

Through the Bible - Ephesians - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon on Ephesians emphasizes the importance of spiritual maturity and understanding one's position in Christ for effective Christian living.

Duration: 55:28

Topics: "Christian Foundation", "Faith And Trust"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the foundation of the Christian faith before moving on to the practical aspects of living a Christlike life. The first three chapters of Ephesians are highlighted as the foundation, where believers are reminded of what God has done for them. The speaker explains that without this foundation, any attempts to imitate Christ externally will be in vain. The sermon concludes with a reminder to trust in God's word and not rely on our own opinions or feelings.

Transcript

Let's turn now to Paul's letter to the Ephesians. We could say that Ephesians is perhaps the most spiritual letter, almost certainly, of all that Paul wrote. And that indicates that the church in Ephesus at that time was in a very spiritual state.

It was a good church. We don't find anything to correct. To the Galatians he had to use very strong language, saying, Oh foolish Galatians, who had bewitched you? And things like that.

Corrects them very strongly. But to the Ephesian Christians, he has nothing to correct. It's a wonderful church.

And so, he's able to share with them many, many things that he was not able to share with other churches. Like to the Corinthians, he says, I could only give you milk. But to the Ephesians, he's able to share more deeper truths.

That teaches us that we can only receive according to the measure of our spiritual growth. A baby cannot eat meat, because it cannot chew. And if we remain babies for a long time, we'll have to live on milk for a long time.

This is the condition of many believers. They never seem to go on to understand the deeper things of God. They are satisfied with, my sins are forgiven.

I'm on my way to heaven. Full stop. Now my job is only to bring other people to the place where their sins are forgiven.

And they're on their way to heaven. Full stop. And then they must go and bring other people to the place where their sins are forgiven.

And they're on their way to heaven. And that's all. Now, if that was the case, if that was true, I'd say a major section of the New Testament can be thrown away.

We don't need it. Why there is so much teaching in the New Testament? Because God doesn't want you to stop with the forgiveness of your sins. God doesn't want you to stop with being born again, with drinking milk.

He wants you to grow up to maturity on earth. Not just give the gospel to others. The more you grow to maturity, the more effective your testimony on earth is for the Lord.

God is not involved in a program merely of taking people to heaven. We need to understand that. He's also involved in a program where there must be a powerful, mature testimony for Christ on earth.

In place after place after place called a local church. And Ephesians speaks about a church. He speaks more about the universal church.

But if you understand the principle of that, that's how every local church should be. And Ephesians, we can say, deals with a heavenly life on earth. A church and a Christian can fulfill his function or its function on earth only as it is heavenly minded.

The more heavenly minded you are, the more you can fulfill God's purpose for you on earth. The more heavenly minded a church is, the more it can fulfill God's purpose for it on earth. The more earthly minded you are, the more useless you are to fulfill God's purposes on earth, even if you say you're going to heaven when you die.

Unfortunately, among the vast majority of believers, they are happy that they are born again. They say that's what makes the difference between born again Christians and nominal Christians. I'm born again.

And now my only job in life is to get other people to be born again. But the Lord says no. Ephesians says no.

You've got to be heavenly minded. And only if you're heavenly minded will you fulfill your function on earth. Your home can fulfill its function for God only as it is a heavenly minded home.

You know that expression we saw in Deuteronomy that your days on earth may be like the days of heaven upon earth. We saw that in Deuteronomy 11. That's how our life should be, days of heaven upon earth.

And Ephesians speaks about that more than anything else. There's an expression that comes very frequently in Ephesians. In Christ.

In Him. In Him. See, there is an external aspect of Christ which everybody sees when you read the Gospels.

He cared for the poor. He put his arms around the leper. He healed the sick.

He preached the Gospel. That's the external Christ. And most people, even many people of other religions, admire this external Christ.

And they try to imitate, some of them, this external Christ. And it looks very nice. You get a reputation of being a very kind person who helps the poor and does so many good things.

But Ephesians is speaking about being in Christ. He's speaking about that inner life. And if you follow the external Christ without being in Christ, you're not even saved.

You're doing it just to get a reputation before men. You've got to be in Christ first and see His inner values and what are the inner motivations in His life. From the inside comes the outside.

You remember when we studied the tabernacle, we saw that God did not begin with the outer compound wall made of that curtain. Or the sheets, rather. He began with the ark in the most holy place.

That's the first thing He described. That's God's way. When God makes a dwelling place, and you're a dwelling place, the church is a dwelling place, He does not begin with the outward testimony of that white sheet around the tabernacle first.

No. He begins with the ark in the most holy place. He begins with your spirit.

