The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians

A Commentary on the Greek Text

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Preface

The Church of the Holy Redeemer, and School Hall, Helensburgh, 1908.

My first full-time appointment was to Helensburgh, a small coal mining community south of Sydney. I well remember Helensburgh from my youth, since it was my father's first pit-stop as we headed down south to my grandmother's home at Sussex Inlet. My father, and his mate Les Phillips, liked their drink, and the Burgh pub provided the necessary liquid refreshments and facilities to sustain them on their journey. I guess I should explain that a "pub" is Australian for a public house licensed to serve alcoholic beverages. My childhood visits to Helensburgh enabled me to boast that I drank at the Burgh pub long before many of the local residents, although I would forget to mention that it was a lemon-squash.

The congregation at the Church of the Holy Redeemer Helensburgh was both small and elderly, but keen as. As younger couples joined the congregation, we began to experience the wonder of Christian community. Our organist was a Fisher Folk fan, and she added a powerful dynamic to the shape of our Christian Community. I guess it was a bit impractical for a normal Anglican Parish setting, but somehow we created a real sense of community while respecting the Anglican frame. The Epistle that we constantly returned to was Paul's letter to the Ephesians. The idea of oneness in Christ is a powerful theological imperative,

and realizing that, while honouring the family and a person's individual freedom, became our goal.

My study of Ephesians began in earnest in the days when Peter O'Brien began lecturing at Moore Theological College. He led a series of studies on Ephesians and I made a point of travelling into Sydney to attend his lectures. In those days, that entailed a mile walk to the railway station, motor rail to Sydney and a bus to Moore College. This, of course, was well before he wrote his commentary on Ephesians. At that time, my commentaries were limited to Robinson, Bruce (Pickering, 1961) Barth (1974) and Mitton (1976). I must also mention A.M. Hunter's Layman's commentary, 1960. Now I know, there is nothing technical about his writing, yet his capacity to express the most complex of theological ideas in the simplest of words amazes me, even today. Of course, since those days we have been blessed with an outpouring of wonderful commentaries: Bruce, Lincoln, Best, O'Brien and Hoehner, just to name a few, and their hard work has made my work possible.

It is my hope that these notes aid your task of knowing the mind of Christ.

Bryan Findlayson, 2021.

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Notes

Commentary Intention: This exegetical commentary aims to provide a foundation for expository preaching, assisting fellow pastors with *rusty* Greek to come to grips with the text. The Greek level is college years 2/3, with a focus on syntax to aid an understanding of the text - accents are only used where necessary. Highly technical issues are avoided, with the exposition primarily guided by the expressed views of respected published commentators. Where possible, the commentary is structured to conform with the readings of the Revised Common Lectionary.

Format: RCL study units - synopsis, context, structure, interpretation, homiletical suggestion and exegesis: the Greek word or phrase; a limited parsing; the English text (NIV and/or NIV11); a literal English translation (TNGEI, Accordance, Louw & Nida); syntax where necessary; comment, often with a published translation.

Copyright: No copyright provision covers this commentary, nor is citing expected. Where citing is required for academic purposes; Findlayson, *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians; A Commentary on the Greek Text, 2021*.

Abbreviations: See Series Addendum.

Print: Format; A5. For mono laser "render colour black."

Greek: Nestle-Aland / UBS 4 Greek New Testament.

Greek Glossary; See Series Addendum.

Inclusive language: Numerous older translations and paraphrases are used throughout the studies to enhance the meaning of the text. Latitude is given to sexist language, although alterations are sometimes made to the original text.

Primary English Text Bible: The New International Version, NIV, 1985, and / or NIV11, 2011, copyright by International Bible Societies and published by The Zondervan Corporation. All rights reserved worldwide. The full text is not provided under copyright requirements and it is recommended that a copy of the NIV be at hand for these notes.

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Dedication: To my children, Marelle, Paul and Justyne.

Typos: Forgive me! I keep finding clangers.

Commentaries on Ephesians

Abbott, ICC, 1897. 5D
Allan, Torch, 1958. 1D
Arnold, Zondervan Exegetical, 2010. 3
Barth, Anchor, 1974. 4
Best, ICC, 1998. 5R
Bock, Tyndale, 2019, 2R
Bruce, Pickering, 1961. 2
Bruce, NICNT, 1984. 3R
Caird, New Clarendon, 1976. 2D
Caudill, Broadman Press, 1979. 1D
Foulkes, Tyndale, 1963. 2D
Hendriksen, Banner of Truth, 1967. 3D
Hoehner, Baker, 2002. 5R
Hunter, Layman's, 1959. 1RD
Johnston, Century Bible Commentary, 1967. 2D
Kitchen, NT Readings, Routledge, 1994. T
Larkin, HGT, 2009. G
Lincoln, Word, 1990. 5
Merkle, EGGNT, 2016. G
Meyer, T&T Clark, 1880. 4D
Mitton, NCB, 1976. 2D
Morris, *Expository reflections*, Baker, 1994. T
Muddiman, Black's, 2001. 3
O'Brien, Pillar, 1999. 4R
Robinson A. James Clark. 1908. 4GD.
Schnackenburg, T&T Clark, 1991. 4
Simpson, NICNT, 1957. 2D
Snodgrass, NIVABC, 2008. 3
Stott, BST, 1984. 2R
Strelan, ChiRho, 1981. 2D
Thielman, BECNT, 2010. 4
Thompson, CBC, 1967. 1D

Commentary Key:

Level of complexity: **1**, non-technical, to **4**, requiring a knowledge of Greek.
Deceased: **D**. For publications no longer in print, search bookfinder.com
Other identifiers: Recommended **R**; Greek Technical **G**; Theology **T**

The above is a selection of some of the English Bible Commentaries available on Ephesians.

Analysis

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Introduction

Paul the apostle probably wrote this letter from Rome somewhere between the years 56-60AD. It seems he was in prison, so he was probably in the same situation as described at the end of the book of Acts. Ephesians presents as a speech, an address or homily, in the form of a letter to be read to an audience. It addressing general issues of Christian theology and ethics, rather than a specific problem. A.T. Lincoln argues that it is a general letter seeking to encourage believers in a "variety of settings", to "further knowledge of their salvation, greater appreciation of their identity as believers and as members of the church, increased concern for the church's unity, and more consistent living in such areas as speech, sexuality, and household relationships."

Structure of Ephesians

Paul was an educated man and seems to have understood the principles of rhetoric (speech delivery) and epistolography (letter writing). Both forms are somewhat similar, but given that Paul's letters are designed to be read to a congregation, they tend to be rhetorical. Most fall into the category of deliberative rhetoric, speech delivery designed to persuade an audience, with some falling into the category of forensic rhetoric, accusing or defending, eg., 2 Corinthians. The essential elements of such a speech can be distilled down to the following items:

Exordium - an introduction serving to introduce the subject matter while eliciting the sympathy of the audience;
Narratio - a narrative section providing background information;
Propositio - proposition / thesis to be tested, or a partitio, summary of proofs;
Probatio - rhetorical proofs, often with a *refutatio*, a refutation of the opponents' arguments;
Digressio - a digression where a proof or refutation is covered in more detail;
Exhortatio - exhortation;
Peroratio - a concluding recapitulation of the main theme.

In epistolography, the opening of a letter aligns with the *exordium* in rhetoric, although more personalized, as in Paul's epistles, and the *conclusio* of a letter aligns with the *peroratio* in rhetoric. Ephesians presents as a letter with a typical address, 1:1-2 and *conclusio*, 6:21-24, but quickly becomes a speech / sermon. Although Kennedy in *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical*

Criticism states that the writer of Ephesians is skilled in rhetoric, he, like many commentators, does not attempt a structural analysis of the epistle in classical rhetorical form. As Best notes, most tend to avoid Ephesians as it defies classification. Still, a rhetorical structure of sorts may be intended:

Exordium - thematic introduction in praise and prayer, 1:3-23;
Probatio - doctrinal instruction, 2:1-22;
Digressio - Paul's part in the mystery and a prayer for love, 3:1-21;
Exhortatio - ethical exhortation, 4:1-6:20

Hoehner opts for a simplified approach by arguing that the letter follows the pattern of Hellenistic letters of the time, namely an opening, a body and a closing. He divides the body of the letter into three parts: instruction, 1:3-3:21; paraenesis (exhortation), 4:1-6:20; and commendation 6:21-22. O'Brien is also wary of rhetorical criticism, particularly as it relates to Ephesians, and is of the view "that attention be directed to the apostle's own internal method of argument." Best also stays clear of rhetorical analysis, classifying it as "more probably a homily."

Authorship

These notes proceed on the basis that Paul the apostle is the author of this letter, but it should be noted that many modern scholars dispute Pauline authorship. There are certainly indicators that this work is the product of someone operating within a Pauline school of thought, but the proposition promoting pseudonymity causes more problems than it solves. For a detailed argument supporting the traditional view of Pauline authorship see Peter O'Brien's commentary on Ephesians in the Pillar series; also, Hoehner, Fee, Morris, Turner, Ellis, Carson, Harris, Bruce, ... Against Pauline authorship, see MacDonald, Sacra Pagina, 2000; Kreitzer, Epworth, 1998; Perkins, Abingdon, 1997; Kitchen, N.T. Readings, Routledge, 1994.

Occasion and recipients

Paul writes this homily / letter from prison. It is possible that he writes while in prison in Ephesus around 55AD, although this is very unlikely. He may have written it while in prison in Caesarea, between 57 and 59AD. Most conservative commentators argue that it is written from Rome during Paul's time of imprisonment, awaiting his trial before the Emperor. At this time, Paul sends out a number of letters to his mission churches - Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and a personal letter to Philemon. Both Colossians and Ephesians, letters that are very similar in style and content, are likely carried from Rome by Tychicus. It is generally assumed that Paul wrote Colossians first and then Ephesians (more general in style, suitable as a circular letter), around 60-62AD. These notes proceed on the basis that Paul's letter to the Ephesians addresses the Ephesian

congregation, but it is possible that it is a circular letter for all the churches of Asia Minor. This is borne out by the lack of personal greetings usually found at the end of Paul's letters and the lack of the phrase "at Ephesus", 1:1, in some of the oldest manuscripts.

Purpose

Bruce describes Ephesians as "an exposition of the Pauline mission and message." Paul sets out to show the unity that all believers have as members of Christ's body the church, and the means of making that oneness real. Peter O'Brien, in his commentary, puts it simply when he says that Paul is out to communicate "cosmic reconciliation and unity in Christ."

Argument

In developing his argument, Paul set out to show that all believers, both Jew and Gentile, have an intrinsic unity in Christ; through Jesus' work on the cross both are made alive. Things that may have divided in the past are no more; now all are one in Jesus. Even Paul's own role as apostle to the Gentiles serves this end.

Paul then sets out to explain how to make this oneness / unity real. First, he deals with a functional problem, namely the structuring of the local church group. Mutual ministries, especially those of the Word, are essential to the upbuilding of the group. Unity will only evolve if mutual ministry is properly exercised. Paul then deals with relationship problems, namely, right behaviour amongst members of the church community.

Paul's ecclesiology

Paul's letter to the Ephesians is highly theological, but at the same time practical; written for practical results, namely, unity within the local Christian church. Yet, Paul is well aware that right action flows from right theology and so we are treated in this book to many deep truths about the church.

Our starting point is an interesting phrase used extensively in the gospels, but little in Paul's epistles. It appears in 5:5: "No immoral ..... man has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God". Paul rarely uses this phrase because of its Jewish nature. Still, the kingdom, the righteous reign of God ("the righteousness of God"), is the basis of his theology.

To understand the basic idea of the kingdom of God we need to look at its historical manifestation in the kingdom of Israel, especially under David and Solomon. The kingdom of Israel, just like any kingdom, had a king, a people, a city and laws, along with a temple and priests and this under the rule of God. When the kingdom of Israel failed, the prophets revealed that God would establish a new kingdom, so renewing the covenant promises made to Abraham

and his descendants. When the Jews returned from exile in Babylon (536BC) they thought that they would see this reality in their restored kingdom, but it was only a poor imitation of the Solomon's kingdom.

In the first century, Jesus announced that the kingdom was about to burst in upon mankind. Naturally, the Jews took him literally and expected him to become their king and throw out the Romans, but as Jesus said, "my kingdom is not of this world". This kingdom found its reality in the spiritual realm. John painted a picture of this kingdom in the book of Revelation. It is the heavenly assembly gathered around Christ, the king and high priest in the new Jerusalem. We commonly use the term "heaven" to describe this kingdom, a kingdom to be established on the last day when Christ has brought all things under his control.

Although we await the final summing up of all things in the second coming of Christ, there is a real sense in which the kingdom of God (or "kingdom of heaven" in Matthew's gospel) is a *now* reality. Christ is at this moment ruling a people gathered about him; He is protecting them like a city wall; He is mediating between them and the Father as their high priest and they as a Temple are indwelt by his Spirit. The whole point of Peter's Pentecost sermon in Acts is his announcement that the kingdom of God is a *now* reality. So right now, in a world of rebellion against God, Christ rules a people, blesses and cares for them and unites them into one. The kingdom of God has burst in upon us.

It is the local church / assembly where we can catch a glimpse of this universal reality. For it is here, where two or three gather together in the name of Christ, centred on his presence, that we behold a tangible foresight and foretaste of the kingdom of God.

Paul views the εκκλησια, "church", in two ways. A church is both a local assembly at which Christ is present, and an eschatological assembly in heaven - the church is both local and universal. It's a somewhat difficult time-warp problem, but even now, Christ is seated at the right hand of the Ancient of Days before the eschatological community of God's people - a universal church, past, present and future.

The substance of the church is revealed in "the mystery." A mystery is a hidden truth, but this Biblical mystery is hidden no longer, for Paul and the apostles have learnt its secret, 3:3. It concerns God's establishment of his kingdom, or as Paul puts it, the uniting of all things in Christ, 1:9. Of course, God has always intended this outcome, but there is a new aspect to the realization of the kingdom: First, it is completely brought about by Christ 3:11; Second, the church is a tangible expression of it, 1:22-33, 3:9-10. So then, the church is a foretaste of Christ's work of uniting all things in the heavenly spiritual realm and the earthly realm with God, and this through and in himself.

The nature of the church lies in its relationship with Christ. Paul describes this as the "new man", 2:15 - Christ being the head, and believers the body, 4:15. Obviously this is expressive of a fellowship of love in a triangular fashion, ie., members with Christ and each other. Thus, Paul uses terms such as "unity" or "oneness" to describe this relationship of love, 2:16, 2:19, 3:6, 4:3-4, 4:25-2:21-22.

The depth of relationship can be observed in 5:21-33 where Paul demonstrates that the marriage relationship is constructed on the image of the relationship of Christ with his church, both local and universal, ultimately realized in the uniting of all things to himself - each illustrating the other.

So it is, as the angels gaze upon the church, they glimpse God's mighty plan to unite all things with himself through and in Christ, 3:9-10. From this theological understanding of the church, Paul sets out to encourage unity within the Christian fellowship and gives practical advice to achieve that end.

Grammatical Note:

This corrected edition uses a descriptive classification for a genitive of source, rather than an ablative classification. See *A Note on the Genitive* in the **Series Addendum**, page 69.

Commentary

1:1-2

Introduction

Address and greeting

Argument

As is typical of ancient letters, Paul begins his letter to the Ephesians with the sender's name, the recipients and a greeting. In Ephesians, this prescript / salutation is short and to the point, possibly indicating that the letter is intended for a wider audience than just the church at Ephesus. As with Romans, another somewhat general letter, Paul does not mention any of his associates in the prescript.

Issues

i] Context: The contextual arrangements of Ephesians are many and varied. A simple two-part structure is fairly common: the first three chapters deal with theology, followed by ethics in the next three chapters, so Lincoln. O'Brien also opts for two parts; an extended benediction and prayer, 1:3-3:21, followed by admonition, 4:1-6:9/20. Hoehner suggests three parts: instruction, 1:3-3:21; exhortation, 4:1-6:20; and commendation, 6:21-22.

Ephesians doesn't fit well with deliberative rhetoric, but Paul certainly hasn't abandoned the accepted ways of progressing an argument. The opening chapter of praise and thanksgiving serves to introduce the subject matter and build rapport with the readers, and as such is an *exordium* of sorts. Chapters 2 and 3 focus on establishing doctrinal truth and so effectively serve as the *probatio*. These truths are then applied in ethical instructions, 4:1-6:9, a classic Pauline move, a *digressio* of sorts, before a concluding *exortatio*, exhortation, 6:10-20.

Following the usual prologue, from whom and to whom, Paul introduces his letter with praise and thanksgiving, celebrating the realization of God's eternal purposes in Christ for both Jew and Gentile, 1:3-23. Paul then proceeds to develop his proposition:

In Christ, all things are unified in heaven and on earth.

First, he establishes the means by which a person moves from death to new life in Christ, and thus to union with the divine - "by grace you have been saved", 2:1-10 - and then examines the consequences for Gentiles, namely that they become one with God's historic people Israel and thus members of his household in Christ, a holy temple indwelt by God's Spirit, v11-22. In 3:1-13 Paul explains

his part, as apostle to the Gentiles, in the formation of this one people of God in Christ, and then goes on to explain the purpose of this new humanity, the church, namely, to make Christ known (communicate the gospel / "the manifold wisdom of God" / the mystery / "the unsearchable riches of Christ" / grace / Christ). Given the task facing the church, Paul prays for love, that they might "be filled to the measure of the fullness of God", concluding with a statement of adoration, v14-21.

Having developed his proposition that in Christ, all things are unified in heaven and on earth, Paul goes on to apply his theology with a series of ethical admonitions, 4:1-6:9. He begins with a guiding admonition which concerns maintaining unity in the church, 4:1-16, reinforcing this by describing the old lifestyle and new life in Christ, v17-24. Then follows examples of practical love, 4:25-5:2, acting out of darkness, 5:3-14, acting out of light, v15-20. Paul then examines the Christian household under the principle "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ", 5:21: wives and husbands, children and parents, slaves and masters, 5:22-6:9. The exhortation *God's Mighty Armour* follows, 6:10-20, concluding with an epilogue, v21-24.

ii] Background: As indicated in the introductory notes, there is some doubt regarding authorship, destination and purpose, but these notes proceed on the assumption that the letter is a general letter written by Paul while imprisoned in Rome, around AD60, and that it was addressed to the church in Ephesus where he ministered for two and a half years around AD53-55. Although addressed to the Ephesian church, It is likely that Paul intended the letter for general circulation among his mission churches in the Lycus valley (Western Turkey) / Asia Minor.

