

# Great Truths From Ephesians - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

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*Understanding what God has done for us in Christ is essential for a strong spiritual foundation and a triumphant life.*

**Duration:** 59:55

**Scripture:** Psalm 1:2, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 1:3-4

**Topics:** "Ephesians"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker introduces a series of messages on the book of Ephesians and the importance of studying scripture as a whole. He emphasizes that God's word is meant to nourish and strengthen our souls, just as food is necessary for our physical bodies. The speaker also highlights the unity between believers and Jesus, stating that just as the head cannot be separated from the body, we are united with Christ. He further explains that God's mercy and love have made us alive in Christ, and encourages listeners to truly believe in and live out their new birth experience.

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## Transcript

I want to begin a series of three messages titled Great Truths and Ephesians. Now, most of the time when we hear God's Word, we probably hear a message on a particular subject, a topic. Well, that's called topical preaching.

But sometimes it's good to go through Scripture as a whole book, particularly some of the smaller books like Paul's letters, because that brings us into the depth of Scripture and gives us some solid meat to make us strong. God's Word is given to us as milk for babies and meat for grown-ups. And there are a number of verses in Scripture that teach that God's Word is meant to be to our soul and spirit exactly what food is to our body.

So, a person who neglects food is not going to be strong, and a person who neglects God's Word is not going to be strong spiritually. Now, when we hear God's Word proclaimed from a pulpit like this, we can say that's like spoon-feeding. Somebody else has digested the food and he's giving it to you.

We need it in the beginning, but as we grow up, just like children need to be spoon-fed, but we hope that they will grow up quickly to the place where they can feed themselves. And one of the great tragedies in Christendom today is that far too many Christians are like babies. It's not only today, even in the first century, the Apostle Paul, when he was writing to the Corinthians, he says, I can't give you anything but

milk, because you're babes.

I mean, you've been alive in Christ for a number of years, but you're still babes. It's like a 10-year-old boy or girl getting milk out of a feeding bottle. That's how many Christians were, and to the Hebrews also, the author writes, you should have been eating meat by now, but you're still only capable of drinking milk.

So right through the history of the church, one of the great tragedies has been that Christians have not seriously gone into God's Word, and this is one of the master schemes of Satan. The reason why many Christians are not able to overcome Satan, overcome sin, and live a triumphant life, the type of life described in the New Testament is because they don't go into the depths of God's Word. So, I want to try and help you to see some things here in Ephesians.

We won't have time to go through the whole book, every verse, but some of the most important truths in this book. So, if you have a Bible, if you can turn to Ephesians, and Ephesians is one of those books which is very neatly divided into two sections. The first three chapters deal with what God did for us, and the next three chapters, what God did for us in Christ, and the next three chapters deal with how we should live on earth as a result of what God did for us.

So, these are the two sections of Ephesians. In fact, I can't think of any other book in the whole Bible that's divided so neatly. So, by the time you go through this series, you'd have known quite a bit about this letter to the Ephesians.

Now, Paul is a very logical writer. He writes very logically in all his letters, and it's very important for us to have a foundation and to know what God did for us before we do something for God. And I've discovered through counseling and contact with many, many Christians through more than 40 years, that the problem with many Christians is they don't have an adequate understanding of what God has done for them, and they're rushing out to do something for the Lord.

Very sincere, maybe sacrificial, devoted, but they run into problems very quickly because they're like people who are building a house without a foundation. If we try to go out and do something for God, and when I say do something for God, I mean just live the Christian life, or try to build a Christian home, or go out and serve the Lord, or fight the devil, or whatever you do. If we try to do any of those things without a clear foundation of understanding what God has done for us in Christ, we're going to have problems sooner or later.

And if the devil knows that, and he does, he's going to make sure that you don't understand fully what God has done for you in Christ. And if you get to know a little bit, he'll try and make sure that you don't know any more, so that your foundation is weak. I have met numerous Christians.

I believe that their problems lie with the foundation. You know, if you get a crack in the third floor of a building, the problem is usually in the foundation. If you get a problem if the doors don't shut somewhere up in the higher floors, it's because of the foundation sinking.

And many a time, a person can go on as a Christian for 10, 15 years, and then have a problem in his life, or his married life, and the problem lies in the foundation. So we want to get a good foundation and efficiency first. And what is that? What God did for us in Christ.

So when we think of what God did for us in Christ, to appreciate it sufficiently, we must know something about what our condition was before Christ came into our life. And that is why I don't want to start with

chapter 1, I want to start with chapter 2. In chapter 2, we read here in Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 1, you were dead in your trespasses and sins. That's the perfect description of all human beings when they are born into this world, outside of Christ.