He begins with your being in Christ. In Him. In love.

The various times you find that in, in Him, in love. And that word in comes about 89 times in this letter. It's about grace.

Grace is a word that comes about 13 times in this brief letter. Spiritual. That's another word that comes about 13 times in this letter.

It's not about material things, this letter. It's about spiritual things. It's not about law.

It's about grace. It's not about the outside. It's about being in.

So, if you keep that in mind, you understand what Ephesians is about. A heavenly life on earth. That's why it begins straight away in verse 3 of the first verse with spiritual blessings in heavenly places.

Now, more than any other book, any other writing of Paul's in the New Testament, and I would say almost more than any other book in the whole Bible, Ephesians is very neatly divided into two sections. The first three chapters are telling us about our position as believers in Christ. And the next three chapters, as a result of this position, how we are to walk on earth and how we are to fight with the devil on earth.

But it begins with being in Christ, with our position in Christ. We can say it's like a building which has got a foundation and a superstructure. The foundation is Ephesians 1 to 3. The superstructure is 4 to 6. If you don't have the foundation and you only have the superstructure, you'll be like all these people who admire Jesus' life and say we must follow what it says in the Sermon on the Mount.

You know there are many religious people in other denominations and great people in different lands who have tried to follow Jesus, read the Sermon on the Mount and be kind and good. They remind me of a man who builds a superstructure without a foundation. What happens? The superstructure looks exactly like Jesus and people say, oh, that man of that religion, he's so much like Christ.

Who are the people who say that? I've even heard Christians say that, admire some man in some other religion. Oh, he's so Christ-like. These are the blind Christians who have no understanding of foundation.

They are looking at the superstructure like the foolish man who built his house without foundation. Oh, his house looks so nice. Wait till the flood comes.

Wait till the earthquake comes. The thing will collapse. There'll be nothing left.

Thank God all these buildings had a foundation. Weren't you happy this morning that all these buildings had a foundation? I was. So that's sufficiency.

When the earthquake comes, you'll stand. If you've got a foundation, if you've got chapters 1 to 3, otherwise the whole thing will collapse. So don't admire these people who follow Christ externally.

They don't have anything internally. You can't have chapter 4, 5 and 6 without chapter 1, 2 and 3. It's very important to understand it. Otherwise, you also will go around saying, oh, look at those people.

They are so Christ-like. Have they got the foundation, brother? That's what I want to know. I want to know where they'll stand when the earthquake comes.

That's what I want to know. When God shakes heaven and earth, as it says in Hebrews chapter 12, where are they going to stand? And then if you admire them, you will discover that you were as big a fool as they are. See, the danger of admiring such people is that you also become like them.

You don't bother about the inner life. You bother about the external. And you bother about caring for the poor, caring for the lepers and caring for the widows and treating people nicely and all this thing on the external.

It's a beautiful superstructure, but no foundation. And there's a tremendous danger of that in Christendom today. If a man does not have a foundation in Christ, all that superstructure is useless.

He'll be like the foolish man who built his house without a foundation. So please remember this. That's why Ephesians 1 to 3 is very important.

And let me say another thing about Ephesians. The first three chapters, there is no exhortation, no commandment. You're not told to do anything in chapters 1 to 3. You're only told what God has done for you.

In chapters 4 to 6, because of this foundation, because of what God has done, therefore you should do. Chapters 4 to 6 is full of exhortations. That is the balance in the Christian life.

First, what God has done in me. Therefore, what God does through me. Now, if God has not done a work in me, first, chapters 1 to 3, he will not be able to do a work through me, chapters 4 to 6, because it won't be God doing it through me, it'll be me imitating Christ.

And trying to behave like Jesus Christ externally. Jesus lived simply, I live simply. Jesus cared for the poor, I care for the poor.

Jesus preached nice things, and I preach nice things. And I can imitate all those external things about Jesus, and it's all outside. It's not God working through me, it's me imitating Christ.

God can never, never work through me, if he has not first worked in me. Please remember that. So that's why in Ephesians the great word is in Christ.

Christ in me, in Christ, I must be in Christ. And some of these great people, religious and other people who admired Jesus Christ, they did not first come in Christ. They just read the Sermon on the Mount and tried to follow that, without coming in Christ.

And then, even though they did a lot of good things, it was not God working through them, it was they imitating Christ. It was like a painted fire. You know, an artist can paint a fire that looks so much like a real fire from a distance.

But at night, it doesn't give any light. It doesn't give any warmth when you come near it. But from a distance, it can look like a real fire.