When it comes to the purpose of Ephesians, commentators again propose many and varied theories. Yet, there is one theme that most commentators at least reference, and that is the theme of unity. Hagner suggests that "the purpose of Ephesians is to promote a love for one another that has the love of God and Christ as its basis. ..... This provides the basis for unity. Possibly realizing that the Ephesians were starting to forsake their first love, Paul wrote this letter to encourage them to love both God and their fellow saints more deeply."

iii] Structure: *The prologue to Paul's letter to the Ephesians*:

Prologue:

From whom to whom, v1;

Blessing, v2.

iv] Interpretation:

The impersonal nature of this salutation adds to the evidence used by those who doubt Pauline authorship, eg., Best. Yet, as already indicated, the letter bears the marks of a circular letter to Ephesus and beyond - a reworking of Colossians for a wider audience. In fact, like Romans, it may well be intended for all Paul's mission churches, churches that are primarily Gentile in makeup.

Text - 1:1

The Salutation, v1-2. From whom, to whom, v1. Paul follows the standard opening of a first-century Greek letter, although he gives it a particular Christian shape. The opening words are very similar to Colossians.

αποστολος [ος] "**apostle**" - [PAUL] AN APOSTLE. Nominative in apposition to the nominative absolute "Paul". Paul uses the word "apostle" to refer to someone appointed directly by Christ as his witness to the new covenant, ie., the 12 + Paul. The word is used sometimes in the NT of an evangelist / missionary. Paul is not using the word here in that general sense.

Χριστου [ος] gen. "**of Christ**" - OF CHRIST [JESUS]. The canon of Apollonius applies where two nouns, here proper nouns, either have an article or both lack it, here both lack the article. Jesus stands in apposition to Christ. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, or descriptive, idiomatic / subordination, "*belonging* to", or source, "*which is from*"; "*of Christ Jesus* not only signifies that he belongs to Christ, but also that his is a messenger who is fully authorized and sent by him", O'Brien.

δια + gen. "**by**" - THROUGH [WILL OF GOD]. Instrumental, expressing means (intermediate agency, so Wallace). "Paul, by the will of God an apostle of Christ Jesus, sends his greeting to those in Ephesus", Cassirer.

τοις ἁγιοις [ος] dat. "**to God's holy people**" - TO THE HOLY *ones* / SAINTS. Dative of recipient. Those who are set apart for God; "who are consecrated to God", Cassirer.

τοις ουσιν [ειμι] dat. pres. part. "-" - THE ONES BEING. The participle serves as a substantive, dative in apposition to "the holy *ones*.".

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [EPHESUS]. Local, space; "at Ephesus". Missing in some early texts, eg., p46, one of the earliest Pauline texts. This is further evidence that the letter was designed as a circular letter with the church name added as necessary.

πιστοις [ις εως] dat. "**the faithful**" - [AND] FAITHFUL, BELIEVERS. Dative standing in apposition to "the holy *ones*", an awkward construction due to the presence of the dative participle "the ones being." The word probably carries the

sense "*the* believing / trusting *ones*" rather than "*the* faithful *ones*", so O'Brien, Lincoln, ...

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST JESUS]. Local, space metaphorical / incorporative union, "in union with Christ Jesus", although instrumental, means, is possible.

v2

Blessing / greeting, v2.

ὑμιν dat. pro. " **to you**" - [GRACE] TO YOU [AND PEACE]. Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage, the verb being assumed, probably an optative verb to-be = a wish prayer; "*may* grace and peace *be* to you." To the normal Jewish greeting of "peace", Paul adds a Christianised version of the normal Greek greeting χαιρε, "happy", or more formally "greetings". "May God's eternal favour and peace be upon you."

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM [GOD FATHER OF US AND]. Expressing source / origin. The source of grace and peace is both "God Father" and "Lord Jesus Christ", also genitive. "Father" stands in apposition to "God", and "Christ Jesus" stands in apposition to "Lord".

Ιησου Χριστου [ος] dat. "**Jesus Christ**" - [THE LORD] JESUS CHRIST. Dative, standing in apposition to "Lord".

1:3-14

1. Praise for God's rich blessings in Christ, 1:3-23

i] Praise to God

Argument

Paul begins his letter to the Ephesian church with a prescript - a from whom and to whom. He then follows up with what can best be described as a eulogy, a statement of declarative praise to God. God has blessed his people, chosen them, redeemed them, opened their eyes to the mystery / the gospel, and assured them of his eternal purpose. And this, not just for believing Jews, but for Gentiles who share the faith of Abraham. Together, both Jew and Gentile, taste the promised blessings of the covenant in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-2. There is some debate as to whether the letter proper begins at v3, or 2:1. The opening chapter presents in two parts, praise, v3-14, followed by a prayer, v15-23. Given that Paul often begins his letters with praise and thanksgiving / prayer, chapter 1 is best classified as introductory (an *exordium*), with the argument proper beginning in chapter 2 (the *probatio*), contra O'Brien, who argues that the eulogy, 1:3-14, begins the letter proper.

The eulogy certainly introduces the main theme, a theme which O'Brien suggests is "the power of God's actions in Christ", which actions achieve "cosmic reconciliation and unity in Christ."

In Christ, all things are unified in heaven and on earth

The first chapter can be divided as follows:

- A eulogy of praise to God, v3-14:
- Thanksgiving and prayer, v15-23:
    - The thanksgiving proper, v15-16;
    - Paul's prayer for the Ephesians, v17-19a;
    - A statement of praise for God's life-giving power in Christ, v19b-23.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2

iii] Structure: *Paul's openings statement of praise to God*:

Theme:

"cosmic reconciliation and unity in Christ", O'Brien.

Praise:

God be praised, v3;

Election, v4-6;

Redemption, v7-8;
Knowledge of the mystery / gospel, v9-10;
Assurance, v11-14.

iv] Interpretation:

This letter seeks to affirm the unity of the church (assembly of believers) against the tendency for a racial divide between Jew and Gentile. The passage before us, described by Best as a *eulogy*, serves to introduce the major theme of the letter which distils down to **we are all one in Christ**. Bruce describes this passage as a "contemplation of God's eternal purpose", his "cosmic reconciliation and unity in Christ", O'Brien. It serves as a statement of praise, or blessing to God. Its liturgical form is that of a eulogy, a liturgy of declarative praise. It celebrates (praises God for) a series of spiritual blessings. Paul will often introduce his letters with a thanksgiving and blessing, but in Ephesians this follows on from the eulogy such that the whole of chapter 1 is introductory.

The opening passage in Ephesians, 1:3-14, is virtually one long sentence made up of compound clauses, the principal clause being v3, "who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.":

Note that in v3-12 Paul speaks of "we", "we" were chosen, redeemed and opened up to the mystery. He may be speaking of "we believers", but given v12-13, "and you also ....", he is likely speaking of "we Jewish believers." The blessings of the kingdom belong to the children of Abraham, which blessings are now extended to believing Gentiles, those who are children of faith possessing the faith of Abraham.

v] Homiletics: *We praise him for all his blessings*

From our reading today we are able to draw out quite a few truths that touch our Christian lives. Three of these truths are worth considering in detail. They are three blessings which are ours in the here and now, in Christ.

First. We are told in v4-5 that God has determined to "adopt" us "as his sons through Christ" that we might be "holy and blameless in his sight." Everyone who accepts the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ automatically becomes a member of the chosen people of God - the set apart people of God, the children of God. As God's sons, the day is coming, and in a sense now is, when we will take upon ourselves the qualities of divinity. We certainly don't deserve to become godlike, but out of his abundant grace we will be as Christ is. Jesus has gone before us, and on

the day of resurrection we will put on glory, the glory that he now possesses. That will be glory indeed!

Second. In v8 we are told that God has "made known to us the mystery of his will." We now possess the secrets of the universe. "What is truth?" asked Pilate. Since the beginning of time mankind has asked the same question. Ultimate truth is the possession of God's people in the here and now. The mystery, a secret we possess, is the wonderful truth of the gospel of God's sovereign grace. It is the truth that God in Jesus is gathering a people to himself to share his divinity for eternity. God has determined that those who share this blessing, do so through faith in Jesus. This community of faith will be the instrument to unite all things under Christ - an eternal united new creation.

Third. In v13-14, we are told that we are sealed with "the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance". The gift of the Holy Spirit is a "deposit" - a down payment of the blessings to come. He is also a "seal" - a guarantee of the glory to come. It is the Spirit who expedites in our flesh the shape of holiness which is already eternally ours in Jesus. He slowly moulds us into the image of Jesus. Through the interplay of the circumstances of life and the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, we are adopting the character of our Creator.

Text - 1:3

Paul gives praise to God for all the spiritual blessings he has poured out upon his people, v3-14. i] God be praised. Paul opens by praising God for the wonderful blessings that were given to the saints / Jewish believers (blessings which Gentiles similarly share as members of Christ). These blessings are every "spiritual" blessing and they are experienced in the "heavenly realms". Seeing that we are in a relationship with Christ, we are in a sense, spiritually one with him in the heavenly realms, while still being part of the earthly realm. This verse serves as a summary introduction to the eulogy.

ευλογητος adj. "**praise *be to***" - BLESSED *be*. Fronted for emphasis. The verb to-be is assumed, either optative = a wish prayer, or imperative, "let be ...", or indicative, "is praised / blessed. Possibly "worthy of praise / blessing."

πατηρ [ηρ ρος] "**Father**" - [THE GOD AND] FATHER. "Father" is without an article, joined to "the God" by και indicating they are one in the same.

του κυριου [ος] gen. "**of [our] Lord**" - OF THE LORD. The genitive is adjectival, relational.

ἡμων gen. pro. "**our**" - OF US [JESUS CHRIST]. The genitive is adjectival, also probably expressing subordination; "Lord Jesus Christ over us", Larkin.

ὁ ευλογησας [ευλογεω] aor. part. "**who has blessed**" - THE ONE HAVING BLESSED, PRAISED. The participle serves as a substantive, standing in apposition to "the God and Father." The eulogy gives praise to God on the ground of his blessings to us.

ἡμας "**us**" - There is debate over whether Paul includes his readers in the "us". It is likely that the "us" are Jewish believers, or even the apostles. In v13 his readers, "you", are included in the blessings, in that the Gentiles get to share in the blessings poured out on God's historic people. The Gentiles are "included in Christ", along with God's chosen people Israel.

εν + dat. "**with**" - IN/WITH [ALL/EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING]. Adverbial use of the preposition, expressing reference / respect; "with respect to." The blessing is "spiritual". "Spiritual blessings" means those elements of life that are ours in our association with the Spirit, as outlined in verses 3-14.

εν + dat. "**in**" - Local; expressing space / sphere.

τοις επουρανιοις adj. "**the heavenly realms**" - THE HEAVENLIES. The adjective serves as a substantive. Numerous definitions have been suggested for "the heavenlies", eg., "the sphere of the blessings which are related to the Spirit", Lincoln. Some argue that it is another word for heaven, but this is very unlikely. It seems more likely that the term refers to the "spiritual sphere of influence" touching both earth and heaven. Spiritual forces, both good and evil, exist within its sphere: see 3:10, also 1:20, 2:6, 6:12.

εν Χριστῳ "**in Christ**" - The preposition εν is locative / incorporative union, the prepositional phrase again serving to modifying the verb "blessed" - the spiritual blessings which come to us through our incorporation in Christ, by grace through faith.

v4

ii] Election and adoption to sonship, v4-6. In these three verses, Paul identifies the first spiritual blessing: Set apart / called / elected / predestined as a holy people, God like, Christ like. The people of Israel were elected to sonship, chosen to be holy and blameless in the sight of God, "to the praise of his glorious grace."

καθως "**for**" - AS, JUST AS. The NIV reads the conjunction as causal, "because", although an epexegetic / explanatory sense seems better. "God has blessed us in that he has ....."

εξελεξατο [εκλεγω] aor. "**he chose**" - HE CHOSE OUT, SELECTED [US]. The aorist tense may indicate a single act, but not necessarily. The first element of God's kindness, his blessing, is the divine election of a people. Commentators with a reformed leaning tend to argue for an individual sense to the blessing of predestination. Yet, it is likely that a corporate sense is intended in that God chose

Abraham and through his seed (ultimately Christ) he gathered an eternally secure people to himself. Today, a person is incorporated into this chosen people, this new Israel, through faith in Christ.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [HIM]. Local, space, metaphorical / incorporative union, probably "in Christ." Through our incorporation in Christ, we are the elect people of God.

προ + acc. "**before**" - Here adverbial, temporal. Both this prepositional phrase, and "in him", modify the verb "to choose."

κοσμου [ος] gen. "**[the creation] of the world**" - [FOUNDATION (also deposit, sowing in the sense of conception)] OF WORLD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "the world's creation", but possibly objective. God's choice of a people, including his determination of a how a person can join with this people (namely, by grace mediated on the basis of the faithfulness of Christ appropriate through faith), was made "before the creation."

ειναι "**to be**" - [*for* US] TO BE. The infinitive is adverbial, expressing purpose; "in order that we may be ..... The accusative subject of the infinitive is ἡμας, "we".

ἁγιους [ος] "**holy**" - Certainly an ethical sense is intended here, "goodness / purity / without fault", but pushing toward "divine like." See sample sermon above.

αμωμους [ος] adj. "**blameless**" - [AND] UNBLEMISHED, BLAMELESS. Predicate adjective. Used of pure sacrificial animals and of moral rectitude. The purpose of divine election is the creation of a people who will stand holy and blameless, perfect, in the last day. Such perfection can only be found in identification with Christ, rather than by striving toward ethical purity in the here and now. Of course, our status of purity in Christ prompts a desire for purity in our daily lives. "Unblemished", Moffatt; "innocent", CEV.

κατενωπιον + gen. "**in [his] sight**" - BEFORE [HIM]. Spatial, metaphorical.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [LOVE]. Possibly instrumental, "by/with", but better causal, "because of love." Whose love and to whom? Either God's love, or our love and if our love, is it love to the neighbour, or to God? The NIV has "in love" as the opening words of v5, in which case it is God's love, but the words can also end the sentence, in which case "in love" amplifies "holy and blameless", or the words can stand by themselves; "to be full of love", REB.

v5

προορισας [προοριζω] aor. part. "**he predestined**" - HAVING LIMITED, DECIDED BEFOREHAND, FOREORDAINED, PREDESTINED [US]. Although it is unclear as to the intention of the participle here, it looks very much like an attendant circumstance participle identifying action accompanying the main verb

"he chose" - "he chose us ..... predestining us in love to be ...." Adverbial is certainly possible, temporal, or causal, or instrumental. O'Brien suggests cause = end view / goal; "he chose us ..... with the goal of predestining us." The word is used 6 times in the NT. In choosing a people for himself, God destines this people for a particular end, namely, adoption as sons. Again, this does not necessarily define how an individual becomes a member of the corporate entity which is both chosen and destined. A Calvinist will argue that God determines membership, while an Arminian will argue that membership is a matter of human decision.

εις + acc. "**to be [adopted as sons] / for adoption to sonship**" - TO, INTO, TOWARD [ADOPTION, SONSHIP]. Here probably expressing purpose, "in order to be." Hoehner notes that in v5-6 εις is used three times, the first with the sense of direction or appointment, the second direction and relationship and the third (v6) goal or end. The word "adoption" is used 5 times by Paul. It is often argued that the word comes out of Graeco-Roman social practice, although Jewish society also practised adoption. Paul is here referring to Israel's adoption as sons of God, a privilege that belongs to remnant Israel, Hos.11:1, Rom.9:4.

δια + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [JESUS CHRIST]. Instrumental, agency.

εις αυτον "**-**" - TO HIM. The preposition εις here expressing advantage; "for himself." Presumably "God".

κατα + acc. "**in accordance with**" - ACCORDING TO. Expressing a standard, as NIV, but possibly cause, "because of ..."

αυτου gen. pro. "**his**" - [THE GOOD PLEASURE OF THE WILL] OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "God's will", but it may be taken as verbal, subjective, with "him" doing the willing.

ευδοκιαν [α] "**pleasure**" - GOOD PLEASURE, SATISFACTION. The word is often used of God's good pleasure, but sometimes of human happiness (satisfaction or contentment is closer to the mark, given that it is very difficult to know what the word "happiness" means). Here though it is most likely a close synonym to "will", that is, God's intention / purpose. So, rather than "contentment", we are better to go with a meaning like "passionate concern", "delighted intent."

του θεληματος [α ατος] gen. "***and* will**" - OF THE WILL [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, attributed (ie., the lead noun acts as an adjective limiting the noun in the genitive case), so Larkin, but possibly idiomatic / source, "the good pleasure *comes from* his will", Hoehner.

v6

εις + acc. "**to**" - TO [*the* PRAISE]. Expressing purpose, goal / end. "All the actions of the Father have as their goal the praise of God", Hoehner.

δοξης [α] gen. "**glorious**" - OF IMPORTANCE, WEIGHTINESS, SIGNIFICANCE / GLORY, SPLENDOUR, POWER, RADIANCE. The syntactical function of the three genitives "of *the* glory of the grace of him" is problematic. The genitive pronoun, αυτου, "of him", is best classified as possessive rather than subjective. The genitive noun χαριτος, "grace", is most likely adjectival, attributed, as NIV; "glorious generosity", Phillips. As for "of glory", it is usually classified as objective, "praise about / concerning / toward his glorious grace", although possibly adjectival, attributed, see v12. Other possibilities for "of *the* glory of the grace": a) attributive and objective, "for the glorious praise of his grace", b) objective and attributive, "to the praise of the glory of his grace", NJB.

της χαριτος [ις ιτος] "**grace**" - OF THE GRACE, FAVOUR [OF HIM]. The grace is truly glorious, a brilliant display of God's character. The word often refers to God's covenant mercy in gathering a people to himself through the faithfulness / worthiness of Christ.

ἧς gen. pro. "**which**" - *by* WHICH. Genitive by attraction. Variant εν ᾗ, "by which" (instrumental use of the preposition), certainly better expresses the sense of this clause, but was obviously added for that very purpose.

εχαριτωσεν [χαριζω] aor. "**he has freely given [to us]**" - HE BESTOWED FAVOUR UPON, FAVOURED HIGHLY [US]. Here the substantive "grace" is emphasized by adding its cognate verb. The literal meaning is something like "his grace, by which he has endowed us with grace."

εν "**in**" - Local, expressing a close personal relationship.