What they need is not reformation. I mean, if you have a dead man here, what he needs is not reformation. He doesn't need to be beautified or put better clothes on him.

What he needs is resurrection. And there's a lot of difference between trying to reform a person and trying to raise him from the dead. To reform a person, a criminal for example, a lot of criminals who get reformed, that's not a great miracle.

But to raise a person from the dead is a tremendous miracle. Only God can do it. Man may be able to reform another person, but man cannot resurrect another man from the dead.

So if we don't understand that our problem is not just a little bit of bad behavior, or a bad temperament, or some inherited weaknesses in our personality, no, it's much more serious than that. We are dead. And this is where, this is the mistake that all religions make.

There's no religion in the world that teaches that man is dead in sin. All religions may teach that man is a bit bad and needs to become better, and various religions try to improve this man whose behavior is bad. But it doesn't solve the problem, because it's like trying to dress up a man in better clothes, a dead man in better clothes.

That's all that religion does. You know how they, in the olden days, the pharaohs in Egypt, they used to make mummies out of them, you know, preserve them in such a way that they seem to be not fully dead, even after many years. But it doesn't solve the problem.

Person's dead. And that's what religion does. And a lot of people, for them the Christian religion is also like that.

They come to church, and they feel, well, I can, I've got to change my behavior at home, and maybe be a little more upright in financial matters, etc., etc. It doesn't make them Christians. Not at all.

What they need is resurrection. So that's what Jesus came to do. To become a child of God is an absolute miracle.

And that's what Paul is trying to tell the Ephesian people here. Once upon a time, you were dead in your trespasses and sins, and unconsciously you were obeying this unseen ruler of this world. That's how it says in one of the paraphrases, when it says here, you're walking according, verse 2, according to the prince of the power of the air.

In verse 2, what it means there is, you were unconsciously obeying this unseen ruler of the world. There is an unseen ruler of this world. His name is Satan.

And all human beings unconsciously have obeyed him till they come to Christ. And unfortunately, if they don't understand the gospel properly, even after they come to Christ, very often they unconsciously obey this unseen ruler of the world. So that's our condition.

This same attitude that's found out there in the world. But what did God do? Verse 4, it says, God who was rich in mercy. See, what we needed first of all was mercy, because we've done so many wrong things in

our life.

With his great love, with which he loved us, when we were in this dead state, made us alive. This is the best description of what the Bible says, when it says you must be born again. When the Lord told Nicodemus, you must be born again.

This is what it means, that a dead person is raised to life. The greatest miracle that God can do, is to raise a man who is dead in sin, and bring him alive in Christ. It's a greater miracle than physical resurrection.

And unfortunately, we don't appreciate that, because so many people who claim to be born again Christians, live just like they lived before they were converted, or claim to be converted. And so then our faith in this experience of new birth, begins to shake. We say, is there much in this? If a person is really born again, if he is allowed Jesus Christ to come into his life, and allows the Holy Spirit to give him the life of Christ within him, it is a resurrection.

God has made him alive. Now there's one thing I want to say here, concerning this phrase, God is rich in mercy. You know, when God, when we first confronted God, if you were, if you're a Christian today, the first thing that you received from God was mercy.

And that teaches me something. A very important truth, which I did not realize for many, many years after I was converted. And that is, if you and I, once we become Christians, and we're supposed to represent God to the rest of this world.

That's our calling by the way. If you have given your life to Christ, now you are supposed to represent God to the rest of the world. If so, and if the first thing that you got from God when you encountered him was mercy, then the first thing and the most important thing that other people must encounter in you and me, when they meet us, is mercy.

That's the character of God. If we cannot be merciful to other people, then I would say to you, you don't have a God who is rich in mercy. You haven't encountered a God who is rich in mercy.

We treat other people the way we think God has treated us. If you think God's very hard on us, we're hard on other people. And the reason why so many Christians are so hard on their wives and their husbands and other people, is because they've got a God, an imaginary God that doesn't exist in the Bible, who has been hard on them.

They haven't encountered the true God of the Bible, who is rich in mercy, ready to forgive any number of sins, any number of times, a million sins, in a moment he overlooks and forgives. This is the God I encountered. And this is the God I'm supposed to represent.

What a calling! That's why Jesus said, we must forgive others, just like God forgave us. It's a very, very important truth. It's one of the fundamental truths of the Christian life, because Jesus said, if we don't forgive others, God will not forgive us.

