

To the Saints and Faithful...

We want to look at Paul. He had a lot of fortitude in him to call himself an apostle, even though he was, because there was a day that he was trying to persecute and in some cases kill all those that followed Jesus. Paul came up the hard way, that is, God had to strike him down and cause him to go blind so that he had to listen. He didn't have any choice, and he listened. The reason God chose him was because he was thinking that he was doing God's will, but because he walked in law he could not see the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 1:1, *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:* In Revelation it talks about the called, the chosen, and the faithful. So he's talking about the saints: those that have gone through the cleansing process of recognizing sin and through the blood of Jesus have it removed. These are the people Paul is addressing. He's not addressing heathen; he's not addressing those that are half-heartedly seeking. These are those that have gone through a process and have been faithful and not run from the chastening of the Lord. You have to understand that to really appreciate Ephesians. Verse 2, *Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* Grace and the working out of your salvation comes from the Father and His Son. We know that grace is God's patience if you want to become a saint and one that is faithful and willing to submit to God, the Holy Spirit, and Christ. They will work with you even if you make a mistake or do not understand it right or even stumble and get caught going back to the old way for a short period of time. Every time God exposes something in you, it manifests itself and wants to carry you off. The stronger you get the bigger the spiritual forces you will be able to remove from you. But He starts with just little things and He works up to the big things. Jesus tells the story that to get rid of the strong man you have to get rid of all the little workers around him so the only thing left is the strong man. Then he has no help and you can get him out too. That's the way the spirit of grace works; little by little. I don't know that you can get to be a saint in just a snap or someone laying hands on you. One of the things I watch for when I pray for someone is that I'm not praying more than they are able to retain in their victories. Verse 3, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.* God is blessing us because we've gone through the process of being made holy as saints and faithful to God and not running or giving up but staying with it. That takes place because of the grace of God, so when that process is done Paul says we bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus who has blessed us. We bless God the Father and His Son by being faithful. That's the only way you can pay back a father; to stay where God has brought you to. He will keep letting us continue to grow and as we grow, we end up with all spiritual blessings. It doesn't say one or two, but we can have all of the spiritual blessings when we are in heavenly places. How do we get in heavenly places? The spiritual blessings in heavenly places come from your death to your flesh. If you have not died in your flesh, you cannot be in heavenly places, because you cannot take flesh and blood up in heavenly places. To operate in the spiritual realms in heavenly places you have to die to this world, which is dying to the flesh and coming alive in Christ Jesus so we can go where He is, in heavenly places. If you don't die, you will never be able to go in heavenly places. We can live in heavenly places because Christ came to break the power of sin. If we follow Him to that fleshly death, Jesus said I have power to lay my life down and I have power to take it back up again. The Father has given Me that promise. So Jesus was willing to die on the cross and to be resurrected as no man had done before, but Jesus was confident because satan had no grip on Him. When you are around certain people that have a lot of junk in them, when they start to draw on you, you can actually feel spiritual forces trying to draw you into their world, and you have to quickly back away so that doesn't happen. I've seen many times where people accept the Lord and appear to be saved and they go out and try to save the whole world and within two years they've lost everything and they are back where they are at because they didn't know how to see the enemy that was there in those they were trying to help. You can't drive something out of someone else that's still in you. Verse 4, *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.* That is the first church. Verse 5, *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.* We are a people that