And some of these people who have imitated Christ through the years, you can be fooled by them if you don't have discernment. And the way to find out, for me, it is very simple. I want to know how much this person knows Jesus, not imitates Jesus.

Eternal life is not the imitation of Christ. No. Eternal life is knowing Christ.

Remember that. That imitation of Christ can get you a lot of honor in the world. You must first begin with knowing Him, come in Him.

Then, from there flows out the life. Jesus said, first clean the inside of the cup, then the outside will be automatically clean. Throughout the New Testament, it is that.

That's what He said in the Sermon on the Mount too. It's not just a question of not committing adultery. It's the inside of not even lusting.

Everywhere, Jesus' emphasis was inside. He said, it's not a question of your tongue. The mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.

So it's no use controlling your tongue if your heart is filthy. In a moment when you're not guarded, suddenly everything in your heart will come out and it's filthy. So Jesus said, watch your heart.

Because from there only, something comes out through your tongue. Ephesians 1-3 speaks about our position as a believer. Let's look at what it says.

First of all, verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ. Now that verse itself is so full. First of all, I want you to notice that all these blessings are spiritual.

They are not material. It doesn't say God has blessed us with all material blessings. That was in the Old Testament.

You read Deuteronomy 28, that if you obey the law, every blessing mentioned in Deuteronomy 28 was material. In earthly places. This is in heavenly places.

This is the contrast to the law. That was in Moses. This is in Christ.

If there was a verse like this in the Old Testament, it would read like this. Blessed be God Almighty, who is not our Father, just God Almighty, who has blessed us with every earthly blessing, with every material blessing and physical blessing in earthly places in Moses. That would be the equivalent in the Old Testament.

So when you are seeking physical blessing and material blessing and blessing in earthly places primarily, you are back under the law. You're in the Old Covenant. You're a Jew.

You're not a Christian. You're a follower of Moses, not a follower of Jesus Christ. Does that mean God does not bless us materially today? He does, but it's in a different way.

In the New Testament, we seek His kingdom first and the other things are added to us. In the Old Testament, they sought those things and they got those things. In the New Testament, they got plenty of those things on earth.

Many children, much property, a lot of money, victory over enemies, position, honor on earth, everything. In the New Testament, we seek all these things spiritually. Spiritual children, many spiritual children, much spiritual wealth, much spiritual honor, spiritual victories, not over Philistines and Amorites, but over the lusts of our flesh and over demons.

And these things are added according to what we need. God will give us as much as He knows will not ruin us. In the Old Testament, He may have made people multi-millionaires.

He doesn't do that for us because it would destroy us. It would prevent us from seeking those things which are above. So that is why many people haven't understood the difference between the New Covenant and the Old Covenant.

And that's why they are still pursuing those things which God promised in the Old Covenant. And they're also very selective about the Old Covenant. For example, the Old Covenant says you'll get a lot of money and a lot of children, but they don't want a lot of children.

They only want a lot of money. So they pick that promise out from the Old Testament and leave the other one. You see, they're not people of integrity.

There's a deception about them. All these prosperity preachers who take verses from the Old Testament never preach what it also says in the Old Testament that you'll have many children. I've never heard one of them preach that.

And that itself shows that they are deceivers. They're only telling you what they want. They want to justify their wealth with some Old Testament verse.

So don't be deceived by that. Here it says we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. And the other thing I want you to notice is the spiritual blessing could be translated as blessing of the Holy Spirit.

So potentially God has already in Christ given you every blessing in heavenly places of the Holy Spirit. It's already yours. You just got to go and claim it in Jesus' name.

To use an illustration, it's like if you're a beggar, a beggar girl. Let's assume that we're all like beggar girls sitting on the wayside and this rich prince decides to come and marry us and is put millions of rupees into

a joint account with his name and my name. Can you imagine what a lucky beggar girl this is who had nothing except a little tin can with a few coins inside and this handsome rich prince comes along and marries her and opens a joint account in the bank with millions of rupees and now she lives in a grand palace with good clothes and she can sign checks now.

In fact, the checks are already signed in the book. She's just got to fill in the amount. Every check has got the name of Jesus Christ signed in it.

You can take it to the bank of heaven and you, a beggar girl, can go and take it because now you've become an heir with Christ. This is what it is. Everything of heaven is for mine, for me, in Christ.

If I remain in this marriage relationship and say, Lord, I want to be married to you. I want to live all my life on earth as your bride. That's the greatest thing I long for on earth.

I can go and claim every promise, every blessing of the Holy Spirit is mine. Please remember that. You don't have to convince God, Lord, I deserve this.

I tell you, you don't deserve it. Can you imagine this beggar girl going to the bank and saying, I deserve this money? No. I don't deserve it, but the check is there.