That's very, very important. Let's move on now. And it says here, that God raised us up with Christ, and made us sit together with him in the heavenly places.

Now this is an amazing truth, that God put us, this old man of ours, to death with Christ on the cross, and raised us up. And spiritually, something amazing has happened, in a true Christian. Now none of this

becomes true, if you don't believe it.

I mean, I can prove that to you. Christ died for the sins of the whole world. Why is it there are so many millions of people in the world then, whose sins are not forgiven, even though Christ died for them? Why is it for so many years, your sins were not forgiven, even though Christ died for them 2,000 years ago? It's because everything that Christ did, including his death on the cross, has validity in your life and in your becomes real in your life, only when you believe.

It's like putting on a switch, and the lights come on. Now if you know a little bit of electricity, you know that inside that switch, all that a switch does is, connect two wires that are kept at a distance when the switch is off. That's all there is in a switch.

The wires are kept apart, and when the switch is put on, the wires connect, and the lights come on. Everything turns on. That is faith.

Lord, I believe. And when you did that, it became real in your life. Otherwise, it can be there.

The power can be there, coming right up to the switch. And there's no life, till you make that connection. It's something like that.

And you know in your life that you never experienced forgiveness of sins, even though Christ died for all of them 2,000 years ago, till you believed. Can you consider this possibility? There could be many other things that Christ did for you, which you are not experiencing today, for the same reason that you don't believe. Here is one example.

That spiritually, God raised us up in our spirit. My body is still on the earth, but in my spirit, which is the deepest part of me, God did a miracle when I was born again, and lifted me up, and united me with Christ, who sits on the throne in the heavenlies. Now, when I understood this and believed it, it changed my whole outlook to life.

Don't you think the world would look different if you were sitting in heaven today, compared to what it looks like when you stand on this earth? You know, most of our problems are because we have this earthly viewpoint, because we haven't believed that God raised us up, and made us sit together, Ephesians 2, 6, with Christ in the heavenly places. I want you to consider this seriously. Those of you who have received forgiveness of sins, because you believe that Christ died for your sins, to recognize this wonderful truth, that God has placed us in Christ in the heavenlies.

I want to say it's not imagination. I'm not talking about visualizing something which is unreal. You know, we can't imagine something that's unreal, and make it happen.

I mean, however much I may imagine that I'm a millionaire, I'm not going to become one. It's not like that, and I'm not trying to teach you that type of rubbish. I'm telling you something that's true.

It's like an illustration I could use is, if you don't have many beggars sitting on the streets, like we have in India, in our country, we have many, many beggars sitting on the streets, extremely poor, with their little tin cans and a few coins in them, and I've thought about salvation like this. Some rich king comes along and tells this beggar, hey, I've opened a bank account in your name, and I put a million dollars there, and this beggar thinks this guy's just making a fool of me. Why should he do it? But another beggar sitting next to him says, hey, I don't lose anything by going to the bank and checking up.

At the most, I'll make a fool of myself. Nothing more than that, and he goes to the bank and checks up and discovers that what the king said was true. There is an account in his name with a million dollars, and he stops being a beggar from that moment.

But the other beggar who didn't believe, he just sits there with his tin can and a few cents in it for the rest of his life. This is the picture of two types of Christians. God did the same for both of them.

One person enjoys the benefit of it and the other doesn't. Why? Because one person believed it, went to the bank of heaven, and cashed on what Christ has done for him. The other person sat and said, oh, that can't be true.

It's too good to be true, and he sits as a beggar for the rest of his life. Now, I want to say to you, my dear brothers and sisters, this is absolutely applicable, perhaps, to your life. That the reason why you find yourself defeated, frustrated, depressed, discouraged, bitter, unforgiving, unable to overcome so many things in life is because you don't believe that Christ has done something fantastic for you.

It's so unbelievable. It's like telling this beggar that a million dollars has been put to his account. Who can believe it? It's amazing.

Here in this Ephesians, it speaks about the unsearchable riches of Christ put to our account. So, what I'm saying is something absolutely true. This illustration I used is absolutely relevant to the message of the gospel.

So, Christ has raised us up with Christ and made us sit in the heavenly places, and all of this, we read in Ephesians 2 verse 8, is by grace and through faith. Now, these are two great words of the New Testament. By grace through faith.

Ephesians 2 verse 8. Everything that God does for us is by grace through faith. By grace is God stretching out His hand and giving us forgiveness, or the power of the Holy Spirit, or healing, or power to serve Him, or anything. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, it's all by grace.

