

QUIET DAY 13 JUNE 2015

EPHESIANS: THE BIBLE'S SPIRITUALITY GUIDEBOOK

Whether you think of yourself as a mystic, a contemplative, or a beginner on the spiritual journey, Ephesians offers unsurpassed insight. From beginning the life of faith to becoming one with the cosmic Christ, Ephesians invites us and guides us on the journey of journeys. In this new Quiet Day series we'll explore these themes from the Book of Ephesians. All are welcome. Please remember to bring your Bible.

Ephesians 1

Blessed be God!

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God to the saints [in Ephesus] and faithful in Christ Jesus, ² grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ, ⁴ just as God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before God's presence, in love ⁵ God preordained us into adoption through Christ to God's self, this was God's own good pleasure, ⁶ leading to the praise of God's glorious grace, which is freely bestowed upon us in the Beloved. ⁷ In whom we have the deliverance through his blood, the forgiveness of trespasses, according to the riches of God's grace, ⁸ which God lavished upon us; with all wisdom and understanding, ⁹ making known to us the mystery of God's will, according to God's good pleasure, purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ into the administration of the fullness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth in Christ. ¹¹ In whom we also have received an inheritance having been destined according to the intention of God who all things works according to the counsel of God's own will, ¹² so that we would be to the praise of God's glory, we who were the first to hope in Christ. ¹³ In whom also you, when you heard the word of truth, the good news of your salvation, in whom also having believed you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the earnest (or "first installment") of our inheritance, until our full deliverance as God's own possession, for the praise of God's glory.

¹⁵ On account of this, I also, when I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ have not ceased giving thanks for you mentioning you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God, ¹⁸ having already enlightened the eyes of your heart, so that you may know what is the hope of God's calling, what are the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of God's power toward us who believe according to the working of the might of God's strength. ²⁰ This same power which God worked in Christ when God raised him from the dead and seated him at God's right hand in the heavenly realms ²¹ high above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name being named,ⁱⁱ not only in this age but also in the coming age; ²² and God subjected all things under Christ's feet and gave him who is head

ⁱ "In Ephesus" is lacking from the best manuscripts and considered by the majority of scholarship not to be original.

ⁱⁱ A good paraphrase could be: "or whatever is it called!"

over all things to the church, ²³ which is Christ's body, the fullness of the one who the all in all is filling.ⁱⁱⁱ

Was Paul the Author?

Strongly debated today.

Not an "Occasional Letter"

"In Ephesus" not in the original letter.

A more spiritual or mystical and practical letter. We could say "theological," but that tends quickly to throw is into a head trip. The letter is decidedly not that.

Blessed be God

It's all about God!

We need further and further more and more to be enlightened

Ephesians 2

Our Individual, Contextualized Encounter with Grace

1 And you who were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the aeon of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the ruler of the spirit that is now working in the children of disobedience; 3 among whom we all formerly lived our lives in the desires of our flesh doing the will of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like everyone else ... 4 but God being rich in mercy, because of God's great love with which God loved us, 5 and we ourselves being dead in trespasses made us alive together in Christ – by grace you have been saved – 6 and God raised us with Christ and seated us with Christ in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 so that God might show forth in the coming ages the surpassing riches of God's grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this has not come from yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not from works or deeds you have done, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are God's work, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them.

ⁱⁱⁱ Verse 23 is notoriously difficult to translate. Most modern translations opt for an easy translation that avoids the problems. Something like: "the fullness of him who fills all in all." The problem is that this is not actually what the final phrase says, and it misses how this verse relates to the message of Ephesians, which is essentially that God is "administering" the movement or becoming of creation into what God always planned. On the one hand, Christ is the all in all; on the other hand that Christ is the all in all is being manifested through Christ's body the church. The translation above reflects the idea that all things are not yet subject to Christ and that through the church Christ's presence is becoming known and manifested to all creation, especially all the powers. Cf. 1:14; 2:22; 3:19 (Also see Heb. 2:8)
