulers over the congregation, which will be fully discussed at 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2. *Deacons*. The work of these officials is explained at Acts 6: 2, in the first volume of the New Testament Commentary.

Verse 2. *Grace* is from CHARIS, and one part of Thayer's definition is, "kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved." This phase of the word explains why the apostle specifies that it is the grace from God he is wishing for his brethren, since all of God's favors are bestowed upon man undeserved by him. They are bestowed only through the Lord Jesus Christ. That is because the sacrifice of Christ provided the way for God to maintain his justice and at the same time extend this unmerited favor to humanity. *Peace* is from EIRENE, which is used 90 times in the Greek New Testament, and is rendered by our present word 88 times. As it applies to individuals, Thayer defines it, "peace between individuals, i.e., harmony, concord." As to disciples and the Lord he defines it, "the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatever sort it is."

Verse 3. The original Greek word for *remembrance* is so rendered 3 times in the King James Version, and by "mention" 4 times. The various translations and commentaries differ as to their preferred rendering. The truth is that the difference between them is slight. However, I believe the connection favors the marginal rendering, namely, the word "mention." In Romans 1: 9 and Ephesians 1: 16 this Greek word is used in virtually the same kind of connection, and in each of those places it is rendered "mention." The verse could well be understood as if it said: "Every time I have occasion to mention you in my prayer, it is with thanksgiving for what you have meant to me in my service to Christ." Several verses following bears out this thought.

Verse 4. *Request with joy*. The record of helpful service extended to Paul