What is faith? Faith is my stretching out my hand and saying, thank you Lord, and taking what He offers. Now, the problem with many Christians is God is offering His gifts, but they don't stretch out their hand and take it. They're praying instead.

Lord, give me a gift. Give me something, and God's stretching it out all the time. What we need is faith.

I mean, imagine if somebody prayed to God like this, oh Lord, I'm a sinner. Will you please send Christ to die for my sins? Please Lord, please send Him, please send Him. Please save me.

And the Lord says, I sent Him 2,000 years ago. What do you need to do now? I don't need to send Him again. You just need to receive what I've done for you, through Him.

Now, apply that same thing to some of these other wonderful things written here in Ephesians. Let me show you this. In Ephesians chapter 1, in verse 3, it says here, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Listen to this. This is one of the most fantastic verses concerning our wealth in Christ, in the entire Bible. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us, past tense, just like Christ has died for all our sins, past tense, He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing.

Now, you've got to go slowly in this, Ephesians 1, 3. With every single spiritual blessing in Christ, in the heavenly places. Now, that means, spiritual blessing means blessing of the Holy Spirit. Potentially, God has already given me in Christ.

It's like this million dollars put into the bank account of this beggar. He hasn't drawn on it. He hasn't written a check and withdrawn that money, but it's there, in his name.

Now, if he doesn't believe it, and if he doesn't write out a check, he may live as a beggar for 50 years. And another person goes in there and draws that money, and lives like a millionaire. This is the difference between different types of Christians.

It's a question of how much we believe God has done for us. Now, if one beggar, let's say one beggar is better than the other one. Let's say a number of beggars sitting here, and one of them believes, well, I don't believe he's put a million dollars to my account, but I think there must be at least a hundred dollars.

So, he says, I'm not going to write a check for more than a hundred dollars, and he lives on a hundred dollars for the rest of his life. He's not much better than the other beggar who lives on a few cents. And here's another one who says, no, maybe not a hundred, maybe he's put a thousand to my account.

But what does God's Word say? Every single blessing of the Holy Spirit, that any human being can ever have, has already been put to my account, in the heavenly bank, in Christ. God's given me a lot of blank checks with Jesus Christ's signature on it. I can fill in whatever I want and take it.

It's up to me. If I don't avail of it, and I keep admiring these checks like Christians admire the promises, you get nothing. We got to claim them.

Go back to the matter of forgiveness of sins. Did you get forgiveness of sins because Christ died on the cross 2,000 years ago? I didn't. For 19 years of my life, I didn't.

But one day I got it, because I believed. I put on the switch, the lights came on. That's what we need to do with many, many of the other things in the Christian life.

So many people are seeking for something and God says, I've given it to you. Receive. We need to receive the blessings of God.

By grace, God stretches out, thank you Lord, I take it from you. We need a greater boldness to come before God and take from Him what He has already purchased in Christ. Can you think of the disappointment of God when He sees His children living like beggars, spiritually speaking, when they should be living like kings? I'm sorry that my own life was like that for many years, till God opened my eyes to show me that spiritually, I could live like a king on the earth.

The Bible says in Romans 5, that we're supposed to reign in life. I'm not supposed to be a defeated, frustrated, grumbling, murmuring, bitter type of person saying, Jesus died for my sins. That's a pathetic testimony.

So often, it's our testimony is weak because our life doesn't back it up. It's like I heard that story of the long-faced person who was witnessing to somebody about Christ and said, don't you need Christ? He said, no, I've got enough problems already. Because he looked at this person's face and said, this is what Christ has done for you.

I don't want it. Thank you. Ask yourself, is that your testimony? I want to say to you, it can change from today.

Not if you'll believe what I say, but if you'll start believing what God's word says, that He has blessed us with every single blessing of the Holy Spirit. What blessing of the Holy Spirit do you need? It's there in Christ. Seek it.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit. I have to come to Christ and say, Lord, this is already mine. I want you to give it to me right now.

I don't have to fast and pray and wait for five years before I get it. In Christ, everything is there. Whatever I need in life, the Bible says, my God shall supply all your need according to His riches and glory in Christ Jesus.

There's nothing that He cannot do and will not do. Doesn't God want me to live as a victor on this earth, as a conqueror? Jesus said, I want you to overcome even as I overcame. And isn't it such a disappointment to God when so many of His Christians, so many of His children, fail and fail and fail and fail? How would you feel if your child was failing in the first grade repeatedly every year? Failing, failing, failing.

I mean, he may be alive, but he's failing. You wouldn't be happy. Neither is God.