It's in my name. I can take whatever I want. Don't go to heaven and say, Lord, I fasted.

Please give me this. No. I remember once how the Lord taught me this lesson.

I was praying for something and I said, Lord, I've served you so many years with a lot of sacrifices. Can't you do this for me? And the Lord said, no, I won't do it for you because you're coming in your name. That day I understood what it means to pray in the name of Jesus.

What does it mean to come in my name? I was saying, Lord, you've got to do this for me because I've served you for so many years, so faithfully and sacrificially. That is coming in my name. That day I realized that the new believer who is converted today and me who has been converted for 41 years, we both come to God on exactly the same basis.

In the name of Jesus. He was converted only this morning. He comes in the merit of Christ.

I was converted 41 years ago. I also come in the merit of Christ. He comes with a check signed by Jesus Christ.

I also come with a check signed by Jesus Christ. He can cash it in the bank. I can cash it in the bank.

When I go to God and say, Lord, I've been so faithful to you for so many years. Can't you do this for me? I'm going with a check signed in my name. In my name.

I have done so much for you, Lord. Can't you do this for me? And the bank rejects it. That's the reason why some of our prayers are not answered.

We're not going in Jesus' name. We're not going with a check signed in Jesus' name. We're going in our name.

We think, because I have sacrificed something for the Lord, God should answer me. That is going in your name. Do you know that even if you live faithfully with God for 70 years, when you come before God, you

come on exactly the same basis as that new convert.

With a check signed in Jesus' name. Don't ever go to the bank of heaven with a check signed in your name. Showing how faithful you have been.

You'll get nothing. I thank God for that revelation, because after that, I've never taken a check signed in my name. When I'm tempted to, I say, that won't be cashed.

I throw it away. Let me go in Jesus' name and say, because of His merit, I deserve this. So, every spiritual blessing is mine in heavenly places in Christ.

Wonderful place to begin. Verse 4. He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Before the world was created, God chose us.

Long before Genesis 1, verse 1. You know, I told you that John 1, verse 1 comes before Genesis 1, 1. Genesis 1, 1 is the heavens and earth were created. Before that is John 1, 1. In the beginning was the Word. And the Word, that is Jesus, was with God and He was God from eternity.

What's the next verse? The next verse is not Genesis 1, 1. The next verse is Ephesians 1, 3. In the beginning was God, Jesus was God, John 1, 1. The next verse after that is Ephesians 1, 3. He chose me. He chose you. In Christ.

And then much later comes Genesis 1, 1. He created the heaven and earth. What a wonderful thing to recognize that. That I was in God's mind before the heavens and earth were created.

My name was in the book of life in heaven before He created any of these stars or sun or moon or anything. And your name was there if you are born again. So, don't ever get discouraged.

Your name was there before the worlds were created. All these people who oppose you and fight you, they are nowhere. Their names are not in the book of life.

You were in God's mind. He knew about you. He knew your name.

You may think you are just a useless nobody. But if you are born again, your name was in the book of life before Genesis 1, 1. Praise the Lord for that. He chose us and it says here, why did He choose us? He chose us not to go to heaven.

Unfortunately, a lot of preaching today majors on going to heaven when we die. Let me disappoint you and say that there is no verse in the Bible which says He chose us to go to heaven when we die. No.

That may happen, but that's not the main thing. I will go to heaven when I die, that's true. But that's not the main thing.

He did not choose you and me to go to heaven. He chose us that we might be holy and blameless before Him. So, if somebody asks you, why did God choose you? Is it to go to heaven? No.

A lot of our songs are about going to heaven when we die. They are not about God chose me that I should be holy. God chose me that I should be blameless.

We got to change our perspective. Ephesians chapter 1 to 3 is the foundation. If you got in the foundation a stone which says going to heaven when we die, that's why God chose me, throw away that stone.

Put this stone in place. He chose me that I should be holy and blameless before Him. That's the stone.

Ephesians 1 to 3 is the foundation. Let's get this foundation right. We are talking about the foundation.

If the foundation of this building is weak, this building will collapse. If the foundation of your Christian life is weak, your Christian life will collapse. Many Christians don't have the solid foundation of Ephesians 1 to 3. And that's why later on in life, they collapse.

You have a crack in the fourth floor of a building. Why? Do you have one? Because the foundation is not strong enough. Don't blame the wall.

The foundation is not strong. There are other buildings with hundred floors and there are no cracks, skyscrapers. They have a deep foundation.

