

“But God!”

Ephesians 1:15-2:10

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Teaching Aim: To reveal the exceedingly great power of God that is available to those in Christ Jesus. To recognize that God uses the same mighty power to raise born-again Christians from the dead spiritually as He did to raise Jesus from the dead physically and seat Him in the heavenly places. To understand Christians are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone and not by the works of the law. To realize Christians are not saved by their own works, but they are saved unto good works which God prepared beforehand that they should walk in them!

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: Paul’s prayer for wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ (Eph. 1:15-23)

1. The Apostle Paul divides the Book of Ephesians into two sections: 1) doctrine (**chapters 1-3**); and 2) application (**chapters 4-6**). **Verses 3-14** are comprised from one sentence in the Greek and is a very long doxology. What is a doxology? (See Dictionary) This doxology praises all three members of the Trinity for their role in salvation. God the Father is praised in **verses 4-6** for choosing us, predestining us, and adopting us as His children. God the Son is praised in **verses 7-12** for His work of redemption, the forgiveness of sins, and for our future inheritance in Him. The Holy Spirit is praised in **verses 13-14** for His work of sealing the believer and being the down payment and guarantee for our future inheritance in Christ. How many spiritual blessings can you find in **Eph. 1:3-14**? (**Hint: vs. 4,5,7,11,13**)

2. What caused Paul to give thanks to God and consistently mention the Ephesian believers in his prayers (**vv. 15-16**)? What did Paul mean when he said he “*does not cease*” in giving thanks to God for the Ephesians? What did he give thanks for? What is needed for Christians to pray without ceasing? (**See 1 Th. 1:2-4; 5:17-18; 2 Tim. 1:3**) What did Charles Spurgeon mean when he said that we should be in an atmosphere of prayer? Why do you think it’s so difficult to have consistent quality times of prayer? When is your prayer life the most effective?

3. What did Paul specifically pray for in **verse 17**? Through which member of the Trinity is the “*spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God*” applied to the believer? According to **verse 18**, what is Paul asking God to reveal to the Ephesian believers? Is this something people can see apart from God enlightening the eyes of our understanding?

4. The Old Testament uses creation and the miracles of God (*particularly the Exodus*) to demonstrate His mighty power. According to **verses 19 & 20**, what does the New Testament use to demonstrate this same power? Why is the resurrection of Jesus Christ such a critical part of the gospel message? Is there any “*good news*” without it? Why should Christ’s resurrection be a comfort to every born-again believer? (**See Rom. 6:1-5**)

5. According to **verse 21**, what is the position of the resurrected Christ as He sits in the position of honor in the heavenlies? What is Paul referring to when he speaks of “*principality, power, might and dominion*?” How many different ranks of angels can you find in Scripture? (**See Gen. 3:24; Is. 6:2; Matt. 18:10; Luke 1:11-13; 1 Th. 4:16; Rev. 4:8**) Are Satan and his demons angels? What can we learn from **Job 1:6; Ezek. 28:11-17; Mark 5:12**? How superior is Jesus to the angels? (**See Heb. 1:1-14**)

6. What, if any, significance is there in an ancient king placing his foot on the neck of a conquered enemy? According to **Phil. 2:8-11**, who in the end times will kneel at the name of Jesus? At His first advent, Jesus came as the tender Lamb of God? (**See John 1:29b**) How will Jesus reveal Himself at the Second Coming? (**See Gen. 49:8-10; Rev. 5:5**) According to **Eph. 1:22-23**, what will be under His feet?

7. What makes the human body such a great illustration of how the local church should operate (**vs. 23**)? (**See 1 Cor. 12:12-26**) What happens when a part of the human body is not properly working? Today we call this a handicap. Are you using your spiritual gifts in the church body or is the church handicapped by the absence of them? What are your strongest spiritual gifts? (**See Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 27-31; Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Pet. 4:9-11**)

Part II: And you He made alive who were dead in your trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1-7)

1. Have you ever witnessed a miracle in your lifetime? If so, what was it and when did it take place? How did witnessing this event affect your faith in God? What real miracle takes place in the life of every born-again believer according to **verse 1**?