So I want to deliver you from this deception of Satan. I want to encourage you to believe what God has said. And I want to move on to verse four.

This is an amazing verse. God chose us in Christ before the worlds were created, so that we should be holy and blameless before Him. Now I want you to use your imagination a little bit.

We've used our imagination for a lot of filthy things when we were unconverted. Let's use it for some good things now. So use your imagination now and think back to that time before Adam was created.

And then you go back to the time when the angels were there and go back before that, when there were no angels. And go back before that to the time when there was only this universe. And then go back to before Genesis 1 verse 1, before Genesis 1 verse 1, to the time when there was no universe.

It was only God. Way back in eternity. Only God.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And me in the mind of God. And you in the mind of God.

Is that too much to believe? That's what this verse says. Before the foundation of this universe, He chose us in Christ. Now if you have responded to this salvation that I described in chapter 2, where I recognize I'm dead and I receive this forgiveness freely, without any works, freely from God.

Lord, thank you for dying for me. If I've received Him, then the Lord says, according to His foreknowledge. Foreknowledge just means that God knew beforehand what you're going to do a million years before you did it.

That's all foreknowledge means. God knows what is going to happen tomorrow. He doesn't influence your actions, but He knows them.

Foreknowledge doesn't mean God forces you to do this or that. That's false religion teaches that. Whatever happens, that's God's will.

Whatever happens is not God's will. It's what some stupid thing you do, you can't say that God, that was God's will. No.

But God knows beforehand that you'd go and do the stupid thing and you'd reap the consequences off it. But He doesn't influence it. He gives you a choice to choose the way of wisdom or the way stupidity.

That's up to you. But God knows it. He knows and He doesn't influence it at all.

Way back, millions of years before He created the world, He knew in this 21st century who would open their hearts to receive Christ's salvation. And in His foreknowledge, He chose them by name, you and me, and put our names in the book of life. He chose us in Christ.

Now, this is something which brings a tremendous sense of security to a person like me. I grew up as a very insecure Christian as a young man when I was converted. And when you're insecure, you're always trying to impress people and always competing with others, jealous of others, and many, many other problems insecure people have.

Relationship problems, all relationship problems in the human race are because of insecurity. The only solution is to find security in God. And here is something I tell you, believe me, my dear brother and sister, if you will believe what God's Word says, it can change many, many areas of your life because you will come to security in God.

What God has done for us in Christ, before the worlds were created, He knew your name and He chose you to be His child. I was not an afterthought with God, neither were you. He knew you and when I realized that, this is how it comes to me.

When I was born and when I was a little boy, I mean, I didn't know that one day I'd be a child of God and one day I would serve Him. God knew it. And so God was watching over me when I was a little child, make sure I didn't die in an accident or get some sickness or something like that, watching over me.

And here I was going along as a young man in my own rebellious way without having time for Him and He was still watching over me and you in all those years when you didn't care for Him. But He knew that one day you would turn and He watched over you and patiently, patiently worked with you for many, many years till that point of time came when you finally yielded to Him. Do you think you did it? Oh no, like the hound of heaven, He was following you, the love of God, following you, following you, protecting you here and there, saving you from accidents, sickness and death because He had chosen you before the worlds were created and He had to fulfill that purpose.

I tell you, if that doesn't give you a sense of how important a person you are, I don't know what will. That's what brings security to me. I'm not an accident.

You know a lot of people say that child was born by accident, rubbish. You are no accident, even if you are an illegitimate child, you are no accident. God chose you, if you've given your life to Christ, God's chosen you before the worlds were created.

Maybe your father and mother did something wrong, it doesn't make any difference to God because you are an individual soul in His eyes and He called you, He chose you and He has a purpose for your life. You know when I think of my own life, I apply it to myself and you can apply it to yourself. I'm applying it to myself not because I'm different from you, the same God who chose me chose you as well if you've given your life to Christ.

But the way I apply it to myself is like this, see God knew that He had a certain plan for my life and part of that plan was to give me a ministry of teaching in the church. That's not the most important ministry. Your ministry is equally important even though it may be a little different.

Don't think that it's only the ministries that stand up here in the pulpit that are most important. These are more the visible ministries like the eye and the ear and the tongue. Maybe some of you sitting there who never come up here have got invisible ministries like the heart and the liver and the kidney.

Do you believe these are unimportant? Certainly not. They are not visible but they are very important. So I apply this to myself only so that you can apply it to yourself.

