

Chapter 1

Verses 1-2

“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: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.¹”

Verse 1

Paul – In all but the letter to the Hebrews (of which, Paul's authorship is regularly questioned), Paul begins his letters in the standard way of the day. First with the writer, then with the reader, followed by the greeting.

An apostle of Jesus Christ – A common theme across the epistles of Paul, he identifies himself as Christ's apostle. To Paul, his intent is to demonstrate 1) that he is a man on a mission, and 2) that he was specifically sent out by Christ as His representative/messenger. In some epistles, such as Paul's letter to the Romans, he identifies himself as Christ's slave.

By the will of God – The distinction is necessary. Many question the authority of a religious figure, especially in the modern world, and even more so from the predominate religion of the area. In Galatians, Paul stipulates his authority is not of man, nor through men, but through Jesus Christ and the Father. This demonstrates that Paul carries the authority he claims and that it was not Paul's own will and desire that manifested this great authority.

Who are faithful in Christ Jesus – The phrase not only describes the object of our faith (Jesus), but is much deeper in Paul's understanding. To Paul, Christ is not only our object of hope, but He in whom our entire lives reside.

Verse 2

Grace to you and Peace from God – Paul's greeting reaches beyond the standard greeting of the day. Grace demonstrates the unfailing love of God of which we neither earned nor deserved; which sought to save us purely from God's own initiative. Peace describes our current position and standing before God as a result of His grace. From the beginning of the work to the result, it is God who brings His enemies in and makes them to be His friends. Paul's greeting then serves as a blessing and assurance to all who would be called saints.

¹ [The Holy Bible: King James Version](#) (Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version., Eph 1:1–2). (2009). Logos Research Systems, Inc.

Verses 3-14

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 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: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times 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: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. 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, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.²”

The following passage, in English, consist of one very long sentence consisting of two-hundred and sixty-eight words. In the original language, Greek, the passage consists of four individual sentences, each of which should be interpreted as a whole and the section together as a whole. Through the passage as a whole, we see the work of each member of the triune God as they come together for the salvation of the elect. The Father through the election and predestination to adoption, Christ through the redemption through His blood, and the Spirit as the sealing agent by which we are marked as Gods. Through each members work, we are blessed because we are chosen as sons, because Jesus blood was given for us, and because the Spirit has guaranteed us to the promise.

Verse 3

Blessed is God – Paul begins his address by glorifying God and blessing His name. The statement is also one which signifies that we should bless and praise the name of God. The word is to speak highly of.

Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing – The word and statement, to have *blessed* is unique to Christianity and to the Greek culture in which this was written. The word *blessed* here is to describe an act which bestows blessings, to benefit and prosper. Within the Greek culture, it never said that a

² [The Holy Bible: King James Version](#) (Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version., Eph 1:3–14). (2009). Logos Research Systems, Inc.

deity has bestowed benefit to a person. Perhaps the most famous Greek god, Zeus, has never been said to give benefit to a man, only to give one luck.

Our God is unique in that He wants to pour out good things upon His children. We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing and enrichment needed for our spiritual life. There is nothing that God has withheld.

Verse 4-6

These verses consist of the work of the Father, the predestination and election of men to His adoption.

As He chose us – It is critical to understand our relationship to God in the work of salvation. Man did not seek out God and find Him and then in some way enter into a relationship. But it was God who sought out man. It was God, in the garden of Eden, who sought Adam and Eve after they hid. It was God who called Noah in the time of great wickedness. It was God who called Abraham from his house of idols. God chose Jacob instead of Esau, saved Moses from the wrath of Pharaoh, sought after David's heart, and indeed, it was God who called out to the Paul who authors this letter while he was on the road to persecute and slaughter more Christians. It has been declared that there is none who seeks God, even, there is none who does good, no not one. Christ proclaimed that only those who God has drawn near can enter into a relationship with Christ.

Before the foundation of the world – God chose each of us who should be saved prior to the foundation of the world.

Having predestined us to the adoption – If God chose us before the foundation of the world, what did He chose for.../to? God first desired a family, and He looked upon His sinful and fallen creation and chose us to be believers unto adoption into His family. To be bestowed the same gifts, rights, and privileges as if we had been born naturally into the family of God.

And if we were chosen, and chosen to adoption, to what purpose and end was this for?

To the praise of the glory of His grace – The end is that God should be glorified and praised for His endless and glorious grace. If God should freely save us and select us from sin to His own family, so much more should we praise Him and glorify Him for it.

Verse 7-12

These following verses consist of the work of Jesus as the agent of redemption.

In whom we have redemption – It is through Jesus Christ of which we have redemption. That is, redemption from sin and the curse it has laid upon us. Through Christ, we have been set free from the law of sin and death, and have been placed under a new law, the law of grace.