It's like that in the Christian life. Fifteen years after you are a Christian, you got to the fourth floor and you get a problem in your Christian life like a crack in the wall. Why? Because when you started your Christian life, you didn't lay a proper foundation.

One of the main things I do in my church is to keep on leading people to a good foundation of repentance, of their acceptance in Christ, of being filled with the Holy Spirit. And I've realized that if you don't get people established on a good foundation, they're going to have problems sometime or the other in their life. The crack may not come on the first floor.

It may come on the fourth floor. It may come on the tenth floor. It may come fifteen years after you're converted.

So lay a good foundation. Make sure that you're seeking spiritual blessings, not physical material blessings. Make sure you're seeking blessings in the heavenly places and not in the earthly places.

Make sure you're in Christ. Recognize that you were chosen by God not to go to heaven. You were chosen by God to be holy and blameless.

That's why He chose you. Okay, we move on. In love, He predestined us.

That's another word which is greatly misunderstood. Why did God predestine us? People think God predestined us to go to heaven or to hell. Rubbish.

He doesn't predestine us to go to heaven or to hell. He predestined us to the placement as sons in Christ, according to the kind intention of His will. He predestined me that I should be a son and not a baby.

He never predestined me to go to heaven. He predestined me that I should behave like a grown-up son, a responsible son who's interested in his father's business. That's why He predestined you.

Eternally, He chose you, destined you, to be what? On earth, first of all, a mature son. Conduct yourself like a responsible, not like a baby, a responsible son who's got a sense of responsibility about his father's business. You put a 25-year-old son in a father's, say, medical shop, and you put a 2-year-old baby in that medical shop, you know there's a difference.

A lot of difference. The 2-year-old baby will run out as soon as he finds one of his friends to play with. The 25-year-old son will stay there till midnight if necessary.

That's the difference between a son and a child, a sense of responsibility towards his father's business. In God's church, there are few sons who've got a tremendous sense of responsibility towards God's work. They are concerned about it, they think about it, they don't work for pay, they work because they've got a sense of responsibility.

Then there are babies who are only interested in playing marbles and playing around with their friends and who have no sense of responsibility towards God's work. They come and sit in the meeting and go away. These are not sons, they are babies.

Why did God predestine you and me to be sons? Remember that. Okay, there are a number of other wonderful verses in chapter 1 about our having redemption through His blood. Verse 7, forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.

That's the first part of grace, forgiveness of sins. Victory over sin, Romans 6, verse 14 is the other part of grace. And it says here in verse 13 about our being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

And there's a beautiful verse here in verse 14 which calls the Holy Spirit a pledge or a guarantee or a down payment of our inheritance. You know, when somebody is buying a property, say worth 20 million rupees, let's say a very large bit of property, 20 million rupees, he will sign an agreement, I will buy this within three months. And to prove to you that I'll buy it, here is a down payment, initial deposit of 2 million rupees.

He has to make that down payment. Otherwise, you never know, he may sign something and back out after a little while. And say, no, no, no, I don't feel like paying so much.

But once he has paid 2 million rupees, he's not going to back out. Nobody wants to lose 2 million rupees. So that is called a down payment, an initial deposit.

And here the Holy Spirit coming into our hearts, it says God has purchased, decided to purchase us for 20 million rupees. And he's putting down an initial deposit and saying, here is the proof that I'm determined to complete that purchase. He has not yet completed what he wants to do in us.

For example, he has not given us a new body yet. He has not made us totally like Christ. He has not removed the lusts of the flesh from our body yet.

All that will be done. How do we know? Because he's put a down payment. What is the down payment? He's given us the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a down payment. That is the guarantee that God will complete the payment. He will make my body like Jesus' body one day.

He will deliver me from all the lusts in my flesh. He will make my mind exactly like Jesus' mind one day. You say, how do you know? I got the down payment.

I got the Holy Spirit. That's what it says in verse 14. And he says, in view of this wonderful gospel, first of all, I give thanks for you.

I've heard of your faith and love. Verse 16, I never stop giving thanks for you. Paul was a man who was always giving thanks for God's people.

Praise God, he said, for these people. Praise God. I thank God for the work God has done in these people.

And he says, now, even though God's done a wonderful work, that you've got faith in Jesus, verse 15, and you love all the saints, I'm still praying for you, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, verse 17, these are very important verses, the Father of glory may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation. Notice that word, revelation, again. You don't find it in the Old Testament, revelation.

I told you, in the Old Testament, it's meditation. Here it says, God, I'm praying that God will give you the spirit of wisdom. And the Holy Spirit will give you revelation in knowing Him.

Not knowing the Bible, but knowing Him. Lord of difference. The Old Testament emphasis was you must know the law.