I believe that since God saw that He had a certain ministry for me before as soon as I was conceived in my mother's womb, going back so many years when I was conceived in my mother's womb, God put certain things into my DNA to equip me for that particular task that He'd have for me 30 years later, 35 years later. And He's done the same for you. And those are the natural gifts He gives us.

And then later on He fills us with the Holy Spirit and gives us spiritual gifts too. And if we can believe this, we find the ministry God has for us and we're not in competition with anybody else. I'm not in competition with anybody because God has programmed something into my DNA and given me those unique gifts for the particular task I'm supposed to do for Him on this earth.

Now I want to say to you, He's done the same for you because He chose you and me before the worlds were created. It's very important to understand that. Now you may have given your life to Christ when you were 35 years old.

That's when you realized that you could be a child of God. But when did God know that? Before He created Adam. Before Genesis 1 verse 1. That's what this verse says.

And therefore He was watching over you from childhood because He had this wonderful plan for your life. Chosen in Christ before the worlds were created. Blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

I want to move on now. I don't have time to read all of this. I want to turn to Ephesians in chapter 1 and verse 17.

Now Paul says, I'm praying for you since all these wonderful things are true. I'm praying that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of glory may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. And he goes on to say, I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened.

Verse 18 Ephesians 1 verse 17 and 18. Now he doesn't say, listen fellas, I want you to read this letter of mine 10 times and you'll understand it. I want you to meditate on it.

Now all that is great. But this is more than meditation. Meditation was the great word of the Old Testament.

Revelation is the great word of the New Testament. You don't read much about meditating in the New Testament. Maybe one or two references.

In the Old Testament is, blessed is the man who meditates on the law of the Lord, Psalm 1 day and night. Because they did not have the Holy Spirit within to explain these scriptures to them. And meditating on scripture is like using our human mind without the aid of the Holy Spirit and trying to understand what God's word says.

Just like you would study a chemistry book or a history book. Like you study your books in school. You study with using your mind.

And most Christians study the Bible exactly like that. And that's why their lives don't change. Will you become more spiritual if you study a chemistry book? Or a history book? Well it won't change if you read the Bible either.

In the same way. You use your mind to understand what the Bible says. That's great.

But it shouldn't stop there. You know man is three parts. It's a trinity.

Like God is a trinity. The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 5.23. Man is spirit, soul and body. Soul is our mind.

And mind is one part of the soul. When we read the Bible in the New Testament time, we use our body. You know our eyes or your ears right now as you listen to me.

We use our body. But if you use your body and don't use your mind, for example, even if you're sitting here listening to me and your mind is 10 miles away or 50 miles away thinking about something else, you're not going to get what I'm saying. So through the eyes and the ears it must go into our mind.

And then it must go deeper into our spirit. That was not possible in the spirit of man was dead. How do you communicate with a dead man? You can preach the most wonderful truth, but he doesn't get anything.

The spirit was made alive in Christ. And here it says, Paul says, you're reading my letter a hundred times, won't give it to you. But I'm praying that God will give you revelation.

That means it's like switching on the lights. To try and understand the Bible, without the power of the Holy Spirit, is like trying to read a book in a very dark room. You can barely see some words here and there.

And revelation is like somebody suddenly switching on the light in that room. Say, hey, this is wonderful. Now I can read it.

That's what the Holy Spirit does. Now I want to encourage you when you come to study God's Word and read God's Word to understand these promises of God. To be open to the Holy Spirit.

The greatest gift God's given us in this New Testament age is the Holy Spirit. Honor Him. Seek for His power to overcome sin in your life.

Seek for His power to be a witness for Christ. I never get up to preach without seeking for the power of the Holy Spirit. I say, Lord, I can't do it.

But if you give it to me, I can do it. When I come to God's Word, I say, Lord, give me understanding. Otherwise, I'll be blind and won't understand a thing.

I can read it and study it like a chemistry book. And that's how unfortunately a lot of people who study the Bible in Bible school study it like that. But God wants us to have revelation.

That's the word in Ephesians 1.17. He says, I'm praying, you Ephesian Christians, you're wonderful fellows. You're born again. And you've got great faith and love for all the believers.

That's great. He says that in verse 15. I thank God for your faith.

I thank God you love all the others. You're great Christians. But I'm now praying that you'll get revelation.

On what? He says, I want you to get revelation. I want the eyes of your heart, verse 18, to be enlightened. Do you know that we've got eyes in our body and eyes in our heart? And a lot of people whose physical eyes are 20-20 vision, the eyes of the heart are zero.

They don't have much vision there. And Paul is praying. He says, I want the eyes of your heart to get light.

