

Paul first visited Ephesus on his 2nd missionary journey. The city was a cultural & commercial center. Capital of the Roman province of Asia. Ships from around the world anchored in its harbor. It a ethnic & religious melting pot. Legend claimed the city was founded by Amazons, half-mythical women warriors whose deity was Diana.

On Paul visit the chief goddess of Ephesus was Diana (Roman name) Artemis (Grk name) *'the mother goddess of all the earth'*. Her temple was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world--*a main tourist attraction*.

A huge statue stood outside the temple entrance-*image of Diana* represented by a body covered w/ rows of breasts(*Picture*) signifying her being the mother of all life. She embodied the reproductive powers of life. Basically pornographic w/ temple rituals of prostitution-A giant brothel in the name of religion.

City economy thrived by means of making & selling miniature silver images of Diana & temple shrines. *Magical & mystical phenomenon* associated w/ the temple rituals were a way of life.

On Paul's 3rd mission he established a strong work of God. He spent 3 years preaching, teaching & pastoring new converts. Occult practices were abandon, books amounting to great sums of money dealing w/ witchcraft, spiritism & the occult were burned. The silver trade suffered as a result of Christians evangelizing their pagan friends who were turning to the Lord.

In contrast to the money made on silver idols Paul tells the Ephesians about true riches in Christ when turning from idols to the living God.

Book of Ephesians called *'The Queen of epistles'* is one of four letters Paul writes from prison-Philippians, Colossians, Philemon-Paul calls himself an *'Ambassador in chains'* 6:20

The book is divided into two parts **ch 1-3** *'our wealth in Christ'*; **ch 4-6** *'our walk in Christ'*. **First** section tells of our position in Christ; **Second** section our practice. First our riches, second our actions.

We begin by seeing *who we are in Christ*, after *how we are to live*. Key word **'in'** 90 x's--emphasizing our position in & union w/ Christ.

*1 Paul, an **apostle** of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the **saints** who are at Ephesus, and who are **faithful** in Christ Jesus:*

Paul formerly *Saul of Tarsus* antagonist to the gospel & persecutor of the church--after conversion, called apostle *apostolos* 24 apostles recorded in NT but 12 unique-taught by Jesus, witness resurrection, work miracles.

All of us are *called by God* to be something for Him. First called *'saints'* 9 x's *'all who call on name of Lord'* 1Cor 1:2 **Saint William**

Faithful—a great commendation--Jesus parables **Matt 24:45,46** *"Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? 46 "Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Lk 16:10 "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much Matt 25:21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.'*

So many unfaithful OT, NT, today & even in the church. We need a fresh appreciation for the word **Gal 5:22** *fruit of the spirit*...Jesus called the true & faithful witness Rev 1:5;3:14 Who is our example

2 *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Grace 12 x's in Ephesians--*kindness toward the undeserving*—*Peace*
Shalom-*can't buy it, not for sale*--only in Christ' 27 x's--our spiritual position,
id w/ Christ. As a child of God we are free to draw on all the riches in our
heavenly Fathers bank account.

*3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us
with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*

Theme '*our riches in Christ*' – Spiritual blessings vs what world has to offer
(*law of diminishing returns*) won't satisfy...Can't exhaust spiritual riches.
Elon Musk \$180 Billion—if gave you \$70 Billion you'd have to work hard to
spend it--12 hr/days--7 days/wk--for next 66 years you'd have to spend
\$194 million/mo; or 441/2 million/wk or 61/2 million/day or 1/2 million/hr—
non-stop fair weather friends---all this and it still wouldn't satisfy.