τῳ ηγαπημενῳ [αγαπαω] dat. perf. pas. part. "**the one he loves**" - THE ONE BEING LOVED. The participle serves as a substantive. This is possibly a messianic title applied here to Jesus, although Paul may just be saying that God's grace is expedited in the Son of his love, namely, Christ. The term is descriptive of intimacy, even a pet name. "In his Beloved", Barclay.

v7

iii] Redemption and the forgiveness of sins, v7-8a. The second spiritual blessing is redemption. Through identification with Christ a representative group of Israelites, namely, the apostles and other Jewish believers, were redeemed, purchased from their slavery of sin by the sacrificial death of Christ. God has called out a special people to himself and so makes provision for the realization of that people by means of the redemption which he has achieved for them in Christ. All this is in accord with God's grace lavished on his people.

εν ᾧ "**in whom**" - Local, in union with; "In the beloved / in union with Jesus we possess redemption."

εχομεν [εχω] pres. "**we have**" - WE HAVE, POSSES. This verb in the present tense, surrounded by aorist verbs, stresses the fact that we have redemption now as an ongoing reality, ie., a durative present tense.

την απολυτρωσιν [ις εως] "**redemption**" - THE RANSOMING, DELIVERANCE, LIBERATION, EMANCIPATION, REDEMPTION, ... The deliverance of Israel from Egypt, colours the meaning of this word in the scriptures, although Leon Morris argues that in the New Testament, redemption invariably conveys the idea of release from bondage on the payment of a ransom price. Certainly, here we note the price paid is "blood", the blood-sacrifice of Jesus.

δια + gen. "**through [his blood]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [THE BLOOD OF HIM]. Instrumental / means.

την αφεσιν [ις εως] acc. "**the forgiveness**" - THE RELEASING, FORGIVENESS. Accusative in simple apposition to "redemption"; "the redemption ..... that is the forgiveness of sins." Some argue that forgiveness here is a synonym for redemption, yet it is more likely that it further defines the substance of redemption. Redemption is not the same as forgiveness, but what we can say is that a redeemed person is forgiven of all their sins; "a liberation which means the forgiveness of sins", Barclay.

των παραπτωματων [α τος] "**of sins**" - OF THE TRANSGRESSION, TRESPASS, FALLING AWAY, LAPSES.... The genitive is adverbial, reference / respect; "forgiveness with respect to / with regard to / concerning sins." Larkin opts for an objective genitive. Paul is referring to individual sins here, transgressions of God's law. Note that he usually refers to "sin" singular, in the sense of the corrupting power that entered the human race through Adam and infected the whole of humanity such that it is now impossible for a person not to transgress God's law, even though they may desire to keep it.

κατα + acc. "**in accordance with**" - ACCORDING TO. Expressing a standard, and thus the idea that redemption is shaped by its relation to the wealth of God's grace; "it is here that God's grace is found in all its richness", Cassirer. The preposition may sometimes express cause / reason; "because of the wealth of his grace", Barclay.

της χαριτος [ις ιτος] gen. "**of [God's] grace**" - [THE WEALTH] OF THE GRACE [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, probably attributed, "the full and gracious grace", Phillips, or epexegetic, "the wealth / abundance *which is* his grace."

v8a

ης gen. pro. "**that**" - WHICH. Introducing a relative clause. As with most translations, the NIV has taken the verb επερισσευσεν, "he lavished", as transitive and the pronoun as the accusative object of the verb attracted to the

genitive χαριτος, "grace"; "which he abounded to us" = "which he made to overflow to us", Cassirer. The AV, "wherein he hath abounded toward us", treats the verb as intransitive and the pronoun as a dative attracted to the genitive "grace".

επερισσευσεν [περισσευω] aor. "**he lavished**" - HE LAVISHED, OVERFLOWED, ABOUNDED [INTO US]. "This grace he gave us in superabundance", Barclay.

v8b

iv] The mystery, v8b-10. Paul now identifies the third blessing: The third blessing is the bestowal of wisdom such that the saints, Jewish believers, are enabled to share in a secret once hidden, but now revealed. This mystery concerns the fulfillment of God's gracious intention to gather a people to himself, both Jew and Gentile, and shower upon this new community life in all its fullness - "the unsearchable riches of Christ", 3:8.

εν "**with**" - IN [ALL WISDOM]. The preposition is functioning adverbially, modal, expressing the manner by which God's grace overflowed to us; "with all ...." Possibly introducing a new sentence; "God has great wisdom and understanding", CEV.

φρονησει [ις εως] "**understanding**" - [AND] INSIGHT. "Understanding" is either a synonym of "wisdom" (ie. "insight" and "wisdom" are the same), or in apposition to "wisdom" (ie. "insight" further describes the substance of "wisdom"). "Wisdom and understanding" is either another aspect of "the riches of God's grace" poured out on us", or, if linked to the next sentence, an aspect of God's character by which he makes known to us the mystery ....."

v9

γνωρισας [γινωριζω] aor. part. "**he made known**" - HAVING MADE KNOWN. Best doesn't think that the participle "is a second element in God's grace, but represents a new step in the eulogy", none-the-less, it does look like an attendant circumstance participle identifying action accompanying the verb "we have [redemption]", even adverbial, instrumental, expressing means, "by making known", O'Brien. In revealing his intention "God has shown us his secret / hidden plan."

ἡμιν dat. pro. "**to us**" - Dative of indirect object. Clearly the "us" here is the apostles, although Paul does often use the epistolary / royal plural to refer to himself.

το μυστηριον [ον] "**mystery**" - THE MYSTERY. Direct object of the participle "making known." In scripture, a mystery is a hidden truth, and this sense of the word is far safer than a meaning based on a pagan source, namely

"mysterious". Paul uses the word to describe a secret, or hidden truth, which is now revealed. It was once a secret, but now that the secret is revealed it is no longer a mystery. Debate rages as to the substance of this truth, eg. "All one in Christ", "Christ in you, the hope of glory", Col.1:27, "through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel", Eph.3:6. The mystery does indeed relate to "membership in the people of God", Best, of Jew and Gentile together as one in Christ. Yet, such is the product of the mystery and so it is likely that the mystery is the gospel of God's grace, or better, the gospel (in the sense of important message) which concerns God's grace. The phrase "the unsearchable riches of Christ" in 3:8, may come close to defining what Paul means by "the mystery."

του θεληματος [α ατος] gen. "**of [his] will**" - OF THE WILL [OF HIM]. The genitive is probably adjectival, but the possibilities are many:

- Bruce in the translation below takes it as attributed where the lead noun "mystery" limits the genitive noun "will"; "mysterious decree/will";
- Larkin thinks the genitive here is epexegetic, so "the mystery which consists of his will";
- Caragounis, *Mysterion*, thinks it is appositional, "he made known to us the mystery, namely, what he willed";
- Partitive / wholative - of the totality of the divine will / intentions, God has revealed a particular piece of information, the mystery, the gospel of grace. Possibly the best option;
- Hoehner thinks it is objective, "the mystery concerning God's own will";
- Possibly even descriptive, idiomatic / source - from the totality of God's will has revealed the mystery.

κατα + acc. "**according to**" - ACCORDING TO. Establishing a standard; "in accordance with, corresponding to." Introducing a prepositional phrase which modifies γνωρισας "he has made known." "He has made known to us his decree which was formerly hidden from men. This he has done in accordance with that purpose of his which has its origin and its accomplishment in the person of Christ", Bruce.

προεθετο [προτιθημι] aor. mid. "**he purposed**" - [THE GOOD PLEASURE OF HIM WHICH] HE PLACE BEFORE, PURPOSED. In the middle voice it is either "display publicly", or "plan / purpose". "Did what he had purposed", TEV.

εν + dat. "**in [Christ]**" - IN [HIM]. Local. Presumably "Christ", although note the AV which takes the referent as God and so provides the reflective pronoun "himself." Virtually all modern translations opt for "Christ".

v10

εις "**to be**" - TO, INTO = FOR. The preposition here expresses purpose, goal / end, and forms a prepositional phrase possibly modifying the verb προεθετο, "purposed", v9; "which he purposed in Christ for the implementation of .....", but better modifying γνωρισας, "he made known to us the mystery" ..... for the implementation of ..."

οικονομιαν [α] "**put into effect**" - A STEWARDSHIP, ORDERING, ARRANGING, IMPLEMENTING. Referring to the divine implementation of the mystery in human history toward its ultimate realization.

των καιρων [ος] gen. "**when the times**" - [OF THE COMPLETION] OF THE TIMES. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "completion / fulfillment" by specifying it / epexegetic. The epexegetic double genitive construction (Larkin suggests that they are objective, lit. a management concerning the fulfillment concerning the times) is expressing a temporal idea, that moment in time when the long-promised outpouring of divine grace finds its fulfillment in the gathering together of the strands of history in that one seminal event, Christ with us. "He revealed / made known to us the mystery (the unsearchable riches of Christ / grace) ..... for / toward the implementation of his long-term plan."

του πληρωματος [α ατος] gen. "**will have reached their fulfillment**" - OF THE FULLNESS, COMPLETION. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "implementation" by specifying it, epexegetic.

ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι [ανακεφαλαιοω] aor. pas. inf. "**to bring ..... under one head**" - TO SUM UP, GATHER UP INTO ONE [ALL THINGS]. The infinitive, with εις at the beginning of the verse is probably adverbial, forming a purpose clause in apposition to the first purpose clause, although possibly epexegetic explaining an element of the mystery. Commentators now tend to agree that the word expresses the idea of "summary", the summing up of an idea, the gathering together of an idea's salient points, rather than "head". Everything is "summed up" in the sovereign grace of God expedited in Christ. "For / toward the summing up all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth."

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST]. The preposition here is possibly instrumental, Christ is the means by which the grace of God is applied, "by Christ", or better, local, that Christ is the sphere within which all things are summed up, Christ is the focal point, "in Christ", so O'Brien, Hoehner, Larkin. The meaning of the term "in Christ" is dictated by the context. For example, it is often used to refer to a believer's identification with Christ, although not here.

τα + gen. "**-**" - THE [THINGS UPON THE HEAVENS AND] THE [THINGS UPON THE EARTH]. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase into a substantive. The preposition επι is spatial, "in / on / upon." Christ is the

focal point of God's sovereign grace, operative in the heavenlies and on earth, influencing the heavenly powers and authorities and lost humanity.

εν αυτῳ "**in him / under Christ**" - IN HIM. The preposition εν is local; "One perfect whole in Christ", Barclay.

v11

v] Assurance, v11-12. Paul finally identifies the fourth spiritual blessing, namely, assurance. The new Israel of God is destined for glory, for the living God has purposed it and for this, let his name be praised.

εν ᾧ "**in him**" - IN WHOM [AND = ALSO]. The paragraph break in the NIV is made for easy reading, but does not reflect the Greek text. The sentence which began at v3 continues, although the presence of και and the repeated εν ᾧ of v7 indicates a segmental break. In Christ, here in the sense of "through our incorporation with Christ."

εκληρωθημεν [κληροω] aor. pas. "**chosen**" - WE WERE APPOINTED BY LOT, DESTINED, CHOSEN, MADE AN INHERITANCE. The sense here is probably not the same as that already made in v4, so a meaning of "destined" or "assigned" is better. Paul is speaking about assurance rather than election. "We have been given our share in the heritage" through incorporation with Christ, NEB; "in whom also we have obtained (been given) an inheritance", AV.

προορισθεντες [προοριζω] aor. pas. part "**having been predestined**" - HAVING BEEN FOREORDAINED. The participle is adverbial, possibly modal, expressing the manner in which the action of the verb "chosen" is accomplished, or causal, "we have been given an inheritance because we have been predestined ...", so Larkin. Paul now harks back to v4, 5, reinforcing the truth that all this is according to God's purpose and plan.

κατα + acc. "**according to**" - ACCORDING TO. Expressing a standard, "in accordance with."

προθεσιν [ις εως] "**the plan**" - *the* PLAN, A SETTING FORTH / PURPOSE. The sense "purpose" is best here, as AV, TEV.., so "in conformity with the purpose ..... in pursuance of the plan ..."

του .... ενεργουντος [ενεργεω] gen. pres. part. "**of him who works out [everything]**" - OF THE ONE WORKING [ALL THINGS]. The participle serves as a substantive. The genitive, as usual, can be understood in a number of ways. Larkin thinks it is verbal, subjective, or idiomatic / source, while Hoehner thinks it is objective. A simple possessive is probably all that Paul intends; it's God's plan, "a design formed by him", Cassirer.

κατα + acc. "**in conformity with**" - ACCORDING TO. Again, expressing a standard; "in pursuance of .... "Based on what he had decided from the beginning", TEV.

την βουλην [η] "**the purpose**" - THE COUNSEL, DECISION, PURPOSE, PLAN. Expressing the idea of deliberation and its produce = "the plan"; "directs the course of all things according to his own counsel and decree", Bruce.

του θεληματος [α ατος] gen. "**of [his] will**" - OF THE WILL [OF HIM]. Again, probably functioning as a possessive adjective, but other options exist: subjective or source, Larkin; objective, Hoehner.

v12

εις το + inf. "**in order that**" - TO THE [US] TO BE. This preposition with the articular infinitive of the verb to-be either forms a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that we might exist ....", as NIV.

τους προηλπικοτας [προελπιζω] perf. part. "**who were the first to hope / who were the first to put our hope**" - [TO *the* PRAISE OF *the* GLORY OF HIM] THE ONES WHO FIRST HOPED. The participle is possibly adjectival, attributive, although better taken as forming a substantive in apposition to ἡμας, "we", as NIV. The faithful remnant of Israel, the chosen son, is Christ, and the first to rest on the faithful son for eternal salvation were the apostles. The prefix to the verb takes the sense "beforehand". Those who hoped beforehand were the small, but representative, group of believers from Israel.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST]. Local, space, metaphorical / incorporative union; "the believer's hope is in the Christ, the promised Messiah in whom the righteous from the beginning of time have had their hope", Hoehner.

εις + acc. "**for [the praise]**" - TO, INTO. Here the preposition is possibly expressing purpose, as NIV. Yet, Paul may be using the preposition εις here to mean "to", such that Paul is simply using a liturgical turn of phrase to praise God's glory, so vividly demonstrated in his mercy toward humanity.

δοξης [α ης] "**of [his] glory**" - OF GLORY [OF HIM]. The genitive is usually treated as objective here with αυτου "his" as subjective (better possessive), although adjectival, attributed, may apply. The phrase seems somewhat truncated and so it is probably restating a similar statement in v6; "to the praise of the glory of the grace of him"; "his intent was to reveal us as the example of all that he had done ("his glorious grace") that was worthy of praise", Junkins. Commentators tend to argue that the gathering of a people in Christ has as its end, the glory of God, which glory is praised by those who dwell in heaven and on earth. We were given our share in the heritage "that we should be to the praise of his glory", Robinson. "The praise of his glory is the object for which those who first hoped in Christ were chosen", O'Brien. Yet, we need to qualify this point. It is obvious that God does not act to promote his own glory, for his radiant character is a fact in itself. Our God acts toward us because of who he is, not because he desires (and certainly not because he needs) to prove, or demonstrate, his character.

God's move toward us in Christ is totally of grace and does not add to his being in any way.

v13

vi] And also believing Gentiles, v13-14. Paul now includes his Gentile readers in the spiritual blessings which belong to the saints / Jewish believers, but which are now extended to all - "you also were included in Christ." Being included in the family of God, being a child of God, once meant being part of the people of Israel. Yet, God's ultimate intentions, once hidden now revealed, have changed all that. Initially, God's sovereign will defined the family of Abraham as inheritors of the blessings, but now, all those who exercise a faith like Abraham by responding to the gospel, are inheritors of the blessings. As with the saints, Gentiles are included in God's eternal family, predestined according to his purpose for the praise of his glory. As such, the saints / believing Jews, along with Gentile believers, share in the blessings of the kingdom on reception of the gospel. These blessings, the promised blessings of the covenant, of new life in Christ, are now realized in the gift of the Holy Spirit. "Our possession of the Spirit, here and now, is the divinely given guarantee that we shall one day enjoy in fulness all that inheritance which God has reserved in heaven for those that love him", Bruce.

εν ᾧ και ὑμεις "**and you also *were* included in Christ**" - IN WHOM ALSO YOU. Referring back to εκληρωθημεν, "we were made an inheritance", so "you" Gentiles were included in the blessings of sonship along with Israel. One more εν ᾧ in this verse ends the series in this passage of local, sphere / incorporative union, constructions.

ακουσαντες [ακουω] aor. part. "**when you heard**" - HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial introducing a temporal clause, modifying the main verb εσφραγισθητε, "you were sealed [with the holy Spirit of promise]." The Gentiles were incorporated in Christ along with representative Israel (the apostles) when they heard the gospel ("the word of truth"), believed and received the Holy Spirit.

της αληθειας [α] gen. "**of truth**" - [THE WORD] OF THE TRUTH. The intent of the genitive, as usual, is unclear. Hoehner gives the following possibilities: attributive, "true word'"; objective, "the word about / concerning the truth"; epexegetic, "the word which is truth"; or content - "a word of which the truth is the very substance and essence", Ellicott. Larkin suggests it is adverbial, reference / respect; "with respect to the truth."

το ευαγγελιον [ον] "**the gospel**" - THE MESSAGE, COMMUNICATION. Standing in apposition to "the word"; "*that is*, the gospel ...."

της σωτηριας [α] gen. "**of [your] salvation**" - OF THE SALVATION [OF YOU]. Larkin opts again for a genitive of reference, "the good news about your

salvation", while Hoehner opts for content, "the gospel which has as its content salvation." An objective genitive may be better; "the gospel proclaiming your salvation", Cassirer. The phrase "the gospel of your salvation" stands in apposition to "the word of truth." The gospel has acted on the Ephesian believers effecting "a rescue operation, a deliverance from spiritual death, from God's wrath, from bondage to evil powers, sin and the flesh", Lincoln.

πιστευσαντες [πιστευω] aor. part. "**having believed**" - [IN WHOM AND = ALSO] HAVING BELIEVED. The participle is adverbial, probably introducing a temporal clause, "when you believed."

εσφραγισθητε [σφραγιζω] "**you were marked [in him] with a seal**" - YOU WERE SEALED. Verse 13 is a single sentence with "sealed" as the main verb. Note the technical difficulty here. Normally, when an aorist participle ("believing") precedes the main verb ("sealed"), the action of the participle would precede the action of the main verb. Therefore, belief would precede the reception of the Holy Spirit. This verse could then be used to support second-blessing theology. None-the-less, the rule does not always apply and so it is best to understand the two participles "hearing" and "believing" as modifying "sealed", all describing a single event.

τῳ πνευματι [α ατος] dat. "**holy**" - [WITH] THE HOLY [SPIRIT]. The dative is instrumental / means; "by means of."

της επαγγελιας [α] gen. "**promised**" - OF THE PROMISE. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, as NIV.

v14

ὁς "**who**" - WHO / WHICH. There is a textual question over ὅς "who" (masculine), or ὅ "which" (neuter). The textual weight is with the neuter reading, but as Larkin notes, the attraction of the pronoun to its neuter antecedent could well be responsible for the neuter readings. The antecedent, the Holy Spirit' is a person, not an it.