Otherwise, you'll never see this. You won't see it by meditating on this for reading it through 20 times. And he says, there are three things particularly I want you to get revelation on.

Number one, verse 18, I want you to know the hope of his calling. If you understand what God has called you for, it'll change you completely. You can never settle for anything less than that once you realize what God has called you for.

A lot of people wander through life aimlessly because they haven't understood the hope of his calling. And that's why they're so frustrated. They are frustrated because they didn't get admission in some college, or they didn't get a particular job, or they couldn't buy a particular house, or they couldn't marry a particular girl or boy or something.

All types of stupid reasons why they get frustrated. Why? Because they have not seen the hope of his calling. I tell you, it'll change your whole outlook on life when you realize that God called you not to buy a particular house or get a particular job or marry a particular person, but to become like Jesus Christ in your character, in your thoughts, in your conduct, in the way you speak to people, in your attitudes to people, in your love and humility, purity.

Once we see this, and not only that, there's more to it than that, to become like Christ, not only in character, but in my service, that God is a particular slot in the body of Christ. Like that song says, there's a work for Jesus that no one but you can do. There's a work for Jesus that no one but you can do.

There's a work for Jesus that no one but I can do. I can't do what you're doing, and you can't do what I'm doing, but there's a particular slot. There is a calling of God upon your life.

I'm praying that your eyes will be open to see it. I know what it did to me when my eyes were open to see it. I tell you, it made me a cheerful, triumphant Christian from the grumpy, miserable, depressed person I was.

Because I saw, hey, this is my calling, and if God's called me for that, anything less than that, I'm not going to live for. And when we don't see it, that's when we live for lesser things, and we have all types of

frustrations. I'm not joking when I say that the Christian life is one where we're supposed to live without ever getting frustrated in our life.

We may suffer. Jesus suffered, but Jesus was never frustrated. He was perplexed sometimes.

Even perplexity can be there. In the garden of Gethsemane, he was perplexed. Father, what is your will? So there's place for perplexity in the Christian life, but frustration and defeat and grumbling and murmuring, bad moods, not at all.

It all depends on whether we've seen the hope of our calling. We're not called for something low and earthly. How is it that Jesus, when he stood before Pilate with the blood flowing down his body, whipped and stripped and looking like, externally, so terrible, standing before Pilate with his gorgeous robes.

And I say, when I look at these two, I say, who is the true king here? That's Jesus. He was so dignified with the blood flowing down his body, beaten his back, his back all stripped with whips. This world.

And when Pilate says, don't you know I have power to crucify you? He says, you have no power over me except what my father in heaven gives you. Who is the king there? You know that you can be like that, if you have an understanding of the hope of his calling. I have been in situations like that, where people have tried to threaten me and frighten me.

And I've had to say the same thing. You have no power over me except what my father in heaven gives you to do to me. Of course, he could crucify him, but he couldn't do it without the father's permission.

I'm called to be a child of God. I'm the son of a king. Externally, Jesus didn't look like that.

And externally, you and I may not look like that either. But there's something in our spirit that God has done, when we believe the hope of our calling. He says, Paul's praying to these Ephesian Christians, you fellows are born again, but you're living at such a low level, because you haven't seen the hope of his calling.

I pray that you'll get revelation on it. Will you pray with me, Paul says, that you'll get revelation on this. The eyes of your heart will be open.

You'll see it. You know how sometimes you try to understand something and finally you say, I got it. That's what needs to happen here.

I got it. The hope of my calling. The second thing he says is, I want you to understand, verse 18, the second part, the riches, Ephesians 1.18, the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints.

Now, this is something completely different from what is mentioned in verse 11, where it speaks about our inheritance in heaven. Now, most of the time when you hear about inheritance, we think of our inheritance in heaven. We're going to get to heaven and get all this and all these wonderful things God has for us.

Praise God for all that. That's in verse 11. But I'm talking about something even more wonderful.

Like the Living Bible or one of the other paraphrases says, do you know that God became rich when He got you? And you say, who me? You mean God became rich when He got me? Can't be. You must be referring to somebody else. No, I'm referring to you.

God became rich when He got you. You know, we have such a low estimate of ourselves and thereby we insult the price that God paid to purchase us on the cross. What is it that gives value to an article? Which has more value, a big, huge wooden crate or a small little diamond? It's got nothing to do with size.