2. When God created Adam, He created him as the perfect representative for mankind. (See **Gen. 2:7**) Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden and then tested. What did God say would happen to Adam and Eve if they ate the forbidden fruit from *“the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?”* (See **Gen. 2:16-17**) Was Adam obedient or did he eat the fruit? Did Adam and Eve die immediately physically? (See **Gen. 5:5**) Did Adam and Eve die immediately spiritually? What happened to all the descendants of Adam and Eve from that time forth? What made the virgin birth of Christ (the last Adam) necessary? (See **Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:20-23**)

3. A sin is to miss the mark, a trespass is to cross a known boundary. (**vs. 2**) Whether we realize it or not, we all walked in the ways of the world before coming to Christ (**vs. 2**)? (See **John 14:28-30; 2 Cor. 4:3-4**) Who is *“the prince of the power of the air?”* Does Satan still control much of the airwaves today? If so, how do you see him doing this? What are some ways that your life changed after coming to Christ?

4. Edward’s Law is named after Jonathan Edwards. The law states, *“We will always follow our greatest inclination at the moment of decision.”* Have you found this to be true in your own life? How does this law apply to **verse 3** and to our struggles with *“the lusts of our flesh?”* What should the goal of every Christian be when it comes Christian living? (See **Rom. 12:2**)

5. According to **verse 3**, what was the guiding force before we came to faith in Christ? What were we? (See **John 3:36; Rom. 1:18-20; 2:5-6**) What two words in **verse 4** are two of the most important words in the Bible? Why? (*Hint: Take a look at the first two words of the verse.*) Why are these words so important to you? What is the meaning of the word *“mercy?”* According to **verse 4**, what was the motivation behind God’s mercy?

6. What were we dead in according to **verse 5**? What miracle occurs in the same verse? Have you received this miracle in your own life? According to **verse 5**, who are we made alive with? As a result of our spiritual resurrection from the dead, where do we find ourselves positionally according to **verse 6**?

7. According to **verse 7**, what attributes does God display to those He raises up? Is it a vain thing for us as human beings to glorify ourselves? Is it a vain thing for God to glorify Himself? Why or why not? (*Note: God's glory is the highest revelation of His character, it's who He is made known to the world. It's not bragging in the sense that we understand bragging, but revelation of the highest good.*) According to the Westminster Confession of Faith, Question 1, what is the chief end of man? (Hint: Google it.) Is it the goal of your life to glorify God?

Part III: For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves (Eph. 1:8-10)

1. Describe the process of salvation as described in **verses 8 & 9**. What is the grace of God? Is there anything we can do to earn our own salvation? (**See Rom 3:20,28; Gal. 2:16; Tit. 3:5-7**) Many people believe the words, "*and that not of yourselves*" means that even our faith is a gift from God; others believe God's grace is the gift. What do you believe? Why? **Verse 9** makes it clear that we are not saved by our human efforts. What danger did Paul mention if people could claim credit for their own salvation?
2. According to **Ephesians 2:8-10**, we are not saved by our works but we are saved unto good works which were ordained beforehand. Paul was saying in his writings, "*Justification by faith alone is the root of our salvation*" while James was saying "*Justification by works is the fruit of our salvation.*" (**See Rom. 4:1-4; Jam. 2:24**) How do our works relate to our salvation according to **verse 10**? The Greek word for "*workmanship*" is the same word that we derive our English word "*poem*" from. In what way are we as born-again believers a "*masterpiece*" created by God?
3. Today we find almost an overemphasis in the church on the fact that we are not saved by works. Question: "*Are we saved by works?*" (**See John 1:29b; 19:17-19, 28-30; Rom. 5:8-10; 6:23**) The answer is an emphatic, "*Yes, we are saved by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ!*" Now let's rephrase the question, "*Are we saved by our own works?*" The answer is an equally emphatic, "*Absolutely not!*" Spend some time today thanking God for the unfathomable love which led Christ to die on the cross for you. How grateful are you? Grateful enough to spend the rest of your life loving and serving Him?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- Paul prayed for God to give His readers a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of the Lord!
- It is the Holy Spirit of God who enlightens the eyes of unbelievers to know Christ!
- God's mighty power was demonstrated when he rose Jesus from the dead physically and sat him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named in this age or in the age to come.
- Jesus reigns over the visible and invisible; He is the Head of the Church and the Church is His body.
- Born-again Christians are taken from spiritual death and given spiritual life at the moment of regeneration.
- Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone; it is not something we can earn; it is the gift of God.
- We are not saved by our good works, we are saved unto good works in Christ.