as saints and faithful, do what is in the heart, the will of our Father who is in heaven. Jesus did the will of our Father and He said, if you've seen Me, you've seen the Father. When someone sees you, they should see the Son, and eventually the Father, in you. Predestined is probably one of the biggest stumbling blocks in the Bible. How most see predestined is that God already knows where we're going to be, so what's the use of trying to do anything. We are saved and whatever happens, it happens because God's predestined us and we can't change it and that's just the way it is. Have you ever heard that? That's not what Paul is talking about. We were predestined before the foundation of the world was set, to be a certain type of person that would have certain giftings that were needed in the body of Christ. When Jesus said depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you, it was because they never became who they were purposed to become from the foundations. Predestination is: each one of you were given a place to be in God to do a certain job. I know that God knew me before the creation of the world and that He had a certain time, a certain place, and made me to be a certain way so that I would be blessing Him in the joy of His pleasure. That's what I see. I see myself destined to bring pleasure to my Father. What's the best way to give pleasure to your Father? Do what He says. Not that all fathers can be followed, but we are talking about the saints and the faithful. Those are the people that if you obey them, they will bring you up quickly where you don't have to learn the hard way, you just accept it and move on. Each one of you has a call on your life that was predestined. Your call was predestined before the foundations of the world and God knew you. If you choose to not do what you were predestined to do, and you did iniquity, which is self-centeredness, you will stand before God at the end, and when He looks at you, He will say, I don't know you. That's not the way I made you. I have no idea who you are. There were things God just didn't want me to do. I said, but God, that's who I am. I just couldn't see myself being like a regular reverend. I was thinking, You're going to try to make me a reverend, and He spoke back to me and said, but that's not who I created you to be. I didn't create you to be that. That changed me all together. As He began to change my character and the way I walked daily, I began to change some things that He was not happy with. One of my first clues was when Jesus said, depart from Me ye workers of iniquity I never knew you, because there were some things I was doing that were self-centered. Maybe none of you have ever found yourself being self-centered but He didn't like me being self-centered. I could have argued with Him but when God says, that's not the way I made you, you need to stand up and pay attention. Well, what is it I'm supposed to be doing then, the way You made me to be? He began to show me and from that point on I grew into what He wanted me to be before the foundations. Verse 5, *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.* Most of the Bible in the New Testament is individual. In the Old Testament it was corporate, because it was law; you just do it. But in the New Testament it was relationship and the most important relationship you can have is between you and God. That's why Jesus said if your mother, father, brother or sister are more important to you than Me, or if you will listen to them instead of Me, you're not worthy of Me. Verse 6, *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* From verse 1 to verse 6 is describing the first church, that is, the first love. We are to the praise of the glory; we are to praise God for His labor to cleanse us. Any time God does a work in you, that is God's glory on you. ...*wherein he hath made us...* He didn't just say it would be nice if you would change. No, He caused you, made you, formed you, to be accepted in the beloved. Isn't that the saints? Isn't that the faithful? All of this that I've read so far is speaking to faithful people. The people that are heathen wouldn't know what you're talking about. You can hardly even talk to people about this stuff because they have no idea what you're saying. Verse 7, *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;* Because Jesus died on the cross we can have redemption by us going to the cross and shedding the desires of the flesh, causing it to die. Paul had a hard time with it. He said, I die daily. What are the riches of God's grace? His glory, His grace is worked through you so that you are accepted in the family of God's love. God doesn't love everyone, but if you come to this place, you are accepted into the beloved. Verse 8, *Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;* In this period of grace, God has given wisdom and prudence. I always think of prudence as taking wisdom and magnifying it. In that you can have prudence in understanding of the wisdom. The next thing you would call prudence would be understanding. You can have wisdom but if you don't know how to use it, it's not as helpful. Verse 9, *Having made known unto us the mystery of his will.* You wouldn't go