It's got to do with how much do you pay for it? Okay, we compared the wooden crate with the diamond. Now I want to compare this diamond, which probably cost thousands of dollars, with an ugly looking child of God, purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ. Which is more valuable? Have you seen that God values that child of His, even if you don't, because He purchased him with His blood? You know, I tell you, that has made me change my attitude toward God's children, especially those who belong to other churches and not my own, and who have slightly different doctrines from mine, but who are children of God, purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Now, I didn't have that attitude when I was a young Christian. I was narrow-minded, and I thought if everybody doesn't agree with my doctrine, he's going to hell. All these stupid ideas we have, till we see that God's heart is larger than ours.

Much larger than ours. Thank God for that. God's inheritance in His saints.

God has got an inheritance in His people, and I thank God I believe it. It's not conceit. Sometimes we say, oh, that's conceit to think that God became rich when He got you.

No, it's not conceit. It's faith. It's not humility to say, oh, well, I'm so useless.

God didn't get anything when He got me. I'm good for nothing. That's not humility.

That's unbelief. We have to say what God's word says. I'm not asking you to confess what God's word didn't say, but it says here, I'm praying that the eyes of your heart will be enlightened, that you'll get revelation to know that God has got an inheritance in you.

You look into the mirror and you don't look like it, but He's got an inheritance in you, because your spirit and your soul were purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ. Dear brother, sister, from this day, don't devalue yourself anymore. Maybe you fall.

Okay, confess your sin, but come before God and say, I'm precious to you. The third thing, He says, I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you know, this verse 19, Ephesians 1 19, the surpassing greatness of His power that is available, not for everybody. Listen to this.

God's fantastic power is not available for everyone. It's available to us who believe, who put on the switch, who receive what He gives. And the others who just sit and watch, get nothing.

The others who just wait outside the switch and don't turn it on, they don't get anything. But those who believe, there's an amazing power available to them. And He says, this power is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and took Him right up to the heavenly places and put everything underneath Him.

Do you know that the greatest manifestation of God's power was not in creation? That's what this verse says. We think that the greatest manifestation of God's power is that He spoke a word and worlds were created. But according to this verse, the greatest manifestation of God's power in the history of the universe was when He raised Jesus up from the dead.

I believe it. And it says here, greater than the power of creation, this fantastic power that's able to lift Christ up from the dead, having conquered sin, conquered death, conquered Satan, can now be available to me if I believe that that power can lift me up above sin, above the devil, above the pull of the world, above everything on this earth, if I open myself up to this power. It's not by mind, you know, techniques by which we fix our mind on something.

It's not like that. It's a supernatural power that comes and lifts me up. That's what can help me to be an overcomer.

And He says, I'm praying that you'll get revelation, that you'll be able to say, I got it now. This is the secret of the Christian life. I need resurrection power in me.

That's what the Holy Spirit has come to give. He's come to give us this resurrection power. And it says here, this is first manifested in Christ, whom God raised up, verse 21 of Ephesians 1, placed in far above all rule, Ephesians 1, 21, rule, authority, power, dominion, every name that is named.

And verse 22, put everything in subjection under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church. I think it's in the message Bible. It says here that God gave this position to Christ and then put him as head over the church, which is in the center.

And then it says, the church is not peripheral to the world. I like this, but the world is peripheral to the church. In God's understanding, the church is central and the world is peripheral.

Everything that God is doing centers around his purposes for the church. And by the church, born again believers who have given their lives to Christ. And Christ is the head and the church is his body.

And he's put all this under Christ's feet. And if I'm part of the body of Christ, it's under my feet as well. This is the wonderful position it says here.

And that's what I mean by saying that we can overcome everything that comes across our life, just like Jesus. One last verse. In 1 John chapter 4 and verse 17.

It's one of my favorite verses. 1 John 4, 17, the last part, it says, as Jesus is, so am I in this world. So are we.

Do you know what that means? That like the head cannot be separated from the body. See, when my head is here, my body is here too. When my head goes there, the body goes there.

Wherever the head is, the body is there. And if you understand this wonderful truth, that God, something in the New Testament was not possible in the old, has united us, made us one with Christ. He is the head, we're the body.

As he is, so are we in this world. Was there ever any situation in Jesus' life where he had to say, oh boy, what do I do now? Did anyone ever come to him with a problem and say, oh boy, that's a tough one. I don't know how to handle that.

Never. Is it really true? As Jesus is, so am I in this world. I'll tell you, remember what we considered earlier.

This mighty power is not available to everybody, but it's available to us who believe. That's right. If you believe, if you go to the bank and cash it and say in Jesus' name, that's mine.

If you go to the switch and turn it on, it can be yours. Let's pray.

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