αρραβων [ων ωνος] "**a deposit guaranteeing**" - [IS] A DOWN PAYMENT, AN EARNEST. Paul describes the Holy Spirit as "a down payment" guaranteeing our inheritance. In common usage the word referred to the first payment for a purchased item. "Who is the pledge of our inheritance", NJB.

της κληρονομιας [α] gen. "**[our] inheritance**" - OF THE INHERITANCE [OF US]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive. As in v11, but now the inheritance belongs to both Jew and Gentile.

εις "**until [the redemption]**"" - TO/FOR [*the* REDEMPTION]. Possibly temporal, as NIV, but better expressing purpose, goal / end-view; "When God sealed and guaranteed Gentile believers with his Holy Spirit, he had in view their full and final redemption as his prized possession", O'Brien.

της περιποιησεως [ις εως] gen. "**of those who are God's possession**" - OF THE POSSESSION. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic, "the redemption, that is / namely, the possession", so Best, but possibly verbal, objective.

εις + acc. "**to**" - TO [*the* PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIM]. Here expressing purpose, "for ...." See v6 and 12.

1:15-23

1. Praise for God's rich blessings in Christ, 1:3-23

ii] A prayer for knowledge

Argument

Paul began his letter with his typical greeting, and then moved onto what can best be described as a eulogy, an example of declarative praise. Paul now sets out to pray for his readers, giving thanks for their faith and love, praying for an increase in their knowledge, namely, that they may know Christ better and that they may know the hope that is before them, the riches of their inheritance, and of the divine power operative in them, 1:15-19. Paul then expands on this mighty strength that is theirs in Christ, a strength which has already shown itself in raising Jesus from the dead, 1:20-23.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:3-14.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2

iii] Structure: *Paul's prayer of thanksgiving for the Ephesians*:
the thanksgiving proper / commendation, v15-16;
Paul's prayer for the Ephesians / intercession, v17-19;
A statement of praise to God, v20-23.

iv] Interpretation:

Best calls this prayer a "prayer for those who have everything, because the believers have every spiritual benefit for their spiritual welfare, including election, predestination, adoption, grace, redemption, forgiveness, insight, understanding, knowledge of the mystery of his will, and sealing with the Holy Spirit", cf., 1:3-14. For Best, the prayer expresses Paul's desire "for the Ephesian believers to deepen their relationship with the God who has enriched them with every spiritual benefit, and to experience those benefits in a deeper way."

The thanksgiving, v15-16a, is rather limited, but Paul has already expressed his gratitude to God in the eulogy for his readers, ie., the many Gentiles who have equal standing with Jews in the gospel. Given that the letter may well be a circular letter (intended for a wider audience than just the church at Ephesus), it is only to be expected that the personal links are limited. Still, Paul does note that he has heard of the readers faith and love and for this he thanks God.

The prayer, v16b-19, serves as an intercession for "the realization of the blessings of the eulogy in the lives of the readers", O'Brien. The focus of the prayer is on wisdom and knowledge; Paul wants his readers to truly understand the "mystery", that secret once hidden now revealed.

Moving from intercession to praise, v20-23, Paul praises God for the enthronement / exaltation of Christ over all powers; God gave Christ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, "to the church", to possess and be possessed - God in his graciousness has given Christ, the cosmic Lord of the universe, to the church, that which is his body. In the *now / not yet* schema of New Testament eschatology, Paul's statement is more realized than inaugurated - Christ reigns now, in and through the gathered fellowship of believers.

These verses constitute a single sentence in the Gk. (following v3-14, also a single sentence, the second longest sentence in the NT).

v] Homiletics: *A people gathered to hear*

There are two cities, Babel and Zion. There is the secular city and the spiritual city. There is the world and there is the church. The church finds itself constantly drawn toward the secular city, drawn toward its glory and power. Like the family of Abraham drawn toward Sodom. Similar also to the temptation of Jesus where Satan showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour, and said "All this I will give you if you will bow down and worship me." Rightly Paul the apostle warns us "do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

The temptation we face as a church is that we follow Lot - to choose the green valley and inevitably find ourselves part of the secular city. Paul, in our reading today, tells us something about the church and its function of mind renewal.

When Paul prays for his Ephesian readers, he asks that God reveal his wisdom to them (v17a) and that they be given the spiritual insight to understand that revelation (v18a). This then is the central business of church, hearing and understanding the transcendent God.

- First, hope - the hope of glory (v18b). "Eternity", a mystery scribbled in chalk upon a busy city pavement. Everything about us is crying out "this is all there is." Even our body denies our immortality. Yet, we sense something beyond, and in the gathering of believers and in the hearing of Christ, we sense eternity.
- Second, inheritance - the inheritance of the saints (18b). Community, fraternity, equality..... heaven.

• Third, power - the greatness of God's power (v19-20). The power that raised Christ on the third day is the power which gives life to us - life to live for God, and life on the day of resurrection. This "mighty strength" in Christ enables him to exercise authority over "all" (v21). And this authority and power, possessed by Christ, becomes our possession in Christ (v22). God's wandering and destitute people end up ruling the "principalities and powers in heavenly places."

So, we children of Zion gather to meet our transcendent Lord, and in meeting him, we hear him, and in hearing him, we know him. As we gather Sunday by Sunday we glimpse the mystery of eternity - our place in it all: our hope, inheritance and authority. The green valley beckons us, the "cities of the plain" lure us, but we look to another land beyond the sunset.

Text: 1:15

Thanksgiving, prayer, and praise, v15-23: i] A thanksgiving for the Ephesian believers, v15-16. Paul begins by assuring his readers that he knows of their faith and love and is constantly thanking God for the evidence of these gifts in their lives.

δια τουτο "**for this reason**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF THIS. This causal construction is more inferential than causal; "hence", Moffatt.

καγω "**I**" - AND I. Emphatic, "I also having heard ....."

ακουσας [ακουω] aor. part. "**ever since I heard**" - HAVING HEARD. The participle is adverbial, probably introducing a temporal clause, as NIV, with the aorist indicating time prior to the action of the main verb and its complement, both of which are in the present tense, "I have not stopped giving thanks", v16. None-the-less, causal is possible, "because / since"; "as I have heard of your faith", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "**in**" - [OF THE FAITH AMONG YOU] IN, ON [THE LORD JESUS]. Possibly Jesus is the object of their faith, paralleling their love "for" all the saints (object), although Paul will often use εις or προς to express "your faith toward Christ", whereas he will often use εν, "in" to express the sphere within which faith operates.

την "-" - [AND THE LOVE] THE [TO]. The article serves as an adjectivizer turning the prepositional phrase "to all the saints" into a attributive modifier limiting "love"; "which is to/for all the saints."

παντας τους ἁιους "**all the saints**" - ALL THE SAINTS. Usually, “the saints” refer to either Jews, the Jerusalem church, even the apostles, but the use of "all" may serve to widen the meaning to "all believers."

v16

ου παυομαι [παυω] pres. "**I have not stopped**" - I DO NOT CEASE, STOP. Main verb. An intended exaggeration to make a positive point (a litotes); "I regularly give thanks for you in my prayers."

ευχαριστων [ευχαριστω] pres. part. "**giving thanks**" - The participle is complementary, completing the sense of the main verb "I [do not] cease."

ὑπερ + gen. "**for**" - FOR [YOU]. Expressing representative / advantage; "on behalf of / for the sake of"; "on your behalf."

ποιουμενος [ποιεω] pres. part. "**remembering**" - MAKING [MENTION *of you*]. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal; "when I make mention of you in my prayers."

επι + gen. "**in**" - UPON [THE PRAYERS OF ME]. Probably temporal here; "at the time of my prayers."

v17

ii] A prayer for the Ephesian believers, v17-19. The prayer is directed to God who is described as both the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Glorious One. The title "Father" defines God's substantial relationship with Jesus; "Glorious One", is a common Old Testament description of God, cf., Ps.29:3. Paul prays that his readers may receive, from the Holy Spirit, spiritual understanding, both wisdom and truth.

ἱνα + subj. "***I keep asking* that**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of Paul's prayer for the Ephesians.

του κυριου [ος] gen. "**of [our] Lord**" - [THE GOD] OF THE LORD [OF US, JESUS CHRIST]. The genitive is adjectival, expressing subordination; "Lord over us." "Jesus Christ" stands in apposition to Lord.

της δοξης [α] gen. "**of glory**" - [THE FATHER] OF GLORY. The genitive is adjectival, limiting "Father": possibly idiomati / source - the Father is the source of all glory; or attributive - "the glorious Father." The "glorious Father" stands in apposition to "God". As a descriptive, it serves to show that the Father is well able to answer Paul's prayer.

δωῃ [διδωμι] aor. subj. "**may give**" - MAY GIVE [TO YOU]. Can be read as an optative, but this is unlikely. In v8-9 Paul declared that the Father had bestowed on the Ephesians "all wisdom and insight", he now prays that they may realize what they already possess. "To you" serves as a dative of indirect object.

πνευμα [α ατος] "**the Spirit**" - A SPIRIT. The Holy Spirit may be intended, as NIV, or the human spirit. If the human spirit, the inner self, is intended, such

that Paul's prayer is that a person's inner being will be enabled to receive divine revelation; "may give you a spirit of wisdom", NAB.

σοφιας [α] gen. "**of wisdom**" - The genitive, as with "revelation", is adjectival, possibly attributive, "an inner self attuned to the knowledge of God's will", or attributed, "spiritual wisdom and revelation."

καιν "**and**" - Possibly coordinative, as NIV, but epexegetic seems more likely, ie., "the revelation in a fuller knowledge of him (in respect of him / himself = God)" probably explains what Paul means by the word "wisdom".

αποκαλυψεως [ις εως] gen. "**revelation**" - OF AN UNVEILING OF. Genitive, as above. It is likely that the sense of this word for Paul is the same as μυστηριον, "mystery", which is explained in chapter 3. This mystery is the gospel, "the unsearchable riches of Christ" and not the "Gentiles are heirs together with Israel." Unity is a product of the gospel, not the gospel itself.

εν + dat. "**so that**" - IN [A DISCERNING, PERCEIVING, UNDERSTANDING, FULLER KNOWLEDGE OF HIM]. It is possible that εν here introduces a final or consecutive clause (purpose and result and are always closely linked ideas), although grammatically this is unlikely. Possibly better reference / respect; "with respect to ..." Bruce argues for "goal", as NIV, namely, that the intended purpose of the gift of wisdom and revelation is so that the believer might grow in their knowledge of God. Yet, it is more likely to adjectival, introducing an epexegetic clause, summarizing the content of the wisdom and revelation; it is a wisdom and revelation that consists of ("in") information about God. This "knowing" of God is called "mystical union." It is the process of entering into communion with God, becoming one with him, even in a sense marrying him. "Consisting in the knowledge of him", O'Brien.

v18

In v18-19, Paul identifies three particular areas of insight that he wants his readers to grasp: a) The hope of glory. This is usually understood as the culmination of all things at the second coming of Christ - the parousia, Col.3:4. This "hope" is well expressed later in 5:27; b) The inheritance in the saints. The inheritance is the salvation of the community of believers; the inheritance of a kingdom promised of old, although possibly the inheritance is Christ's, see below; c) The greatness of God's power. This power of God at work in believers is the same power which raised Christ to life, and is the power which gives us new life within, Rom.6:4, and which will raise us in the last day, Rom.8:11.

"***I pray also that***" - This phrase is added by the NIV on the assumption that the participial clause "that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened" serves as the second element of the prayer request which commenced in v17, "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ ..... may give to you ....", ie., it functions as the second

direct object / dependent statement of the negated verb "I do not cease [giving thanks]."

πεφωτισμενους [φωτιζω] perf. pas. part. "**may be enlightened**" - HAVING BEEN ENLIGHTENED [THE EYES OF THE HEART OF YOU]. The participle possibly forms an epexegetic clause explaining "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation." This is supported by the fact that the participle and its associate noun are accusative, thus possibly forming an accusative absolute, although it may just be influenced by the following accusative articular infinitive. On the other hand, the participle may simply be adverbial, causal, so Wallace; "since the eyes of your heart have been enlightened". The participial clause, "having been enlightened with respect to the eyes of your heart", may be tied to the indirect object of "may give", namely, "to you", v17, cf., O'Brien, 133, Lincoln, 47. Yet, it is likely that it is tied to ὑμας, "you [may know him better]." As such it would be adjectival, attributive; "in order that you, who have been enlightened with respect to the eyes of your heart, may know .....". The idea of the eyes of our hearts being illumined is a rather difficult image, but serves to illustrate the ministry of the Holy Spirit who communicates (illuminates) spiritual truth to the believer. The word is used in the LXX of God's instruction.

εις το ειδεναι [οιδα] perf. inf. "**in order that [you] may know**" - TO THE [YOU] TO KNOW = THAT [YOU] MAY KNOW. The accusative articular infinitive governed by the preposition εις introduces either a purpose or result clause; "in order that / so that we can understand the truth about God's purposes"; "to enable you to see", Barclay.

τις "-" - WHAT [*is* THE HOPE]. Introducing the first of three indirect questions: what is the hope, what are the riches and how great the power? Paul prays that we may "realize how great the hope .... the magnificence and splendour of the inheritance .... and how tremendous is the power", Phillips.

αυτου "**he [has called you]**" - [OF THE CALLING] OF HIM. The "hope" is the sum of the concrete promises made by God in association with his calling of believers.

της κλησεως gen. "**called**" - OF THE CALLING, INVITATION. Genitive of source. The strength of this word depends on our own view of predestination. We may properly translate it as "the hope that is associated with his invitation", or "the hope that was given you when God chose you", CEV.

της δοξης της κληρονομιας "**of [his] glorious inheritance**" - [WHAT *is* THE WEALTH] OF THE GLORY OF THE INHERITANCE. The genitives, "glory" and "inheritance", are adjectival, probably attributive, as NIV, limiting by describing "riches"; "the very glorious inheritance", O'Brien. Larkin suggests that both genitives are attributed giving the sense "rich glory of the inheritance", Abbott.

αυτου gen. pro. "**his**" - OF HIM. The NIV takes the pronoun as possessive, but if may be idiomatic / source, "the rich glory of the inheritance from him."

εν "**in**" - IN [THE SAINTS]. The preposition is local, space; "among the saints." Possibly an eternal inheritance which belongs to him and which he supplies, or the Old Testament idea of God's people as his inheritance; "namely, the possession of His elect people".

v19

αυτου "**his**" - [AND WHAT *is* THE SURPASSING GREATNESS OF THE POWER] OF HIM. The NIV treats the genitive pronoun as possessive, but possibly expressing source, "from him", or verbal, subjective, "he works the power."

το ὑπερβαλλον [υπερβαλλω] pres. part. "**incomparably**" - THE SURPASSING, EXCEEDING, GOING BEYOND THE NORM. The participle is adjectival, attributive, and is used for emphasis. God's power is exceedingly great and is operative in believers.

της δυναμεως [ις εως] gen. "**power**" - OF THE POWER, ABILITY. The genitive is adjectival, attributed; "the surpassing great power", Larkin.

τους πιστευοντας [πιστευω] pres. part. "**[for us] who believe**" - [TO US] THE ONE'S BELIEVING. The participle serves as a substantive standing in apposition to "us".

κατα + acc. "**that power is like**" - ACCORDING TO. Of a standard, "in accordance with / corresponding to." Note the piling up of similar "power" words to make the point that God's power, operative in believers, achieves His promises."

την ενεργειαν [α] "**the working**" - THE WORKING, FUNCTION, OPERATION. The application of power.

του κρατους [ος] gen. "**of [his] mighty**" - OF THE POWER, MIGHT. Referring to a resident power that can overcome anything that stands in its way. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the working", "strong might", Hoehner, a working / an application of power which consists of God's mighty strength exercised in Christ's resurrection and ascension, or attributed, "mighty strength."

της ισχυος [υς υος] "**strength**" - OF THE STRENGTH [OF HIM]. Referring to the exercise / functioning of power. The genitive is probably adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, so Hoehner; "from his strength / power / might."

v20

iii] Praise, v20-23. Having prayed that the Ephesians might experience "his incomparable great power for us who believe", Paul goes on to muse on the source of that power, the extent of which "has been demonstrated in what God

has already done in Christ, particularly in raising him from the dead and exalting him", Lincoln.

ἣν rel. pro. "**which**" - WHICH. Direct object of the verb "he worked."

ενηργνσεν [ενεργεω] "**he exerted**" - HE WORKED, EXERTED. This verb governs "raised" and "seated", and in v22, "placed" and "appointed". The exercise of God's power may be observed in these four actions.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST]. The preposition here is best taken as adverbial, reference / respect; "with respect to / regard to Christ."

εγειρας [εγειρω] aor. part. "**when he raised**" - HAVING RAISED [HIM]. Probably best taken as a temporal participle, along with "seated", as NIV, although possibly instrumental, "by means of", so Hoehner, Larkin.

εκ + gen. "**from [the dead]**" - OUT OF, FROM [DEAD]. Expressing separation.

εν δεξιᾷ "**at [his] right hand**" - ON / AT RIGHT [OF HIM IN THE HEAVENLIES]. Local; space. A position of authority and honour; "seated him at the right hand *of God*."

v21

Christ's reign is cosmic, it is over all things; His rule is over our universe, and also over the heavenly realm, over powers both good and evil.

ὑπερανω+ gen. "**far above**" - FAR ABOVE, HIGH ABOVE [ALL RULE AND AUTHORITY AND POWER]. Local, expressing space. Describing a position of authority above secular and angelic powers.

κυριστητος [ης] gen. "**dominion**" - [AND] LORDSHIP. This word, in particular, although all four words used by Paul here, probably refer to orders in the angelic realm, as commonly understood by the Jews. Paul has in mind spiritual beings - most likely evil as well as good. To a Jewish mind at the time, the heavenly realm has multiple dimensions. The "principalities and powers" (most likely evil forces) reign over part, but Christ's rule is over all. Also, his rule is not just for this age, but also for the age to come. So, his rule is eternal as well as universal.

και "**and**" - Possibly ascensive, "even".

ονομαζομενου (onomazw) gen. pres. pas. part. "**that can be given**" - [EVERY NAME] BEING NAMED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "title". This serves as a catch-all covering every other possible power or authority. All are under Christ; "he rules over all beings", CEV.

εν + dat. "**in**" - [NOT ONLY] IN [THIS AGE]. Temporal use of the preposition.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT [AND = ALSO] Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction, "not ...., but ....".