Christians live in two worlds heaven & earth-- '*seated heavenly places*'**2:6**
Heavenly minded gives power & direction for earthly living **HPS** There is-
GPS global positioning system-navigating earth—heavens navigation on E

*4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be
holy and blameless before Him. In love*

*Chosen John 15:16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you,
that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever
you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you.*

Doctrine of election—salvation begins w/ God – lost don't seek Him *Romans
3:11 There is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God. God
seeks them—chosen before the foundation...*

This means salvation has nothing to do w/ our being worthy or nice enough
so He would choose us. No but completely by grace. With privilege comes
responsibility (*our facility*). We are to be *holy*, set apart & *blameless* not
reckless

Holy --*Hagios*-set apart, different—from world & to God. *Blameless*-a word for sacrifice-animal w/o blemish—whole person, every part of life brought before & offered to God. Incredible high calling to think God chose us— A dirt clod to choose a diamond is nothing great. But for a diamond to choose a dirt clod, that is extraordinary.

5 He **predestined us to adoption** as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Predestined – to mark out beforehand, previously ordained. God’s plan for you was decided in eternity past. *Never in scripture predestined to hell.*

Adoption-Roman law ‘*Patria Potesta*’ Fathers power over family-he had absolute authority over child--to sell, imprison, enslave, even kill. Child not own anything. All that the child had was property of father, money, debt, inheritance so adoption was serious step—to ensure continuation of family tree (Abram *let Eliazer live before you*)

Once adopted has all rights & privileges of legitimate son & lost all rights of old family...In eyes of law they a new person w/ new name, all debts & obligations of old life were severed We are redeemed from old life of sin adopted into family of God & received adult standing in family w/ a claim to inheritance--old passed away all become new. It *according to the kind intentions of His will*—not our sweetness, good looks, talent, personality, intellect etc. But “*He saved us not on the basis.....*

Supreme purpose—the *praise of His glory*- God’s glory displayed in the testimony of our lives-to angels & world by means of our adoption. **1Pet 1:12**

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, 8 which He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight

Redemption-pay ransom for a prisoner--to buy back a slave-payment for freedom--6 mill slaves in Roman Empire traded and sold like livestock **1Pet 1:18,19** *knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.*

Forgiveness lit 'to carry away' 'let go' 'payment exacted/made' **Ps 103:12** *As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. Micah 7:19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*

Two things given as a result of God's grace **1 wisdom**-spiritual discernment-kept from making stupid decisions based on emotions **Samson** 'get her for me she looks good to me' **2 insight**- prudent, careful, sensible in wise conduct--not yoked together w/ unbelievers home or business.

9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him

Mystery – hidden but now revealed, sacred secret – Gods will & plans for our life—Greatest need in our woke culture w/ things turned upside down & not making sense is--'who am I' 'where am I going', 'why am I here' 'what is my value as a person..to God' 'what does God say about me' 'what is my purpose in life'

In God's heavenly bank account we find the answers. It's a joint account when we come to know Jesus as savior. God puts in I draw out—For me

it's – adoption, acceptance, redemption, forgiveness, wisdom, inheritance, sealed by Holy Spirit, etc.

Summing up-gather, bring to a head—climax of human history. What sin destroyed God in Christ restores to His purposes. Us & new H & E

11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Inheritance-we are joint Heirs w/ Christ—we will be there & partakers w/ Christ when He claims His inheritance.

13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

After listening-w/ intent of doing--*message-good news* & *believing* in object of message, Jesus Christ--You were *sealed* w/ Holy Spirit--legal term of finishing a transaction, signet or mark to seal in wax or clay—*speaks of ownership*. Pharaoh/Joseph signet ring; Pilate sealed tomb; Spirit in believer attesting to fact faith is genuine- *John Wesley 'A full impression of the image of Christ on their souls'* Holy Spirit possesses & owns entirely what He possesses—*yet we have free will*. *Promise* of the Spirit **Ez 36:27** *'I will put My spirit w/in you'* Peter **Acts 2:37-40** 'Having received from the Father the promise of Holy Spirit He has poured forth ...see and hear.

Pledge- engagement ring-down payment to purchase something- a guarantee--advance installment—emphasis on future condition w/ Him. He will come for what He purchased.