Through His blood – Sin is no light matter, and God does not treat sin lightly. So heavy is the weight of sin and the demands of the law that even the blood of God Himself was required to overcome its effects and ransom out those who God has elected.

According to the riches of His grace – So rich is God in love and mercy that His grace, through the precious blood of Christ, shall unmerited favor flow to all the undeserving who profess His name. The work of salvation was never a work that we took part in, and was always the free and precious gift of God (2:8-9).

The One who works all things – What a wonderful statement of the power and wisdom of our God. It is a great assurance that we have a God who works all things. In much the same way, Paul reassures the saints in Romans 8 with a similar statement that “God works all things together for good.” Both here and in Romans, there is often a temptation to leave the qualifying statements to these promises. In Romans, the qualifier is “For those who love Him and are called according to His purposes.” And here, the qualifier is “according to the counsel of His will. In both cases, the promise is one which should reassure any who has been elected and set apart for the glory of God.

Verse 13-14

In the final two verses of the passage, we see the work of the Holy Spirit as part of the work of redemption. Every spiritual blessing we have received in verse three is not due alone to the work of the Father, or the blood of Christ, but also because of the Spirit's work within us.

When you heard... and when you believed, you were sealed – The sealing of the Holy Spirit comes immediately when you both 1) hear the gospel of Christ and 2) believe upon Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is a **down payment of our inheritance**. He is a guarantee that we will receive the kingdom of God, that we have indeed been saved, and will guard us until the **redemption of the possession**. He will guard us until we have been removed from the presence of sin altogether.

Verses 15-23

“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: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 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:

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 fulness of him that filleth all in all.³

Verse 15

Hearing of your faith... love for all the saints – The faith and love of the saints in Ephesus was so great that Paul not only heard of it, but was so encouraged by it to commend the church and make it the bases of the remainder of this chapter. Paul’s letter immediately prior to Ephesians, to the church in Galatia opens immediately into rebuke and correction, as they did not hold to their faith and have fallen for false gospels. It is, then, encouraging to read of this churches strong stance. As Paul was greatly encouraged by the faith and love of the Ephesians, so to, should we be encouraged as we hear of the faith, love, and works God is doing through other people. And as the Ephesians lived in such a way that their faith and love could be known throughout the mission field of Paul, so too, ought we to live that others could be encouraged by our faith and glorify God in heaven.

Verse 16

Do not cease giving thanks for you and making mention of you in my prayers – Paul made it a habit of his to continuously thank God for the saints and regular pray for them. As Paul gives thanks and prays for the Ephesians here, He also is recorded as doing the same for the saints in Rome (Rom 1).

Verse 17-20

That God... May give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation - Specifically, Paul prays that the church is Ephesus will be given spiritual wisdom. Paul further breaks this down into specific areas of wisdom.

- So that you may know the hope of His calling.
- So that you will know the riches of the glory of his inheritance.
- And that you will know the surpassing greatness of His power.

Dealing with hope – Paul wants you to know the hope of His calling. Again, it is not the person who initiates, takes part in, or performs the works of salvation. It is alone a work of God. A work, which brings hope to the hopeless. A hope that is not a far reach, a distant dream, a graspless desire, but one which is promised, which is secured, which is guaranteed through the blood of Jesus and the sealing of the Holy Spirit. A hope which to be known gives great peace, love and devotion to God. A hope which causes the dead man to live, and the sorrowful man to be filled with joy.

The riches of the glory of His inheritance – Final deliverance from the presence of sin and into the eternal presence of God will be our ultimate destination. Paul wants us to understand the fullness of God riches. The quality of life, the blessings, the fellowship with God that the inheritance will bring us.

³ [The Holy Bible: King James Version](#) (Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version., Eph 1:15–23). (2009). Logos Research Systems, Inc.

This is nothing that words can describe, that may be passed on from one brother to the next; but must be a divine revelation of wisdom and experience granted to you directly from God.

And the surpassing power of His greatness – Finally, Paul wants us to know the power of the greatness of God. Not only that God has promised us salvation, hope, and a great inheritance, but that He is capable, able, and willing. Paul writes that God demonstrates His power first: in the work of Christ. In that Christ came among us and died, but not only died, but was risen from the grave giving victory over death and the grave. And secondly by setting Christ at the right hand of the Father.

Verse 21

Christ is before all things, above all things, and the **Name above any other names**. There is none greater than Christ, and there is nothing that isn't subjected to Christ. He is supreme King over all of creation, that which is in Heaven and on earth. Christ is King, not only in the present age, the age of sin, darkness and death, but shall be King even still in the age to come, when the curse of sin has been fully removed and God shall make all things right.