τῳ μελλοντι [μελλω] dat. pres. part. "**[in] the one to come**" - [IN] THE ONE ABOUT = COMING. The participle functions as a substantive, as NIV, or if αιωνι, "age" is assumed, then adjectival, attributive, limiting "age"; "in the age (*which is*) to come", Moffatt.

v22

Here Paul quotes Psalm 8:6 which expresses the wonder of human dominion over creation prior to the fall, Gen.1:26-28. Christ, the second Adam, now exercises the rule we ourselves were to exercise, but failed to exercise because of our rebellion against God. Jesus, the perfect man, takes up the human right of headship (authority, lordship, dominion, supreme head) over God's domain. Christ is "head over everything", the supreme head of the cosmos, the source of all power and might, and he gives to the church (τῃ εκκλησιᾳ, dative of indirect object after the verb "to give") this authority. The church, the gathered fellowship of believers, "the body" of Christ, "the fullness of him", possesses in its very being the supreme head of the cosmos. It is he who facilitates the "incomparable power for us who believe" for the full realization of "the riches of his glorious inheritance" / the promised covenant blessings. Through our identification with Christ, the community of believers (the church) inherits his dominion over all. The church, the new Israel, becomes the new Adam with dominion, not just over the earth, but heaven and earth, to facilitate the "glorious inheritance."

Note that Paul is not saying Christ is head of all things including the church. Yes, Christ is head of the church, but that is not what Paul is saying. Paul is saying that Christ is given to the church, such that the church possesses Christ, it is his body, and Christ exercises his cosmic reign in and through the church, now and for eternity. The church referred to here is not an institution, but the gathering of believers, earthly and heavenly / local and universal.

ὑπεταξεν [ὑποτασσω] aor. "***God* placed**" - [AND] HE SUBORDINATED, SUBJECTED, PLACED. Expressing the establishment of rank; "God has placed everything under the power of Christ", Phillips.

παντα adj. "**all things**" - Accusative direct object of the verb "to place." Emphatic by position.

ὑπο + acc. "**under**" - Expressing subordination.

τους ποδας [ους οδος] "**feet**" - THE FEET [OF HIM]. To be placed under someone's feet is to be placed under their authority.

εδωκεν [διδωμι] aor. "**appointed**" - [AND] GAVE. "Installed" or "appointed" is possible, although "gave" is better, so Best. The Father gave Christ, the supreme ruler, to the church.

κεφαλην [η] "**[him] to be head [over everything]**" - [HIM] *as* HEAD [OVER ALL THINGS]. Accusative complement of the direct object "him" in a double

accusative construction. Here the image of Christ as the head of the body, the church, is not filled out. Paul later develops the image of Christ as the head of the body, probably in terms of nourishment, with individual believers as the different members. Here "head" is used in the sense of authority /power over everything, not authority over the church as such.

τῃ εκκλησια dat. "**to the church**" - Possibly a dative of interest, advantage, "for, on behalf of the church", so NIV. Technically the dative should be classed as a dative of indirect object; "gave .... to the church." Either way "the greatness of God's power, which was effective in Christ's exaltation, is *toward us who believe*", Lincoln. The Father gave Christ authority / headship / rule over all things, which in the here and now is exercised in the church. The authority we failed to exercise on earth, Christ now exercises over the cosmos, and this in / with / through us.

v23

Christ is the one in whom the fullness of deity resides, and that fullness of deity resides within the community of believers, local and universal, "filling all in all." In the local setting, Christ resides through the indwelling Spirit who is present in the assembly of believers.

ἥτις rel. pro. "**which**" - WHICH [IS]. Nominative subject of the verb to-be. Introducing a definition of the church as Christ's "body". The tendency is to see this image in the terms of authority, ie., Christ the "head" of the "body", the church (cf. Col.1:18). This is how Ephesians 5:22-33 is interpreted in relation to a husband as "head" over his wife. Yet, when instructing husbands, Paul doesn't even mention authority, but rather speaks of their identity found in union with their wife. The "one flesh" image of marriage illustrates Christ's relationship to the church, not his headship over it, 5:32. Although, in 1:22 Paul has said that Christ is "head over everything", it is head over everything "for / to" the church, not head over the church. Clearly the "body" image in v23 is one of identity. As Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 12:12, "as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts make up the one body, so also is Christ." As Jesus put it himself, "I am the vine and you are the branches." The body image simply teaches that we (the church) are "one flesh" with Christ (identified with Christ), by grace through faith, and therefore, we share his glory.

το σωμα "**body**" - THE BODY [OF HIM]. Often used of the church as the body of Christ in the sense that he gives life to it through his Spirit, ie., through his presence in its midst when it assembles.

το πληρωμα [α] **"the fullness**" - THE FULLNESS. Possibly "fulfilled / complete". The phrase "the fullness of the one filling all in / with all" stands in apposition to "body" and thus defines it. This is a key word in the New Testament

and probably finds its origins in the Old Testament where the word at times expresses the presence of divine glory. It is best to see Christ as the one who is complete in himself in that he possesses the fullness of deity and whose completeness is present in the church. The church is not an extension of Christ, which then makes Him complete, an unfortunate idea that originated with Chrysostom.

του ..... πληρουμενου [πληροω] - pres. pas. / mid. part "**of him who fills**" - OF THE ONE FILLING / BEING FILLED. The participle serves as a substantive, as NIV. The NIV follows the common translation of this phrase as pres. mid, part, ie., Christ is doing the filling. This translation goes back to Tyndale, then the AV, "that filleth all in all", and so on. Larkin suggests that the middle voice should be given its full force; "Christ is filling for himself all things in every way." Yet, the passive is possible, ie., Christ is the one being filled; "the fullness of him who all in all (in every way) is being filled", so Best.

τα παντα εν πασιν "**everything in every way**" - ALL THINGS WITH / IN ALL THINGS. The phrase is best used adverbially, O'Brien, Lincoln, "all in all", cf., Col.2:10, "and in him you are made full."

2:1-10

2. The gospel and the church, 2:1-22

i] How we are united with God through Christ

Argument

In his opening eulogy, 1:3-14, Paul introduces his readers to God's eternal plan of unifying all things in heaven and earth in Christ, of gathering a people, both Jew and Gentile, and building them into the church, the body of Christ, inevitably bringing all powers under his feet. Paul goes on to pray that this elect called out people, redeemed by Christ, sealed by the Holy Spirit, will understand fully the extent of God's plan. Paul now, in the passage before us, gets into the body of the divine plan by explaining how a person moves from wrath to grace to become a member of God's called-out community. The process involves making sinners alive, raising them up, seating them with Christ, and bestowing on them "the incomparable riches of his grace", the full appropriation of the promised blessings of the covenant. The means is God's love / mercy facilitated through Christ; "by grace you have been saved through faith ... not by works."

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-2. We now come to the central argument of Paul's letter / address; the *probatio*, the argument proper, an exposition of rhetorical proofs. Chapter 2 and 3 could be classified as an example of a *narratio* in rhetorical criticism, but the weight of theological information contained in them is in line with a *probatio*.

Paul has shared his thesis / proposition with us in 1:10, namely *that in Christ, all things are unified in heaven and on earth*, and now he develops this thesis in chapters 2 and 3:

The gospel and the church, 2:1-22;
All one in Christ, 3:1-21.

In 2:1-10 Paul examines the means by which a person moves from death to new life in Christ, of the exercise of God's life-giving power in Christ. Then, in 2:11-22, Paul follows up this examination of the saving grace of God with an exposition on the incorporation of the Gentiles into Israel, into the house of God, God's elect people.

O'Brien thinks that chapter two is really an extension of 1:18-23, rather than a move to the argument proper, a *probatio*. This is indicated by the και in 2:1, yet, as Hoehner notes, this και is not part of the series of coordinate conjunctions evident in the previous verses. Each of these is followed by a main verb, unlike this και, and sits in the context of God acting in relationship to Christ, unlike

here where God is acting on behalf of sinners. So here "it furnishes a bridge to begin a new section", Hoehner.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2

iii] Structure: *An examination of the divine process of salvation*:

Dead in our sins, v1-3.
Alive to God, v4-7;
Made alive through Christ, v4-5;
Raised and seated with Christ, v6;
Blessed in Christ, v7.
Grace explained, v8-10.

iv] Interpretation:

In chapters 2 and 3, Paul explains the implementation of God's eternal plan "by showing how God makes sinners into saints and builds them into the church, the body of Christ. In 2:1-10 Paul states how sinners, who deserve nothing but God's wrath, became trophies of his grace", Hoehner.

One of the key words appearing in this passage is το μυστηριον, "the mystery, cf., Eph.1:9, 3:3, 3:4, 3:9, 5:32, 6:19. Whereas "the mystery" is "Christ" in Colossians, it seems to relate to the union of Jew and Gentile in Ephesians, and so it is often explained by the text "all one in Christ." The mystery (of your salvation) certainly relates to the summing up / uniting of all things in Christ, but this uniting of all things is a consequence of the mystery, not the mystery itself. The mystery is "the boundless riches of Christ", or simply "Christ", the gospel, "grace", a secret once hidden, but now revealed; it is a revelation of the power of God's actions in Christ.

The passage before us, dealing with the idea that the Gentiles, once lost are now saved, is paralleled in v11-22 with a similar construct, of Gentiles, once separated from the covenant promises, but now reconciled and thus full member of "the household of God".

The Greek text of the passage consists of two sentences. The first, v1-7, takes as its main verb συνεθωοποιησεν, "he made alive with", the subject being "God". The second sentence, v8-10, takes as its main verb the paraphrastic construction εστε σεσῳσμενοι, "you have been saved."

v] Homiletics: *God's gracious plan*

In our reading today the apostle sets before us the doctrine of justification, the driving force of the Reformation - *sola gratia, sole fide, soli Deo gloria*, "by grace alone, through faith alone, to God alone be glory." Our eternal standing in the sight of God, which demands of us an

impossible perfection, is ours as a gracious gift from a merciful and loving God, a gift appropriated through the instrument of faith. It is important to note that the context of this doctrinal statement shows clearly that the salvation offered in Christ is unconditional and eternal in dimension. On the basis of the faithfulness of Christ, appropriated through our faith in him, we now stand before God eternally perfected. Nothing we can do adds to this gift of God's grace.

The extent of God's gift of salvation is quite wondrous. In speaking of our standing before God, we correctly say we are "declared right." Yet, it is also true to say that what God declares so is so. Although we are anything but right until "the old Adam is planted in the ground" (Luther), we are none-the-less eternally right such that we are actually "raised up with Christ" and seated "with him in the heavenly realms." Our eternal possession is a present reality.

And here is the punch-line: God's unlimited kindness toward us is triggered by the instrument of faith. When a person relies on the faithfulness of Jesus for their salvation, they receive in full the abundance of God's new life.

Text - 2:1

United with Christ, v1-10: i] Gentiles, prior to their conversion, were dead in their transgressions and sins, v1-3. In this sinful state, they followed the lead of Satan, living in bondage to the dark powers which manipulate this age. Of course, not just Gentiles, but also Jews; all Israel was in similar state.

και "**as for**" - AND. Transitional connective, probably used instead of δε because of the need to make a link "with the whole of the preceding pericope", Lincoln.

ὑμας pro. "**you**" - YOU ALL. Emphatic use of the pronoun. "You" is plural = "you Gentiles." "The power of God historically and presently operating in Christ is also working in *you*", Hoehner.

οντας [ειμι] pres. part. "**were**" - BEING. Here introducing a parenthesis which continues through to v4, so interrupting the sentence "and you ..... he made alive in/with Christ. The participle is probably adverbial, concessive; "although dead in your transgressions and sins." Note the concessive clause is repeated at the beginning of v5 as Paul picks up again on his main point, although there it is "we" not "you"; "so (και coordinating) although we were dead in trespasses he made [you/us] alive in/with Christ."

νεκρους adj. "**dead**" - "Spiritually dead", TEV.

τοις παραπτωμασιν [α] dat. "**in [your] transgressions**" - [IN] THE FALLING AWAY, SLIPS, TRESPASSES, SINS. The dative here is probably not instrumental,

ie., dead "by means of your transgressions", and certainly not causal, "dead because you sinned and fought against God", CEV", rather, it is descriptive of the state of death; their death is not like Christ's, but is a death in/of sin, dead while alive because of sin, ie., a local dative of sphere, as NIV.

ὑμων gen. "**your**" - OF YOU. The genitive is possibly subjective, so Larkin, but better possessive.

v2

In this sinful state, "you" followed the lead of "the prince of the power of the air", the devil, living in bondage to dark powers, daily manipulated by the powers of darkness.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [WHICH]. Local, sphere.

περιεπατησατε [περιπατεω] aor. "**you used to live**" - YOU WALKED ABOUT [ONCE]. A term Paul uses for life-style, particularly with moral connotations. It reflects the word "way", a term which encapsulates the Christian life. The word has the same meaning as "lived" in v3, so "to conduct oneself."

κατα + acc. "**when you followed**" - ACCORDING TO. Normally expressing a standard, but possibly adverbial, expressing manner, "after the manner of [the values of the world]". Introducing a prepositional phrase which "describes the walk before conversion", Hoehner.

του κοσμου [ος] gen. "**[the ways of this] world**" - [THE AGE / EON OF THIS] WORLD. The genitive is adjectival, attributive; "worldly age." The phrase is not easily rendered in English. It's "this age" and "this world", both describing a single entity, a space / time entity that is passing away and will soon be replaced by the age to come; an entity the believer is to live in, but not be conformed to. "This present evil age", Gal.1:4.

κατα + acc. "**and**" - ACCORDING TO. Standard, or manner, "after the manner of [the prince of darkness]", as above.

τον αρχοντα [ων οντος] "**ruler**" - THE PRINCE, RULER, GOVERNOR. Here a term for Satan, Beelzebub, the prince / power of darkness.

της εξουσιας [α] gen. "**of the kingdom**" - OF THE POWER, AUTHORITY / DOMAIN, REALM. The genitive is adjectival, of subordination, "the ruler over the domain of the air", or attributive, "the evil powers who haunt the air", Barclay. Probably as NIV, "kingdom", in the sense of the domain where authority is exercised.

του αερος [αηρ] "**of the air**" - OF THE AIR, ATMOSPHERE. The genitive is adjectival, limiting kingdom by describing or specifying "the kingdom" in mind - attributive, "air kingdom", or epexegetic. It was believed that Satan and his minions operate in the space between God's domain and earth, and as such are closer to human existence than God. In 3:10 and 6:12, Paul states that "the

heavenly realms" are inhabited by "rulers and authorities" who are "spiritual forces of evil", indicating "the kingdom of the air" and "the heavenly realm" are one in the same. Probably Paul is expressing the idea of multiple layers of rule in the "heavenly realms." Possibly even working off the idea that Satan and his minions are confined to the lower reaches, close to earth, confined to the *deep* / the waters which are above and under the earth / surround the earth. "The ruler of the spiritual powers in space", TEV.

του πνευματος [α ατος] gen. "**the spirit**" - OF THE SPIRIT. This genitive is somewhat problematic. We are best to follow O'Brien who argues that it stands in apposition to the accusative τον αρχοντα, "the ruler", being genitive by attraction to the preceding genitive phrase. So, the "spirit" referred to here is "the devil. See Lincoln for the view that it stands in apposition to της εξουσιας, "of the realm", such that "the ruler", Satan, rules over the "the air" and "the spirit" = either "the ruler over the spirit of this age", or "the ruler over all spiritual forces."

του ... ενεργουντος [ενεργεω] pres. part. "**who is [now] at work**" - THE ONE [NOW] WORKING. The participle is adjectival, attributive; "the ruler of the spirit of this age who is now working ...."

εν + dat. "**in**" - local, space; "among".

της απειθειας [α] gen. "**[those] who are disobedient**" - [THE SONS] OF DISOBEDIENCE. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "sons". A Hebraism = "the disobedient ones." There are numerous "sons of ....." in the scriptures. "Everyone who doesn't obey God", CEV.

v3

Having identified the sorry origins of his Gentile readers, Paul points out that he, along with all Israel, were in a similar state. Religious people can follow "the ways of this world" just as easily as pagans, cf., Matt.23:23. Thus, the Jew also faces the wrath of God.

και ἡμεις "**all of us also**" - [AMONG WHOM] WE AND = ALSO. Probably "we" = Jews, so, "we Jewish believers also", so O'Brien, although παντες, "all", "we all", Jews and Gentiles, is also possible, so Hoehner. If "we" = Jewish believers, then Paul is saying that the Jews were in a similar situation; they too were "sons of disobedience" (v2), following their own sinful desires and facing God's judgment because of it.

ανεστραφημεν [αναστρεφω] aor. pas. "**lived**" - [ALL] CONDUCTED OURSELVES, FOLLOWED (in the sense of imitated) [ONCE]. "We Jews, like all humanity, did what we wanted to do."

εν + dat. "**among them**" - IN = AMONG [WHOM / WHICH]. Local, space, "among whom", ie., "among the sons of disobedience", or sphere, "in which *state of sin*."

εν + dat. "-" - IN [THE LUSTS]. Expressing the sphere of their walk / life, so adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their living "among them", namely "lived a life dominated by the desire of our lower nature", Barclay.

της σαρκος [ξ κος] gen. "**of [our] sinful nature**" - OF THE FLESH. The genitive is usually treated as subjective here, such that it is the flesh that produces the desires, but better adjectival, possessive, in that the desires belong to the flesh, are a natural accompaniment of the flesh, or attributive, "fleshly passions", Barth. The term usually takes a negative sense, of the corrupted flesh, of humanity in rebellion against God, and thus with a negative ethical connotation.

ἡμων "**our**" - OF US. Again, the problem is, "Jews" or "all humanity"?

ποιουντες [ποιεω] pres. part. "**and following [its desires]**" - DOING [THE DESIRES OF THE FLESH]. The participle is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of their living "among them" = "among the sons of disobedience", but possibly instrumental, means, "by doing its desires and thoughts."

των διανοιων [α] "**thoughts**" - [AND] OF THE THOUGHTS, INTENTIONS. The genitive may again be subjective, or simply possessive; "performing the desires of the flesh and [the desires] of the reasoning process." Often the word "heart" is used in the scriptures to represent the seat of understanding. All humanity is sinful through and through, acting out the natural urges of the body and the deceitful reasonings of the mind.

και "-" - AND. Here epexegetic; "that is / namely, we (Jews ??) deserve God's anger like the rest of humanity."

φυσει [ις εως] dat. "**by nature**" - [WERE] BY ORIGIN, DESCENT / INHERENT TO NATURE, NATURAL CONDITION / CREATED NATURE. The first sense is likely, while the dative is instrumental, "we were by descent (by means of the inheritance of our parent's sin) objects of divine anger", or possibly causal, "because of." Either way, the issue is original sin. Describing a condition without moral overtones - "tis the way I am."