The New Testament emphasis is you must know Him. Old Testament emphasis was meditate on the law. Here it says, look unto Him and get revelation from the Holy Spirit.

Then he says, in verse 18, I'm also praying that the eyes of your heart, not the intelligence in your mind, the emphasis in the New Testament is always on the heart. In the Old Testament, it was more on the head, study. But here, it's the heart.

The eyes of your heart might be enlightened. There were people in the Old Testament who were men of the heart. Proverbs speaks a lot about the heart.

David was a man after God's own heart. But generally, the priests and all were not primarily concerned with their heart as much as studying the law. And that's what produced the scribes and the Pharisees.

And if you spend your life using your head to just study the scriptures and get a lot of knowledge in your head, you'll be another scribe and Pharisee of the New Testament. You better let all that sink at least one foot down into your heart. And that's one foot from the head to the heart is what makes all the difference in the Christian life.

Remember that. I pray that the eyes of your heart may get light. That you may know first, the hope of His calling, second, the riches of His glory, and third, the greatness of His power.

Verse 19. Now, what I want you to notice here is Paul is not saying, please read this letter 25 times so that you can understand what I'm saying. It's not that easy.

You can read it a hundred times and you may not understand. He says, I'm praying that when you read this letter, the Holy Spirit will give you revelation. I'm praying that when you read this letter, the eyes of your heart will be enlightened.

Not that you will analyze it, go and study the Greek words and compare this with that and analyze it. That's okay. But you can be absolutely dumb and defeated by sin and not have even one spiritual blessing in the heavenly places after studying it.

And not be holy or blameless, which He predestined you to be. When you get revelation from the Holy Spirit on this book, things become different. Then, you may not be able to analyze it, you may not know any Greek at all, but, you will know Christ.

You'll be in Him. You will be able to take the checks into the bank of heaven and cash them. And you'll be a rich person.

So don't go off on the track of study without revelation. The purpose of Bible study is the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Remember this.

The purpose of all your Bible study must ultimately be the revelation of the Holy Spirit. And anybody who emphasizes the head more than the heart is leading you astray. I'm not against the head.

I mean, if you hear me preach, you know that I use my head. Sure. Otherwise, I wouldn't be able to speak to you like this.

But, my head, my intelligence is a slave of the Holy Spirit. That's the point. Just like my, I use my eyes to read the Bible.

I use my ears. You're using your ears right now to listen. We need to use our body, otherwise we won't be able to see the Bible or read the Bible or hear.

But, we need to go beyond that. We need to understand in our mind. Right.

We need to go still beyond that and get revelation from the Holy Spirit. Then only, that is the way into the most holy place. You know, in the tabernacle, there were three parts.

The outer court, that is what? Reading, hearing, the body. Then we go to the holy place. What is that? Intelligence, emotion, feeling, excited when I read the Bible, when you listen to a message.

Then comes the most holy place, the Spirit. Where God reveals something and that is deeper than reading, it's deeper than understanding. It's revelation.

There's reading, there's understanding, there's revelation. Some people just read. You know some people just read the Bible, they don't understand anything.

They are in the outer court. Then some people read and understand. They have come as far as the most holy place.

Then there are others who read, understand and get revelation. They are the ones who accomplish God's purpose. So let all your Bible study be reading, understanding and revelation.

If you don't get into revelation, then the veil in the temple being rent when Jesus died is no use for you. You might as well stay in the holy place all your life. It will be just as good as Jesus not dying.

Jesus died so that the veil is rent and we go to the most holy place, we get revelation. Very important. Like Jesus told Peter, you got revelation.

That's how you know the Pharisees read and understood. And they understood it wrongly because they used their intelligence only. But Peter got revelation.

So same thing Paul says here. I'm not praying that you just read this 25 times. I'm praying that you'll get revelation.

And I want you to know the hope of his calling. Why God called you? To be holy. Have you seen it? If you see it, it'll change your whole attitude to impurity in this world.

I've been called to be holy. I can't touch things other people touch. It's like a surgeon in an operating theater.

He's conducting an operation. His hands have to be absolutely clean. The instruments have to be clean.

And I've seen surgeons going to the operating theater. You know how they go? They go like this. They can't touch anything.

When they go to pass through a door, somebody else has to open the door for them. And they go through. Because they can't touch anything.

Absolutely sterile. Clean. Otherwise they may kill that patient with germs.

And if something falls to the ground, say a knife, they are scissors, they are using falls to the ground, they won't touch it. Kick it away. Take another one.

They cannot touch. In your eyes, that scissors may look very clean. But no, there's some defilement in there, germs on the floor.