to someone that's heathen and say, do you know the mystery of God's will in your life? He's talking again to those that are faithful. He is making known unto you the mystery of His will in your life. He wants to do it. ...*according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself*: I know God's not fat, but I always think of some fat rich man sitting in a chair and saying, I've wanted to increase you, and to bring you up to be a real man, to have the ability to make decisions for me and run things. That's what God is doing right here. I'm telling you, if you can bring pleasure to your boss, there is no end to your increase. ...*which he hath purposed in himself*. What God knows, Jesus and the Holy Spirit know, so they know what the Father purposed you to be. When they saw Larry Troyer down there being selfish and self-centered at times, they came down. They knew that I wanted to know who God was so they began to do things that I would become part of the saints. They tested me for faithfulness and whether I would run or not. Three times I got mad at God and the fourth time I was going to I said, there's no use. He isn't going to move, I guess I have to. If I wouldn't have been under grace He would have kicked me out and I would be nothing. Verse 10, *That in the dispensation of the fullness of times...* We're in this dispensation from the time of the cross until the two thousand years are up and then we go into a different dispensation of living for a thousand years. When it says in Revelation their time is no more, that's when this dispensation will be over. ...*he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*: We have obtained the inheritance that was predestined for us if we follow through. He's saying because you are faithful and are saints that have cleansed yourselves you have an inheritance in heaven being predestined according to the purpose of what God wanted you to do. I love counsel because I would have no idea what to say or do but within a minute or so the spirit of counsel would come to me and I could speak for a while on the counsel after I just got through telling you a minute ago that I had no idea. It's just an awesome thing. There is nothing better than to give good counsel to someone. Even though you don't know all of the ins and outs about it, it's coming from God and He knows it all. We had the love of God, wisdom, and now counsel; so far three of the seven eyes. These are the things that will help us live in heavenly places because we're not letting the world affect us. Verse 12, *That we should be to the praise of his glory*. That we should be the praise of His labor over us. ...*who first trusted in Christ*. We should be praising the Lord for what He has done to us in helping us reach that place of inheritance forever with Him. Verse 13, *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise*. The word of truth is in you and you are a carrier of God's word. Verse 14, *Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory*. When we get to the place where we're grumbling because we have to go through something, we need to think about where we would be if God's grace wasn't on us to get us where we need to be. Verse 15, *Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him*: What is the knowledge of God? The knowledge of God is knowing His ways. People that don't know God's ways think it's the devil after them. But as you look in the scripture, even Jesus had to go on the cross and die to enter into that place He was destined to go. The knowledge of God will continue to grow in us as we continue to fellowship with Him in heavenly realms through Christ Jesus who gave us the seven eyes of God so we can know what's going on. Verse 18, *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened*; What is the eyes of your understanding being enlightened? If you have understanding of what you have gone through to get set free, then the eyes of your understanding see other people operate, and you know what they're operating in. We use that all the time. It doesn't take too long being around someone and you can pinpoint what they're operating in. That's the eyes of understanding. It enlightens you to see. ...*that ye may know what is the hope of his calling...* If you were put in a cell where you didn't meet other people, it would be more difficult for you to know your call. But as you deal with those that don't have that understanding, it won't take you long until you can feel and realize the giftings you have to help those people. ...*and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints*. This first chapter of Ephesians teaches how to enter into the heavenlies, into your call, and into the realms of pleasing God that brings joy to your soul. Verse 19, *And what is*

the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. The glory of the inheritance of the saints is that He is going to give us power to accomplish His will. He's going to come to us and give us power. Verse 20, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, The work of Christ His Son: He obeyed and received the inheritance, the inheritance of the church. He is the groom and we are the descendants of God. He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand and He will raise us from the dead. We as God's people will judge many things. The reason we can judge is because we know what the Father's will is. Verse 21, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: We are going, according to what God has given us, to rule over principalities, over powers, and might and dominion in the new world. It's hard to even imagine what is being said here, but the only thing we have to compare it to is the earth. Verse 22, And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

In just that one short little chapter he told what the saints and the faithful can look forward to and are walking in. We have six of the eyes, or the spirits, and the seventh one, which is the fear of the Lord, is just going back and catching people up with all of them at one time. But the best way is to deal with each eye or spirit one at a time so we are able to fight and not get busted because we don't know how to protect ourselves. Those that are going through that now will be able to help others in what is coming so they can come out of it. And that we were predestined to destroy principalities, powers, and the forces of the air, and take the dominion back: to destroy them that destroy the earth. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and Savior forever. If we could just absorb even one percent of what He is offering... We get excited when someone gets a house that's better suited for them, but a house compared to what this is? It's nothing. That's why Jesus said if you put Me second place to anybody in your family, your wife, anything, you're not worthy of Me. You have to understand that I'm offering you an incredible deal because the Father labored from the beginning until now all the things that exist. And yes, He's tough, but how did He get there? By being tough. By not quitting. Part of that toughness is because He sees the wickedness and how people trash His name. But when it's all over and the wrath of God is complete you won't find the wrath of God anymore. It will be the love of God.