οργης [η] "**[objects] of wrath / deserving wrath**" - [CHILDREN] OF WRATH [AS ALSO THE REST]. A Hebraism similar to "sons of disobedience." The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / destination; "children *destined for* wrath." "Destined to suffer God's anger", TEV.

v4

ii] Yet, although once lost, God, in his mercy, has made believing Jews and Gentiles alive with Christ, v4-7. The wrath of God is only part of the picture. God is also a merciful and loving God, and it is because of this that believers are no longer under condemnation. "Having discussed the terrible situation of the unregenerate, Paul now demonstrates the gracious act of God in redeeming people from their desperate straits", Hoehner.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND [GOD, BEING RICH IN MERCY]. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument, usually expressed as an adversative, as NIV.

δια + acc. "**because of**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF. Causal; "out of his great love", BAGD.

ἣν pro. "**for [us]**" - [THE GREAT LOVE OF HIM] *with* WHICH [HE LOVED US]. Accusative by attraction. Introducing a relative clause indicating that the divine love is directed toward "us". Although the "we" of v3 may be "we Jews", the "us" here is most likely not believing Jews, but all God's people, ie., it is inclusive.

ὢν [ειμι] pres. part. "**who is**" - [GOD] BEING. The participle is possibly adjectival, attributive, "God who is rich in mercy", or adverbial, causal, "because he was rich in mercy", so Lincoln, Larkin, or temporal, "God, being as he is, rich in mercy, because of his great love, (v5) even though we were dead in sins, made us alive ....", so Ellicott, Hoehner.

πλουσιος adj. "**rich**" - The adjective serves as a substantive, nominative predicate of the participle "being", fronted for emphasis; "God being rich", cf. Larkin.

εν + dat. "**in [mercy]**" - Reference / respect, "with respect to mercy", Larkin, or simply spatial / sphere, "the sphere in which God is rich, namely, in mercy", Hoehner.

v5

Paul now picks up on where he began in v1. Once dead, but now, through "our" identification with ("in") Christ, we are "made.... alive". Notice it is " we" - both Jew and Gentile. "Made alive", in a moral as well as a spiritual sense. Paul adds, in a parenthesis, his formula for justification. This he develops in v8.

συνεζωοποιησεν [συζωποιεω] aor. "**made us alive with**" - [AND = EVEN WE BEING DEAD IN TRESPASSES] HE QUICKENED, MAKE ALIVE TOGETHER WITH. Main verb of the sentence covering v1-7. The word is used only here and in Colossians 2:13. Barth suggests the meaning may be "to keep alive" in the sense of preserve life. The move from "made", v5, to "raised", v6, is not progressive. "Raised us to life with Christ", Barclay.

τῳ Χριστῳ dat. "**Christ**" - [HE MADE *us* ALIVE] IN/WITH CHRIST. Dative of direct object of the συν prefix verb "made alive together with." Prompted by the verb, the meaning is one of identification with Christ, here an identification with his resurrection.

ὄντας [ειμι] pres. part. "**even when [we] were**" - [WE] BEING. As in v1, the participle is adverbial, best treated as concessive; "although we were dead", but possibly temporal, "when we were dead ...." Resumptive, ie., Paul is picking up on the thought he began with in v1.

τοις παραπτωμασιν [α] "**in transgressions**" - IN TRESPASSERS. Locative dative, sphere / metaphorical.

χαριτι [ις εως] dat. "**by grace**" - BY GRACE, FAVOUR, GRATITUDE, KINDNESS. The dative is probably instrumental, expressing means, but cause / basis is possible. In the New Testament it means "grace", used in the sense of a gift or blessing given to believers by God through Christ. In a more specific sense, particularly when reflecting an Old Testament use, it means "God's covenant mercy", his "favour" toward his covenant community in the realization of his covenant promises. With Paul it is often used with a defining genitive, eg., "the grace/favour/kindness of God."

σεσωσμενοι [σωζω] perf. part. "**you have been saved**" - YOU ARE HAVING BEEN SAVED. The perfect participle with the present tense of the verb to-be εστε forms a periphrastic perfect, probably serving to emphasize aspect, "the resulting state", Best, Larkin. It is not present / durative, as if salvation is a process, nor is it aorist / punctiliar, as if salvation is a single divine act, nor is it imperfect as if only a past continuous act, but rather it is perfect in that it is a past act with present permanent ongoing consequences / a state of being - stative.

v6

The idea that a believer is already seated with Christ in the heavenlies is driven by Paul's understanding of the gospel. The gospel / the mystery manifests, and thus facilitates, the "righteousness of God" / God's righteous reign / his setting all things right, and this on the basis of the grace of God appropriated by faith in the faith / faithfulness of Christ. The person who is justified / set right with God / who lives, actualizes the fullness of new life in Christ such that they already possess the totality of God's promised blessings. So, even now we are with Christ in the heavenlies, experiencing the fullness of God's promised new life. Given Paul's understanding of this truth, it is no wonder that he gets distressed by the notion that a believer can promote their Christian life by law-obedience, as if we can add to what Christ has already achieved for us. As the saying goes, *Christ supplemented is Christ supplanted*.

και "**and**" - O'Brien and Schnackenburg suggest that the particle here is epexegetic such that the following two verbs explain the verb "συνεζωοποιησεν, "made alive with"; "God made us alive with Christ, that is, he raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly place ... "

συνηγειρεν [συνεγειρω] aor. "***God* raised *us* up with *Christ***" - HE RAISED *us* UP TOGETHER WITH *him*. The "us" and "Christ" is understood. This verb, as with "made alive" and "seated with" are all "aspects of the same act of God", Best. Christ rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, we too were dead and

through our identification with Christ we are raised from the dead (dead to sin and therefore raised from spiritual death) and have ascended with Christ.

συνεκαθισεν [συνκαθιζω] aor. "**seated *us* with**" - [AND] SEATED TOGETHER WITH, SAT DOWN TOGETHER WITH *him*. "Has given us a place beside Christ in heaven", CEV.

εν "**in**" - IN [THE HEAVENLY, HEAVEN, SPIRITUAL SPHERE]. The preposition is local, sphere, "in"; it is in the sphere of spiritual activities where Christ reigns.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST JESUS]. Expressing association; believers have been made alive with Christ, raised with him and are seated with him in the heavenlies, so Best, O'Brien, Lincoln. Larkin opts for a local sense, "incorporative union".

v7

By this means, God in his grace, has made it possible for believers to appropriate, now and forever, "the incomparable riches of his grace" - new life in Christ.

ἱνα + subj. "**in order that**" - THAT. Introducing either a final or consecutive clause; Christ was glorified for the purpose of / with the result that ...

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE AGES]. The preposition here serves to introduce a temporal clause, "the time when God will demonstrate his kindness", Hoehner; "in the ages to come", Cassirer.

τοις επερχομενοις [ερχομαι] pres. part. "**coming**" - The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "ages"; "the ages which are coming." "Future ages", Barclay.

ενδειξηται [ενδεικνυμι] aor. subj. pas/mid. "**he might show**" - HE MIGHT DISPLAY, DEMONSTRATE, MANIFEST, GIVE EVIDENCE TO, SHOW FORTH. "He might display", Bruce.

το ὑπερβαλλον [υπερβαλλω] pres. part. "**the incomparable**" - THE EXCEEDING, SURPASSING, EXTRAORDINARY. The participle is adjectival, limiting "riches / abundance / wealth". From the idea of throw beyond. "Extraordinary greatness", TEV.

της χαριτος [ις ιτος] gen. "**of [his] grace**" - OF THE GRACE, *unmerited* FAVOUR [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, attributed, where the head noun "[incomparable] riches" limits / modifies the genitive "grace". Larkin suggests epexegetic, Hoehner "of the thing"; "the surpassing wealth which is his grace", cf., 1:7.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN. Possibly adverbial, expressing manner, "in kindness toward us", so Larkin.

χρηστοτητι [ης ητος] "***his* kindness**" - *his* GOODNESS, KINDNESS. Of showing kindness toward another, that which is useful, what is benevolent,

benevolence*. "That he might show the surpassing riches of his grace in (expressed in) his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

εφ [επι] + acc. "**to**" - TOWARDS [US]. Spatial, as NIV.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST JESUS]. Locating the action of God's unmerited favour which operates toward us, so Hoehner, Best. Larkin opts for a local sense, "incorporative union", so also O'Brien; Abbott opts for reason, "because of Christ"; and Calvin goes for instrumental, "by Christ".

v8

iii] Now, alive with Christ, believers, both Jew and Gentile, are a new creation, v8-10. The doctrinal statement, "by grace you have been saved", v5, is now repeated and developed. First, it is through faith, faith in the faithfulness of Christ. Second, it is apart from works of the Law. God's salvation of mankind is not achieved, confirmed, maintained, or progressed by an effort of our will; it is totally a gift. Although salvation is wholly a gift of grace, we are saved for a particular purpose, namely, service to God. God's good work is partly played out here in the gathering of a people to be with him, in the reconciliation of all things as part of God's setting all things right.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining how salvation (being made alive, raised up and seated with Christ) is all of God's grace, apart from works of the law.

τῃ .. χαριτι [ισ εως] dat. "***it is* by grace**" - The dative is instrumental, expressing means; "by the means of God's unmerited favour" we are saved. Unlike v5, there is an article, but this simply indicates that the statement is being repeated from v5, ie., anaphoric, cf., Wallace 250; "for by this grace (the grace I was speaking about earlier) ....

εστε σεσῳσμενοι [σωζω] perf. pas. part. "**you have been saved**" - A periphrastic perfect construction emphasizing aspect, here "the resulting state", Larkin, Best.

δια + gen. "**through [faith]**" - THROUGH / BY MEANS OF THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF [FAITH]. It is always difficult to know how Paul intends us to understand the word "faith". He seems to use it in a technical sense where there is a relationship between Christ's faith / faithfulness, his obedience to the will of God on our behalf, and our faith in Christ's faithfulness. The presence of an article may indicate that both ideas are intended, the preposition εκ "out of" / "on the basis of" possibly stresses Christ's faithfulness, while the preposition δια, as here, possibly stresses our reliance / trust. If we take "faith" to mean "reliance on the faithfulness of Christ" we probably come close to what Paul intends.

και "**and**" - Possibly epexegetic; "that is to say, ..."

τουτο pro. "**this**" - Although neuter, the potential antecedents are either feminine or masculine. Barth points out that the pronoun could refer back to either "faith", "saved", or "grace. Hoehner thinks it refers indirectly to all three, ie., "the concept of salvation by grace through faith." If this is the case, then "this" is referring to a salvation achieved apart from works of faithfulness, rather than "faith" itself. In support of "faith", the Westminster Shorted Catechism states that saving faith is a gift of God's grace by which the Holy Spirit acts to "persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel".

εξ + gen. "**from**" - [NOT] OUT OF, FROM [YOU = YOURSELVES]. Source. The pronoun "you" takes a reflective sense, as NIV.

θεου [ος] gen, "**of God**" - [IT IS THE GIFT] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, or possessive; "from God / God's." Since God is the predicate: "it is a gift and the gift is from God / is God's"

v9

Salvation is not achieved, confirmed, maintained, or progressed by an effort of our will, it is totally a gift.

εξ + gen. "**by [works]**" - [NOT] OF [WORKS]. Basically, expressing source, "out of, from", here leaning toward result, "not the result of works", Cassirer, or means, "by", as NIV. For a Jew, the "works" are obviously the "works of the law", but for Gentiles a wider sense is implied, ie., "human effort", Hoehner. Just as salvation is not because of human initiative, v8, then neither is it a reward for good deeds, cf., O'Brien.

ἱνα μη + subj. "**so that**" - LEST. Introducing a negated final clause expressing purpose. "Any achievement of ours is ruled out to make it impossible for anyone to boast", Barclay.

καυχησηται [καυχαομαι] aor. subj. mid. "**can boast**" - [ANYONE] SHOULD BOAST, EXALT PROUDLY. When it comes to salvation, we have nothing to boast about because we have nothing to do with it - salvation rests totally on the faithfulness of Christ.

v10

Although salvation is wholly a gift of grace, the saved are saved for a particular purpose, namely, service to God.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why this salvation is not of human works, so Larkin.

αυτου gen. pro. "**[we are] God's**" - [WE ARE MASTERPIECE] OF HIM. Emphatic by position. The genitive may be adjectival, possessive, "his creation", or verbal, subjective, "he created us", Merkle.

ποιημα [α ατος] "**workmanship**" - PRODUCT, DESIGN, CREATED THING, MASTERPIECE. A difficult word to render and only used in one other place in the New Testament, Rom.1:20. The LXX uses it for God's handiwork in the creation, so possibly "design", as in the creation of a work of art.

κτισθεντες [κτιζω] aor. pas. part. "**created**" - HAVING BEEN CREATED, FOUNDED, MADE. The participle is adverbial, probably causal; "because we were shaped in Christ for good works."

εν "**in**" - IN [CHRIST]. This preposition always causes problems when we try to translate a prepositional phrase like "in Christ." The sense may be local, incorporative, "in our union with Christ Jesus", TEV, or instrumental, expressing means, "created by Christ Jesus", "through Jesus Christ we have been created", Barclay. The undecided, as NIV, live with "in".

επι + dat. "**to do**" - UPON = FOR. Here expressing purpose, "with a view to."

επι εργοις αγαθοις "**good works**" - GOOD WORKS. "That we may do good works." Although salvation is achieved apart from / independent of good works, the consequence of salvation is the creation of a people who will perform good works - the fruit of faith. So, the divine purpose is fulfilled in good works by a people who are formed apart from good works. The "good work" is undefined and therefore may be justice (Biblical ethics), love of the brotherhood, and certainly the communication of the gospel, but is likely also to have an eternal purpose yet to be revealed (the reconciliation of all things?). It is often stated that the purpose of the "good work" is God's glory, a glory set before all powers and authorities, earthly and heavenly. Yet, such a purpose does seem to smack of self-aggrandizement and so is surely less than the full picture.

οἷς dat. pro. "**which**" - Dative by attraction to εγοις αγαθοις, "good works."

προητοιμασεν [προετοιμαζω] aor. "**prepared in advance**" - [GOD] PREVIOUSLY PREPARED, PREPARED BEFOREHAND. The eternal purpose was in the mind of God even before the creation of the world.

ἱνα + subj. "**for**" - THAT. Forming a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that we might walk in them." "The divine intention .... is that we should walk in good deeds ..... show all the hallmarks of the new creation", O'Brien.

εν + dat. "-" - IN [THEM]. Local, sphere, "the sphere in which believers should walk", Merkle; "so that we might enjoy our lives in the doing of them (ie. the good works)", Cassirer.

περιπατησωμεν [περιπατεω] aor. subj. "**us to do**" - WE SHOULD WALK. "That we might walk", "walk" in the sense of "live out", "do."

2:11-18

2. The gospel and the church, 2:1-22

ii] The results - one in Christ, 2:11-22
a) Christ is our peace

Argument

Because of Jesus' work on the cross, Gentiles, as well as Jews, now have a complete and perfect standing before God. Both are reconciled to God, at "peace" with God, equally reconciled to God and now part of one family. The barriers that once stood between Jew and Gentile are now no more. So, the passage before us speaks of the former state of loss of the Gentiles and of their incorporation into the family of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Issues

i] Context: See 2:1-10.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2

iii] Structure: *The unifying of Jew and Gentile in Christ*:

Paul "describes the position of Gentile Christians before and after they became Christians", Best, v11-13;

He then explains the means by which Gentile Christians are reconciled to Jewish Christians, v14-18.

Consequently, Gentile Christians are full members of God's holy family, v19-22.

iv] Interpretation:

With regard the Jew-Gentile divide, the barrier that once stood between Jew and Gentile was that of religious privilege. The Jews possessed the Mosaic law which they wrongly assumed gave them a religious status over and above Gentile "swine", so creating a massive dividing wall between Jew and Gentile. Of course, their problem was that they had a flawed interpretation of the law. The Law did indeed define them as a distinct people, but a people whose door was open to the "stranger". Both Rahab and Ruth, Gentiles through and through, shared in the messianic line, so illustrating that the promise to Abraham was a promise to the whole world. So, yes indeed, the law made them a distinct people, but an open, not a closed people. But above all, the law did not give them privilege in the sight of God. God confers privilege as an act of mercy to the repentant sinner. The privilege of righteousness is not earned, but conferred as a gift of grace through faith. Such was the case for

Abraham and all his descendants. The Mosaic law, with its curse of death, served only to confirm that salvation is by grace through faith apart from the law.

It was only natural that Jewish believers brought their flawed pharisaic / nomistic understanding of the Law into the New Testament church, thus perpetuating the Jew-Gentile divide. For this reason, Paul sets out to show that, under the covenant, no such divide exists. A barrier of religious privilege cannot stand between believing Jews and Gentiles, because both together rest on the sacrificial death of Jesus. Status before God is conferred on those who through faith in Jesus become full members of the "household" of God. Full "citizenship in Israel", full membership of the "one new man", is conferred on those who place themselves "in Christ Jesus" through the faithfulness of Christ appropriated by faith. Thus, "through him we both have access to the Father by the one Spirit."

In what sense is the Law, consisting of ordinances and their interpretation, made of no effect / nullified"? Paul raises this issue in v15 when he refers to the setting aside of the law in Christ's "flesh". This question has long been debated with numerous answers proposed, eg.:

- Only cultic law is made inoperative, not moral law, in that cultic law is fulfilled in Christ's sacrifice, and thus distinctive food laws and the like no longer separate Jewish and Gentile believers, so Hendriksen, Schnackenburg, Mitton;
- The improper conception of the law as a means of salvation is discarded by the cross of Christ (salvation has always depended on grace through faith, cf. Abraham), so Best, Morris;
- It is not the law itself which is abolished, but its power to curse / condemn and enslave, so Lincoln, Bruce;
- It is the old covenant which is terminated and replaced by the new covenant as an appropriate approach to God, so Hoehner, O'Brien (it may be more appropriate to describe the new covenant as covenant renewal, rather than a replacement of the old. God's covenant with mankind finds its fulfillment in Christ).