This is how a Christian lives in the world. I've been called to be holy. Other people can touch and do all types of things.

But God has called me for a holy purpose. I have to fulfill it. And it's because Christian leaders don't live like this, they put their dirty hands and operate patients and kill so many believers.

What a responsibility. Have you seen the hope of your calling? Have you seen the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints? Do you know that God has purchased you? This is not your inheritance in heaven. It's His inheritance in you.

God has got an inheritance in you. Have you seen the greatness of His power in us who believe? The tremendous power that God can manifest in us. And it says here, the greatest power that God ever manifested in this universe was not in creation, but in the resurrection.

Verse 20. The creation was the first creation, the resurrection was the second, the new creation. And the new creation, He says, is more powerful than the old one.

What you read in John chapter 20 is more powerful than Genesis chapter 1. This is the greatest manifestation of power in this universe. And someone were to ask you, what is the greatest manifestation of God's power in the universe? It's not the creation of the sun, moon and stars. It is the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And that power, it says, I pray that you'll have revelation that God wants you to experience that power. He wants us to experience that in our inner life first, and then later on one day in my body. It always starts inside.

One day I'll experience resurrection power in my body, but today God wants me to experience that resurrection power. What is resurrection power? It's a power that lifts us up from death. There is a law of

sin that brings me down to death.

It's called the law of sin and death. Resurrection power lifts me up. I told you the other day, it's like this.

Here's resurrection power lifting up from the law of sin and death, like power lifting up this book from the law of gravity, pulling it down. So resurrection power is power that lifts us up. Lifts us up to the heavenly places.

We read here, in chapter 2, this power, when we were dead in sin, verse 1, verse 6, has raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. This is what resurrection power has done for us. This is real.

It's true. Some of you may think this is all fanciful picture language. It's not really true.

Well, according to your faith, be it unto you, if you believe it's not true, it will never be true in your life. But I decided long, long ago to believe God's word, to let God be true in every man and liar, including me. My opinions are all lies.

Do you know that your feelings are deceptive? Do you know that even what your eyes see are deceptive? Only God's word is right. I remember the story of two little boys watching the sun set. And the older boy, he was only about 10 or 12 years old, he said, hey, the sun moved.

It was here in the east in the morning, now it's in the west. And the younger boy, he was only six years old, he said, no, you remember what daddy told us, that the sun doesn't move, it's the earth that rotates on its axis. And the older boy said, no, I believe what I see.

I saw it here, and now it's here. And I believe what I feel. I didn't feel the earth rotating under my feet.

The earth is quite stationary. And the younger boy said, I believe daddy. Who is right? The one who believes daddy, or the one who believes what he sees, and the one who believes what he feels.

Many of us live by what we see and what we feel. I believe daddy. He's right, and you're wrong.

I believe what God says, that I have been raised up and placed in the heavenly places in Christ. Do you feel like it? I don't live by feeling. Do I see it? I don't believe what I see.

My eyes are deceptive, my feelings are deceptive. I believe daddy. And I found when I believe daddy, it works out okay in my life.

When you don't believe your heavenly father, you have a lot of problems. You live by your sight and by your feelings. It's not a question of feeling like, not being in the heavenly places, not seeing in the heavenly places.

It's believing. It says, we have to believe, verse 19 of chapter 1. This great power is not available for everybody. It's only for those who believe.

And if you don't believe, I'm sorry brother, sister, it is not for you. You want to live by feeling? Jesus told Thomas, blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. I'm one of those.

I'm tremendously blessed because I did not see and I believe. That's what Jesus said. You want to be in that category? Of those who are blessed because they have not seen but they believe what daddy says?

Daddy says, I've put one million rupees in your bank account.

I believe it. I don't have to go to the bank to check up. I don't have to get my passbook filled up to check up.

I know it, I believe it. God says, he has placed me in the heavenly places in Christ. I believe it.

He has lifted me up. I don't belong to earth. For years I belonged to this earth.

But a day came in my life and I realized I belong to heaven. And I'm there. And that's why I don't fight for earthly things today.

I don't even fight for the members in my church. I say, if you want to, somebody says, oh brother, this chap has stolen the member of my church. I say, brother, I'm not fighting for these earthly things.

I'm in heaven. Jesus said, my kingdom is not of this world. Otherwise I'd fight.

You see believers fighting for honor, position, pushing other people down. They are not in heaven. They are on earth.

You know what you need? You need to be lifted up. You need to be transported to the heavenly places. This Ephesians chapters 1 to 3 is the foundation.

Allow God to lift you up to the heavenly places. This is what he does. It's not my lifting myself up.