In what sense then has the law been "nullified"? All of the four options above apply to some degree, but at the heart of the issue lies Paul's confrontation with the Judaizers, pharisaic members of the circumcision party, who promoted law obedience as a means to restrain sin and thus progress holiness. So, the function of the law that is "nullified" by Christ's death is the flawed interpretation that it shapes holiness - the function we might call sanctification. Although the Mosaic Law reveals the nature of

holiness, it was never capable of making holy. For Paul, justification, in the sense of being "set right before God", Bruce, "rectified", Martyn, involves Jesus, God's representative son / Israel / man, being made / accounted (what God declares so is so!!) "holy, righteous" through his obedience to the cross. It is in union with Christ, through the instrument of faith, that a believer stands holy / perfect before God, and this apart from the Law, and also, it is in union with the indwelling Spirit of Christ, through the instrument of faith, that a believer begins to live out the standing they already possess in Christ. Thus, the claim that the law is an instrument for holiness, is nullified, and this because holiness is found in Christ, not in the Law. The Law, claimed as a barrier between Jew and Gentile, is no barrier at all.

What then is the function of the Law? The Sinai covenant regulations served, and continues to serve:

- to expose sin and its attendant curse, and thus the need for faith in God's mercy, ie., the law serves to force dependence on the faith of Abraham as the key to covenant inclusion;
- to guide the life of faith.

Christ's sacrifice does not "nullify" these functions of the Law, it only nullifies the claim of Second Temple religious Jews (the Pharisees, and by extension, the Judaizers) that the Law is an instrument for sanctification. In passing, it is interesting to note how the old English Prayer Book service of Holy Communion, has the congregation reciting the Ten Commandments, with the response, "Lord have mercy on us" [the first function of the Law], concluding with "and write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit" [reflecting the second function of the Law].

v] Homiletics: *All one in Christ*

The principle of a common equal access and standing before the throne of God, through faith in Christ, is a mighty one indeed. It is a principle that affects the way we function as a fellowship. There are two particular applications:

1. *"His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two"*, v15.

The first application has to do with the integral unity of the fellowship of believers. Out of diversity and division, God's ultimate intention is to gather to himself a community of friends - "one new man". There are many factors which divide a church and so work against the "one in Christ" principle. Today we have to live with the inheritance of schism, reform

movements, national churches and the like. Denominationalism certainly doesn't reflect the image of "one new man".

Yet, within our own Christian fellowship we are free to develop the "one new man" principle. We commonly call this "body life". Body life develops when we prayerfully encourage the expectation of oneness.

2. *"In one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross"*, v16.

The second application has to do with the common right of access of all believers into the presence of the living God. Believers stand equally before God the Father on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. There is no privileged class.

The idea of a privileged class of believers is with us today as much as it was with Paul in his day. There is the clergy class, Wardens, Parish councillors, Bible study leaders etc. Sometimes those who simply attend the Sunday services feel as if they are second-class citizens.

Let us affirm the truth that all believers possess equal standing before God, all are equal members of the "one body", and this because of a personal reliance on Jesus Christ. In Jesus there are no second-grade believers.

Text - 2:11

Being all one in Christ, v11-18: i] By contrasting the relationship of his Gentile readers with Israel before and after they became believers, Paul is able to remind them "of the privilege of having come near [to God] through Christ's death", Lincoln, v11-13. Paul begins by asking his Gentile readers to remember that they were once the "uncircumcised", that they were once a people outside God's family and thus apart from his blessings, v11-12.

διο "**therefore**" - Inferential / drawing a logical conclusion. On the basis of the blessing of salvation given to the Gentiles, they should "remember".

μνημονευετε [μνημονευω] imp. "**remember**" - They (the Gentiles) should "reflect" on the privilege of salvation given to them.

ὁτι "**that**" - Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they should remember.

ποτε "**formerly**" - ONCE, FORMERLY, AT ONE TIME. Temporal particle / adverb.

εν + dat. "**[Gentiles] by [birth]**" - [YOU GENTILES] IN [*the* FLESH]. Adverbial, expressing reference / respect, "with respect to their flesh (ie., their state of uncircumcision)" - Physically Gentiles in the sense of uncircumcised. Merkle suggests that the prepositional phrase is adjectival, attributive, limiting

"Gentiles"; "in-the-flesh Gentiles." "Paul is stating that the Jews considered the Gentiles inferior just by what can be observed in the flesh", Hoehner.

οἱ λεγομενοι [λεγω] pres. pas. part. "**called**" - THE ONE'S BEING CALLED. The participle serves as a substantive standing in apposition to "you"; "you *who are* Gentiles in the flesh, the one's being called .."

ακροβυστια [α] "**uncircumcised**" - POSSESSING A FORESKIN = UNCIRCUMCISED. Nominative complement of the nominative subject "the one's being called." The term "uncircumcised" was used by the Jews in a derogatory way. In fact, they daily thanked God that they were not born a Gentile. Circumcision was the sign of membership in God's special family (Israel, the covenant community). Circumcision, along with submission to the law of Moses, entitled membership of the family. Of course, the gospel overturned this thinking such that circumcision was properly a circumcised (cleansed?) heart, Deut.10:16, 30:6, Jer.4:4, and this through faith in Christ for both Jew and Gentile, Col.2:11.

ὑπο + gen. "**by**" - Expressing agency.

της λεγομενης [λεγω] gen. pres. pas. part. "**those who call themselves**" - THE ONES CALLED [CIRCUMCISED (having cut off the foreskin)]. The participle again serves as a substantive.

εν + dat. "**that done in [the body]**" - IN [*the* FLESH]. Again, the prepositional phrase is adverbial, respect, as above; "with respect to the body."

χειροποιητου gen. adj. "**by the hands of men**" - OF HANDMADE. The genitive assumes ὑπο, expressing agency; "*performed by* hand." The term "the uncircumcised" is a put down, and with this qualification Paul puts down "the circumcised" - a mere human knife job.

v12

ὁτι "***remember* that**" - THAT. Introducing an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what they should "remember".

τῳ καιρω [ος] dat. "**at [that] time**" - [YOU WERE IN THAT] TIME. Dative of time.

χωρις + gen. "**separate from [Christ]**" - WITHOUT, APART FROM, SEPARATE FROM [CHRIST]. Paul describes the state of the Gentiles as one of loss. They were not members of God's family and therefore could not share in God's promised blessings nor enter into a relationship with him. The covenant promise to Abraham extends ultimately to the Gentiles, but up till the coming of Christ, this necessitated a Gentile becoming a Jew. In this verse, Paul lists five disadvantages experienced by the Gentiles. Hoehner argues that "separate from Christ" serves as a general statement, the sense of which is drawn out by the following four statements - they "expand the idea of Gentiles without Christ", Hoehner. "You did not know about Christ", CEV.

απηλλοτριωμενοι [απαλλοτριοω] perf. part. "**excluded**" - HAVING BEEN ESTRANGED, ALIENATED, SEPARATED FROM. The participle is probably substantival, the predicate of an implied imperfect verb to-be ἦτε, "you were", with the participial construction standing in apposition to χωρις Χριστου, "apart from Christ", cf., Larkin. When was Israel separated from the Gentiles and who did the parting? Paul simply states the fact, with the implication that the Gentiles are therefore alienated from the covenant promises possessed by Israel. "You were foreigners not belonging to the people of Israel."

της πολιτειας [α] gen. "**from citizenship**" - THE STATE, CITIZENSHIP. Genitive of direct object after the απο prefix participle "estranged from"; "Aliens to the commonwealth of Israel", Moffatt.

του Ισραηλ gen. "**in Israel**" - OF ISRAEL. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic; "the commonwealth which consists of Israel", or possessive, "Israel's citizenship", Hoehner.

και "**and**" - Possibly epexegetic, explaining what "excluded from citizenship" entails, so Merkle.

ξενοι adj. "**foreigners**" - STRANGERS, FOREIGNERS. The adjective serves as a substantive; anarthrous = foreigners in a qualitative sense.

των διαθηκων [η] gen. "**to the covenants**" - OF THE COVENANTS, AGREEMENTS [OF THE PROMISE]. The genitive is ablative, of separation; "foreigners separated from the covenants." The plural "covenants" is interesting, given that primarily there is one covenant which is regularly renewed and finally renewed in Christ, which renewal is often translated "new", although "refreshed / fresh" would be better. The plural "covenants" is explained by the qualifying / limiting adjectival genitive της επαγγελιας, "of promise", the promise type covenants, ie., the reaffirmations of the Abrahamic covenant with its promises (a land, a people and a blessing to the world) - Jeremiah's prophetic ideal with its promises, Jer.31:31-34, and the new/fresh covenant in Christ with its promises, eternal life, etc. The Gentiles were excluded from the promised covenants and all the promises that they contained.

μη εχοντες [εχω] pres. part. "**without [hope]**" - NOT HAVING [HOPE]. In the sense of eternal hope. Again, the participle forms a substantive participial construction, predicate of the implied imperfect verb to-be ἦτε, "you were not having hope."

αθεοι [ος] "**without God**" - AND GODLESS, ATHEIST. The Gentiles had no relationship with God.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE WORLD]. Local, expressing space.

v13

Yet, now the Gentiles have a place in God's family, but this is not by incorporation into the nation of Israel by means of obedience to the Mosaic law, but by grace through faith in Christ's faithfulness - "through the blood of Christ." The sacrificial death of Christ realizes the redemption of mankind for both Jew and Gentile.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument, here contrastive, as NIV.

νυνι adv. "**now**" - Temporal adverb. Note how "now" is contrasted in this verse with ποτε, "then". "Then" the Gentiles were μακραν, "far away (from God)", but now they are (ὑμεις, "you") are εγγυς, "near (to God)" by means of Christ's sacrifice.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST JESUS]. Local, expressing space, metaphorical, relational / incorporative union; "in union with Christ Jesus."

ὑμεις pro. "**you**" - Emphatic by position.

ὅι ... οντες [ειμι] pres. part. "**who [once] were [far away]**" - THE ONES [THEN] BEING [FAR OFF]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting ὑμεις, "you (Gentiles)", but can also be classified as a substantive standing in apposition to "you". Paul describes the Gentiles as "far away". He probably means "far away" from God - without free access into the presence of God. It was common for Jews to see Gentiles in this condition. A Gentile came near to God by becoming a proselyte, but Paul declares that now Gentiles come near to God through the sacrifice of Christ. "But now, through the blood of Christ (the sacrifice of Christ), you who were once outside the pale are with us inside the circle of God's love in Christ Jesus", Phillips.

εγγυς adv. "**near**" - [HAVE BEEN BROUGHT] NEAR. Brought near to God and the promises of the covenant.

εν + dat. "**through**" - IN [THE BLOOD]. Here instrumental / means, "by the blood", as NIV. "The blood" refers to the sacrifice of Christ which achieves the redemption and thus reconciliation of Gentile believers.

του Χριστου [ὁ] "**of Christ**" - The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

v14

ii] Paul now provides a "further explanation of how this coming near [of Jew to Gentile] was made possible through Christ's work", Lincoln, v14-18. What Christ did was establish peace between the two; "he is our peace." a) To make the one new man it was essential to break down the cultural separation between Jew and Gentile.

γαρ "**for**" - More reason than causal, explanatory. Having identified the union of both Jew and Gentile believers in "the blood of Christ", Paul now goes on "to explain how this union was accomplished", Hoehner.

αυτος pers. pro. "**he *himself***" - HE [IS]. Emphatic by position, so as NIV.

η ειρηνη [η] "**peace**" - THE PEACE [OF US]. For he himself, that is Christ, is our peace. Christ achieves reconciliation between both Jew and Gentile believers through the cross.

ὁ ποιησας "**who made [the two one]**" - THE ONE HAVING MADE [BOTH ONE]. The participle serves as a substantive standing in apposition to αυτος, "he *himself*." The true Israel, the true family of God, the true covenant community, was always a remnant people. In the end, this faithful remnant was Christ himself. He is the true Israel. From the visible people of Israel and from the Gentile world, those who believe in Christ become part of the true Israel and thus, the inheritors of the promised blessings. The church, the "body of Christ", the "new Israel", is not some new organism, but is actually the realization of the promised new covenant community of Israel. "Made both Jew and Gentile into one", Barclay.

λυσας [λυω] aor. part. "**has destroyed**" - [AND] *the one* HAVING DESTROYED, BROKEN DOWN. The participle serves as a substantive, coordinate with ποιησας (coordinate και, "and") and standing in apposition to αυτος, "he ... *the one* having destroyed" = "he is our peace .... who destroyed ...."

του φραγμου [ος] gen. "**the barrier**" - [THE MIDDLE WALL, DIVIDING WALL] OF THE PARTITION, FENCE. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetic; "the dividing wall which consists of a fence", ie., "which separates [Jew from Gentile]. The phrase is probably metaphorical, possibly referring to the barrier between humanity and God, namely sin, although better, the barrier between Jew and Gentile - the social and religious barriers between the two groups. This cultural barrier is primarily religious in nature, reinforced by an improper understanding of the Mosaic law; See above. "He has destroyed the fence that separates *Jew from Gentile*."

την εχθραν [α] "***the dividing wall of* hostility**" - THE HOSTILITY. In the context, the word is referring to the hostility that exists between Jew and Gentile. Punctuation is a major problem here, with numerous possibilities presenting themselves. The NIV opts for "hostility" = "the dividing wall of hostility" standing in apposition to "the dividing wall which separates = the barrier", with the prepositional phrase εν τῃ σαρκι αυτου governed by the participle καταργησας, "having annulled, abolished", v15, rather than the participle λυσας, "having destroyed", cf., Hoehner, 371-374.

εν + dat. "**by setting aside in [his flesh]**" - IN [THE FLESH OF HIM]. Local, expressing space, metaphorical, but possibly instrumental, expressing means; "by his flesh = by his sacrifice." The sense being "in Christ's sacrificial death." As noted above, the NIV links this phrase with the participle καταργησας, "having abolished", v15. Indeed, the Law is made of no effect in Christ's sacrifice, but also "the fence which separates, that is, the hostility *that exists between Jew and Gentile*" is similarly demolished by Christ's sacrifice. So, Best argues that "in his flesh" is parenthetical, indicating where and how the action of the participles "having made" and "having destroyed", v14a is achieved; "he destroyed the middle wall of the fence which separates, that is, the hostility (in his flesh)."

v15

b) Peace between Jews and Gentiles, in the Christian fellowship, was accomplished by removing the Law as a means of progressing holiness in the life of a believer, v15-16, by the preaching of the gospel, v17 and by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, v18. One of the major barriers to Jewish and Gentile inclusion was the Pharisaic interpretation of Mosaic law, a barrier nullified in the cross of Christ; See above.

καταργησας [καταργεω] aor. part. "**by abolishing / setting aside**" - HAVING NULLIFIED, ABOLISHED, ANNULLED, MADE OF NO AFFECT, MADE INEFFECTIVE AND POWERLESS. The participle is adverbial. The NIV opts for instrumental, expressing the means by which the cultural dividing wall between Jew and Gentile is destroyed, namely by rendering Pharisaic law inoperative. Barclay suggests a causal sense, "for he abolished the law." "He (Christ) nullified it (the law), so that it is no longer binding", O'Brien. "By having rendered inoperative the law", Hoehner.

τον νομον [ος] "**the law**" - "The whole law is at issue here", Best, "the whole Mosaic law", Hoehner. But see above, *In what sense is the Law, consisting of ordinances and their interpretation, made of no effect / nullified"?* The issue here is a particular understanding as to the function of the Mosaic Law, not the Mosaic Law itself.

των εντολων εν δογμασιν "**with its commandments and regulations**" - OF COMMANDMENTS IN DOGMA, DOCTRINE = INTERPRETATION. The genitive "of commandments", is adjectival, epexegetic; "the law which consists of commandments." The prepositional phrase εν δογμασιν, "in regulations", the "in" untranslated in the NIV, is possibly expressing space / sphere; "in the sphere of regulations", or better its defining / interpretation, "consisting in (of) ordinances and their interpretation." The problem does not lie with the Law itself, but its interpretation.

ἱνα + subj. "**his purpose was [to create]**" - THAT [HE MIGHT CREATE]. The conjunction is used to introduce two purpose clauses; Christ broke down the diving wall by nullifying the flawed interpretation of the law "in order to create one new man ..... and (v16) reconcile the two in one body to God ..."

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [HIM = HIMSELF]. Local, expressing space, metaphorical / incorporative union. The pronoun αυτῳ, "him", is obviously reflective, "himself", and Christ is surely the intended referent. Some have suggested that "body", or even "flesh" (ie., Christ's sacrifice), is the intended referent, but this is unlikely.

ἑνα καινον ανθρωπον "**one new man**" - [INTO] ONE NEW MAN. Paul calls the family of believers "one new man." Christ creates this entity εν αυτῳ, "in himself". Faith in Christ produces identification with Christ and thus in Christ a believer becomes a child of God, a member of the covenant community, a true Israelite, a member of the church of Christ.

ποιων [ποιεω] pres. part. "**thus making**" - MAKING. The participle is adverbial, expressing result - the one new person made up of believing Jews and Gentiles results in peace, ie., the cessation of hostility between Jews and Gentiles (obviously both groups being believers, although Barth argues for all Jews with believing Gentiles).

ειρηνην [η] "**peace**" The theological "peace" which Christ gains, is primarily a peace with God - reconciliation with God through the cross of Christ. Here the focus is on the peace between Jewish believers and Gentile believers, such that in Christ both find "peace" with each other, for the two are now one in Christ.

v16

αποκαταλλαξῃ [αποκαταλασσω] aor. subj. "**to reconcile**" - HE MAY RECONCILE, MAY TURN HOSTILITY INTO FRIENDSHIP. With ἱνα, v15, expressing the second purpose for nullifying the Law; "in order to reconcile both in one body to God." The prefixed preposition serves to intensify the word rather than change its root meaning. Up till this point, Paul's focus has been on the enmity between Jew and Gentile believers, caused primarily by a pharisaic understanding of the Law of Moses. Now he notes that the removal of the law has as its ultimate purpose, the reconciliation of the one new body (the inclusive fellowship of Jews and Gentiles) with God. As Paul often noted, law-obedience to progress holiness (pharisaic nomism) undermines the basis of salvation, namely, grace through faith. "He also made peace between us and God", CEV.

τους αμθοτερους adj. "**both of them**" - THE TWO. The adjective is used as a substantive, direct object of the subjunctive "may reconcile."

εν "-" - IN [ONE BODY]. Here expressing object / goal, or state toward which the action is directed.

τῳ θεῳ [ος] dat. "**to God**" - Dative of indirect object.

δια "**through**" - THROUGH [THE CROSS]. Here expressing means; "by means of the cross."

αποκτεινας [αποκτεινω] aor. part. "**by which he put to death**" - HAVING FINISHED OFF, KILLED. The participle is adverbial, possibly expressing result, but more likely instrumental, expressing the means by which reconciliation is achieved, as NIV.

την εχθραν [α] "**their hostility**" - THE ENMITY, HATRED, HOSTILITY. Possibly the enmity of the one body with God, but better the enmity that existed between Jew and Gentile; "by this act made utterly irrelevant the antagonism between them", Phillips.