I can never do that. I can never raise myself from the dead. Do you know there's not a single verse in the Bible which says that Jesus raised himself up from the dead? Have you noticed that? Christ raised himself up from the dead.

No such verse. God raised him from the dead. Always Christ was raised by God from the dead.

You cannot raise yourself up to the heavenly places. God has to do it. I submit.

I say, Lord, I accept my position as dead in Christ. It's like baptism. When somebody pushes me into the water in baptism, I cannot lift myself up.

He lifts me up. That's how it is. God lifts me up and places me in Christ.

It's his work. I only submit. Like in baptism, I submit to people crucifying me.

I submit to people lifting me up. I submit to other people who crucify me. I submit to God raising me up.

And he places me in the heavenly places in Christ. Take that position. Then we look at everything on earth from a heavenly standpoint.

If you have ever traveled in an airplane, you see how these huge cars look like small toy cars. That's how it is. When we get up to that heavenly place, everything looks small.

And when we come to that place, we realize that God is in the business of making us one body on earth. And so he goes on in that place. First of all to say about our salvation.

Our salvation is by faith. Verse 8. Chapter 2. Not as a result of works. But even though it's not as a result of works.

Verse 10. It says after we are saved, God has planned good works that we should walk in them. So, our salvation is not of works.

Verse 9. But it is unto good works after we are saved. And then, verse 11 to 22 speaks about our becoming one body in Christ. Jews and Gentiles.

The barrier is broken down. Verse 14. He has abolished.

Verse 15. When Jesus died on the cross, he abolished this enmity between Jews and Gentiles. Jews and Gentiles are the greatest opposites in the world.

Much worse than our caste system in India. And Jesus brought them both together at the cross. He abolished this enmity.

In Christ, if you are in Christ, all the enmity that you have towards other people of other communities is all broken down. If it is still there, if you got a prejudice against other communities, you are not yet crucified with Christ. Take that place.

In Christ that enmity is broken down. And the purpose is he wants to make us both one body. You see, you can become one body only with another person who is in the heavenly places.

Here on earth, it will just be many many people in a congregation. But you get a whole lot of people into the heavenly places in Christ, there they become one body. Verse 16.

You can't be one body on earth. You got to be one body if you are in verse 6, in the heavenly places in Christ. Okay.

And then he goes on in chapter 3 to speak about this great mystery. This is a mystery, he says in verse 4, which was not revealed in Old Testament times that we were going to become one, the Gentiles and the Jews. But now it has been revealed by the Spirit.

And then you find another prayer in verse 14 to 21 of chapter 3. Now there are two prayers in this section. The first prayer, chapter 1 verse 17 to 23, is a prayer for revelation through the Holy Spirit. The second prayer, chapter 3 verse 14 to 21, is a prayer for the power of the Holy Spirit.

These are the two things we need. Revelation of the Holy Spirit, power of the Holy Spirit. Revelation of the Holy Spirit to see what we are in Christ.

The power of the Holy Spirit to actually live that as we will read, see in chapters 4 to 6. What does he pray in verses 14 to 21 of chapter 3? He says, now my prayer is, after you got revelation, that's my first prayer, my second prayer is that he will grant you according to the riches of his glory, verse 16, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man. So that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. And the word dwell has been translated, I think it's Amplified Bible or somewhere, that Christ may feel at home in your heart.

Do you know the difference between living in a home and feeling at home in that house? Somebody invites you to stay in his house, you stay there but you feel uncomfortable because you know that he

doesn't like you going there and he doesn't like you going to the kitchen and he doesn't like you doing this and there's so many rules. You live there but you don't feel at home there. And then you go to some other homes where you feel perfectly at home.

It's just like your own home. You can go where you like and you're completely free. Now, Jesus may come in your heart and he may live there but he may not feel at home there.

He's not very happy with a lot of things in your home. And there are other people who receive Jesus in such a way that Jesus is so much at home there. And when the Holy Spirit fills us, it's not just Christ living in us, Christ is at home in us.

That Christ may feel at home in your heart that you may be able to understand with all the saints what is the length and breadth and the height and depth of the love of Christ. You know that you cannot understand the love of Christ all by yourself. It says in this verse only with all the saints only then can you know the love of Christ.

And he concludes by saying that like this you can grow up to the fullness of God. Verse 19 Verse 20 and 21 You can receive from God much beyond what you can ever ask or think. What God is going to do for you is way beyond what our imagination can tell us.

This is the foundation for the superstructure which we shall look at in the next session. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, help us to be established in this foundation of the Christian life that we can be what you want us to be on this earth.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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