εν αυτῳ "-" - IN HIM, IT. Possibly in the body, or in him / himself, but better "in the cross", or better still, instrumental, expressing mans, so "by it = by the cross."

v17

In this verse Paul borrows from Isaiah 57:19. The Lord God proclaims his message of peace through his prophets. This message is to those "far away" (the lost, the Israelites of the dispersion), but also to those who are near. The day of salvation, the day of the coming kingdom and of the peace of God, was eagerly awaited by the true Israelites. This day has now arrived and Paul rightly sees it as a day which includes the Gentiles; a day promised long ago to Abraham.

και "-" - AND. Coordinate with "he is our peace", v14, "and having come he preached peace."

ελθων [ερχομαι] aor. part. "**he came**" - HAVING COME. The NIV treats the participle as attendant circumstance, but it is more likely adverbial, temporal, "when he came", "as he came", Berkeley, or better consecutive, expressing result, "[and] so he came and brought the good news", Barclay

ευηγγελισατο [ευγγελιζομαι] aor. "**preached**" - HE RELATED AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE, PREACHED. Having come, Jesus preached peace to those far off and to those near. The obvious question is when did Jesus do this preaching? Some argue during his ministry, but when did he preach to Gentiles during his ministry? Was it during some post resurrection appearance? There are those who argue that this preaching is still future. Of course, those who are far off, from a Jewish perspective, are the Jews of the dispersion. Yet again, when did Jesus preach to them? It is more than likely that the preaching is the Spirit-empowered gospel proclaimed by the apostles and all those who follow in their footsteps.

ὑμιν dat. pro. "**to you**" - [PEACE] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

τοις μακραν "**who were far away**" - THE ONES FAR AWAY, FAR OFF [AND PEACE TO THE ONES NEAR]. As with τοις εγγυς, "those who are near", the articular adverbial phrase functions as an attributive adjective limiting ὑμιν, "you", as NIV.

v18

This access to the Father for both Jew and Gentile is made possible through the presence of the Spirit of Christ who indwells all believers in community.

ὁτι "**for / consequently**" - THAT. The NIV takes this conjunction as introducing a causal clause, "because ..." = "the ground of the previous declaration", O'Brien, so also Schnackenburg, Lincoln, but "he preached peace .... because ....", makes no sense. It may serve to introduce an object clause / dependent statement, indirect speech, expressing the content of the preaching, or epexegetic, explaining its content, so Best, but the preaching is summarized as "peace". Hoehner suggests that here it introduces a consecutive clause expressing the result of the preaching; "as a result, through him, we both have access ....", so NIV11; this seems to be the likely sense.

δι [δια] + gen. "**through [him]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [HIM]. Emphatic by position. Expressing agency. The union of Jew and Gentile believers and their access to the Father "in" the Spirit rests on the agency of Christ.

οι αμφοτεροι adj. "**[we] both**" - THE BOTH TOGETHER. The adjective serves as a substantive, subject of the verb εχομεν, "have", and technically stands in apposition to an assumed ἡμεις, "we"; "we, the ones both together, have ...", so Larkin, Fee.

την προσαγωγην [η] "**access**" - [WE HAVE] ACCESS. The NIV opts for an intransitive sense, "access, freedom to enter", so Schnackenburg, Hoehner, Best, ... ie. "Christ is the one who acts to create access." On the other hand, it may be taken as transitive, "introduction (ie., being brought to God)", so Barth, ie., Christ is the one who introduces believers to God. Intransitive seems best; "because of the peace accomplished, we have continual access [to God the Father]. It is something we possess", Hoehner.

εν + dat. "**by**" - IN. The NIV has taken the preposition as instrumental, expressing means, but it is also often translated as expressing space / sphere, incorporative union; "in [union with the] one Spirit to the Father", NRSV. Paul's point is that access to the Father for both Jews and Gentiles is found as one body in Christ in union with / through the one Spirit.

ενι πνευματι "**one Spirit**" - ONE SPIRIT [TO THE FATHER]. The "Spirit" is most likely the Holy Spirit, but the human spirit is possible. The mention of "one"

Spirit parallels the one body made up of Jew and Gentile, drawing out the idea that "the one Spirit lives and works in the one body", O'Brien.

2:19-22

2. The gospel and the church, 2:1-22

ii] The results - one in Christ, 2:11-22
b) Members of God's house

Argument

Having explained how the union of Jews and Gentiles in Christ makes for a new humanity, Paul "now defines the consequences of that union", Hoehner. The Gentiles are now full members in the House of God, full members of God's family; "No one is a stranger or sojourner any more in Christ Jesus, rather, all are 'fellow citizens of the saints and the household of God'", Caudill.

Issues

i] Context See 2:1-10.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *Members of God's house*:

The consequences (αρα, "therefore") for Gentiles in their union with God's historic people, Israel:

A new relationship with Jews in God's household, v19;

A privileged position in God's household, v20-22.

iv] Interpretation:

Most commentators align the references to God's "household", his "holy temple", and "the dwelling place for God", with the church universal, so Meyer. Although the universal / catholic church is often viewed as an organizational structure here on earth, it is very unlikely that Paul views it in organizational terms. For Paul, the εκκλησια, "assembly / church", is primarily a heavenly gathering, usually in the sense of the last-days assembly before the Ancient of Days, a gathering of believers, past, present, and future. Some suggest that πασα οικοδομη means "<u>every</u> dwelling", rather than "<u>whole</u> building", implying that every local church joined together produces the "whole church", the universal church, so Mitton. O'Brien argues that Paul is referring here, not to the universal church, but to the local church, the local gathering of believers. In 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 the "temple of God" is the local gathering of believers, cf., 2Cor.6:16.

So, what building is Paul speaking about? Is it the local Christian assembly, or the heavenly assembly? It is quite possible that when Paul speaks about the church (God's new community in Christ, the household

of God, his dwelling place, the holy temple, ...) he has both realities in mind, given that membership in one, entails membership in the other. When we gather, Christ is in our midst, and at that moment we are also seated with him in the heavenlies. If we are to lean toward one over the other, then the local church seems the best choice, given that the building is in the process of being "joined together", and rising "to become a holy temple", that "you are being built together"; the heavenly assembly is already complete (outside of the confines of time, of course).

So then, believing Gentiles are privileged to join together with believing Jews as part of God's new community, his "holy temple", assembling in this town or that town, and each of these assemblies serves as an earthly expression of the heavenly assembly gathered before the Ancient of Days.

v] Homiletics: *Defining the church*

The Christian church can be viewed from many different angles. We can view it from the aspect of history, or architecture, or sociology, or even organization and management. In our reading today, Paul the apostle gives us three particular ways of looking at the church:

1. Community

The church is a society of "fellow citizens", members of a "household", a community where the barriers of race and religion are no more. The church is a society of friends.

2. Eternity

Believers, members of an often fragile and faulty human organization called the church, are actually part of an eternal organization, a building which incorporates Christ and the apostles and all believers from all ages and all places. This building, this heavenly assembly, is even now gathered, and every little congregation, gathered throughout the world, actually images this eternal gathering. So, we may view the church as a shimmering reflection of an eternal reality.

3. Spirituality

The local church is the earthly dwelling-place of our living God. The assembled people are the "holy temple" of God, the place where he dwells. So, we may view the church as a community indwelt by the Spirit of Christ - a spiritual society - when two or three meet together .....

Text - 2:19

The consequences for Gentiles of their union with God's historic people Israel, v19-22; i] A new relationship with Jews in God's household, v19. Gentiles

are "no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people (believing Jews) and members of God's household (God's eternal family, his new community)."

αρα ουν "**consequently**" - SO THEN. Both conjunctions are inferential and together draw a strong logical conclusion from the statement made in v13 and developed over v14-18; "as a result / consequently."

ξενοι adj. "**foreigners**" - [YOU ARE NO LONGER] FOREIGNERS, STRANGERS. The adjective serves as a substantive, predicate nominative.

παροικοι adj. "**aliens**" - [AND] ALIENS (who lives in a place that is not their home). The adjective serves as a substantive, predicate nominative. Used in the LXX of a "sojourner." "You are no longer outsiders or aliens", Phillips.

αλλα "**but**" - The adversative serves is a counterpoint construction; "no longer aliens, but fellow citizens". .

συμπολιται [ης] "**fellow citizens**" - [YOU ARE] FELLOW CITIZENS (members of a socio-political unit*). Predicate nominative. Gentiles could rightly be called "saints". Paul often had to argue, against his Jewish brothers and sisters, that the Gentiles were "fellow citizens" of the Jews.

των ἁγιων gen. adj. "**with God's people**" - OF THE SAINTS. The adjective serves as a substantive, while the genitive is probably adverbial, of association / relationship. "The saints" more than likely refers to Jewish believers, although Paul sometimes uses the term to refer to the apostles.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**his**" - OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive; "members of God's household."

οικειοι [ος] "**household**" - FAMILY MEMBERS. The word is used of a household, with a stress on the relationships within the household.

v20

ii] A privileged position in God's new community in Christ, v20-22. God's eternal family, his "household", his "holy temple", is founded on apostolic truth, v20, is formed in Christ, v21, and serves as a dwelling place for God, v22.

εποικοδομηθεντες [εποικοδομεω] aor. pas. part. "**built**" - HAVING BEEN BUILT. Although anarthrous, the participle may be adjectival, "fellow citizens / household" who / which have / has been built upon ...", Larkin, although more likely adverbial, causal, "because you have been built upon ...", or even temporal. Possibly a divine passive.

επι + dat. "**on**" - ON, UPON. Spatial. A stylistic repetition of the prefix of the verb εποικοδομεω, "to build upon."

τῳ θεμιλιῳ [ος] "**foundation**" - THE FOUNDATION. That on which a structure is built*.

των αποστολων [ης ου] "**of the apostles**" - These two genitive nouns are probably appositional / epexegetical in that they further define / explain the noun "foundation"; "the foundation that consists of ....." It is also possible that the genitives are a genitive of source, "the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets", NEB, ie., the foundation of the gospel laid by the apostles and prophets. None-the-less, we are safer with, "the foundation consisting of the apostles and prophets", O'Brien, although it would be their possession of divine truth which gives them this foundational status.

προφητων [ης ου] "**prophets**" - [AND] THE PROPHETS. The missing article has prompted the suggestion that Paul intends "apostles who prophecy", Grudem, but it seems more likely that Paul has in mind those members of the church with the gift of prophecy. Possibly Paul has in mind the foundational teaching / revelation of the Old Testament prophets. If New Testament prophets are in mind, they would not be the Agabus sort, predictive, nor the more general prophets referred to in I Corinthians, ie., expositors of God's Word, as opposed to unintelligible tongue speakers. These prophets stand with the apostles as "the first authoritative recipients and proclaimers of God's revelation in Christ", O'Brien.

οντος [ειμι] gen. pres. part. "**as**" - [CHRIST] BEING [HIM = HIMSELF]. Attendant circumstance participle, genitive in a predicate genitive absolute construction which makes an assertion about the genitive phrase "the apostles and prophets", ie., it gives "further information about the foundation's construction, namely, that Christ Jesus is the cornerstone", Hoehner. "Jesus Christ" is also genitive, standing as the subject of the genitive absolute construction.

ακρογωνιαιου [ος] gen. "**the chief cornerstone**" - *the* CORNERSTONE OR CAPSTONE (essential to its construction*). Predicate genitive. The "chief cornerstone" of the building is "Jesus himself". When it was finally clear that God's purposes for humanity would no longer be worked out through the nation of Israel, the prophets began to speak of the creation of a new building, a new Israel. This new community would evolve out of the faithful remnant of the old through the intervention of God's messiah, his anointed one. The messiah was described in different ways. One description used in the Old Testament was that of a "stone" - a building stone within a new building. It was a "precious" stone, but a "stone of stumbling". Sometimes it was described as a "foundation" stone - the new building would be built on it. It was a "cornerstone" - defining and holding the building together. It was also described as a "cap-stone" (key or top stone) - the final top stone which held the top arch of the building together. Here in Ephesians, the stone is probably the cornerstone - Christ defines and ties the building together.

v21

Jesus, as the cornerstone, defines and ties the whole building together and becomes the architectural defining point from which the building takes shape. So, the heavenly assembly, as with the church, evolves from Jesus into a complete entity, a complete whole.

εν + dat. "**in [him]**" - IN [WHOM]. Local, sphere; taken to express incorporative union, or base / foundation, "on", whom the structure rests. "In Jesus."

οικοδομη [η] "**[*the* whole] building**" - [ALL, EVERY] BUILDING. The noun, being anarthrous (without an article), would imply "every building", ie., "every gathered congregation", but the whole edifice built on Christ is the obvious intention. Some variant manuscripts have an article, but this was probably added to better convey the likely intended meaning of an entire construction being presently built upon Christ. Some are tempted to see this image as depicting the structure of the universal catholic church, but Paul's universal church is the heavenly assembly within which every believer is now taking their seat with Christ and within which the dividing wall of hostility is no more. Although the heavenly assembly is always in Paul's mind, his focus, as here, is often on the local congregation as an earthly representation of the heavenly assembly. "The whole building", Barclay, etc., better than "every structure", NJB, etc.

συναρμολογουμενη [συναρμολογεω] aor. pas. part. "**is joined together**" - BEING FITLY JOINED TOGETHER. The participle is adjectival, attributive, "in whom the whole building, which is fitly joined together, grows ....", although possibly adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the building's growth, so Hoehner. Again, a divine passive, God is doing the building work. The present tense indicating the ongoing building action, and the prefix συν making the point that the building work is a joining "together."

εις + acc. "**[rises to] become**" - [GROWS] INTO. Expressing direction; the direction of growth is into a holy temple.

ἁγιον adj. "**a holy**" - A HOLY [TEMPLE]. "Holy" in the sense of "set apart for a special use." The building is holy because God is present. Not "a temple holy in the Lord", but modifying temple, "a holy temple in the Lord."

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [LORD]. Local, sphere. The Lord is the sphere in which the temple is realized, "the Lord", given the context, is Christ.

v22

This building, this house, this community of believers, consists of remnant of Israel - Christ himself, and those in Christ, initially the apostles and Jewish believers. The community is now extended to include "you too", ie. Gentile

believers. Believing Gentiles are included in the new building; they are incorporated into this "holy temple", this "dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit". God has always "tabernacled" with his people, and now "through" the Spirit of Christ, he dwells with his gathered people, a people made up of both Jews and Gentiles.

εν ᾧ "**in him**" - IN WHOM. Possibly "in which", referring to the "temple", but referring back to εν ᾧ, "in whom", v21, which refers back to "Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone", v20.

ὑμεις pro. "**you**" - Emphatic by use.

και "**too**" - AND = ALSO. Adjunctive; "you also."

συνοικοδομεισθε [συνοικοδομεω] pres. pas. "**are being built together**" - ARE BEING JOINED TOGETHER. Again, the present tense indicating ongoing building work and the prefix *sun* underlining togetherness. Passive is probably divine, ie., God is the implied agent. Not in the sense of built up spiritually, ie. "encouraged", rather of the building together of believers in the heavenly assembly. "You are being built in as a part with all his other people", Barclay.

εις + acc. "**to become [a dwelling]**" - INTO [A DWELLING]. Possibly here expressing purpose, as NIV - "believers are built together for the purpose of being a place where God dwells", Best. Possibly better taken as expressing the direction of the growth, namely, into a dwelling place of God.

του θεου [ος] "**in which God lives**" - OF GOD. The genitive is probably adjectival, possessive, it is God's abode - "denoting that this place of settled dwelling is God's", Hoehner.

εν + dat. "**by [the Spirit]**" - IN [SPIRIT]. The prepositional phrase εν πνευματι, "in/by the Spirit", modifies συνοικοδομεισθε, "built together", while the preposition itself is probably instrumental, expressing means. It is through the active agency of the Spirit that God's people are built together, and serve as an appropriate dwelling for the divine. This dwelling is both the eternal gathering (the temple of the Lord) and the local assembly of worshipping believers, the church. Not a "spiritual dwelling for God", REB, but "a dwelling for God through the Spirit", Williams.

3:1-13

3. Paul's part in making all one in Christ, 3:1-21

i] The mystery revealed and proclaimed

Argument

In the passage before us, Paul reminds his readers that God, in his kindness, has revealed a divine "mystery" to him and that he, a man who once persecuted the church, has been given the task of revealing this mystery to the Gentiles. The mystery, a secret once hidden, now revealed, concerns "the boundless riches of Christ", or put more simply, it is the gospel of God's free grace in Christ.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-2. Having established that Gentiles are incorporated into God's household, as equal partners with his historic people Israel, by grace through faith, Paul sets out to pray that love may flourish in this new community, 3:1. But, before embarking on the prayer, Paul has something more to say on the subject of the new community in Christ, namely, the operation of the mystery / gospel in making all one in Christ, along with his part in that operation, 3:2-13. He then returns to the prayer, praying that "the Ephesian believers might know Christ's strengthened love which surpasses all knowledge", Hoehner, 3:14-21.

Paul uses the rhetorical techniques of the day to progress his argument, although Ephesians doesn't quite fit the mould. A discourse which is designed to persuade usually begins with an *exordium*, an introduction, sometimes a *narratio*, a narrative section, and then the argument proper, the *probatio*, followed by exhortation, the *exhortatio*. Chapter 3 may fall into the classification of a *digressio*, a digression where specific elements of the argument / *probatio* are further developed. However we classify chapter 3, Paul moves to speak of his part in making known the mystery for the creation of the new community in Christ, of the all-one in Christ, and then goes on to pray for love in that community.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *The administration of the mystery*:

Paul's administration of the mystery as it relates to the participation of the Gentiles in the people of God, v2-7;

Paul's administration of the mystery as it relates to God's plan for the realms of earth and heaven, v8-12;

Paul's part in God's plan, v8-9;

The purpose of God's plan, v10-12;

Paul's suffering due to his administration of the mystery has a grand purpose, namely, glory to the Gentiles, v13.

iv] Interpretation:

Having addressed the issue of the new Israel, the temple of God, inclusive of both Jew and Gentile, Paul sets out to pray for this new community, but immediately he pulls aside to explain his part in building God's new temple through the revelation of the mystery. He picks up on his prayer again in v14.

A μυστηριον, "mystery", in the NT, is a secret now revealed. In Ephesians it is often argued that the mystery is "the union of believing Jews and Gentiles (on the basis of Christ's redemption) in one body, the church", Hoehner; "the summing up of the All in Christ", Best. It certainly presents this way in the passage before us, but it is unlikely the sense intended by Paul. In 1 Corinthians 2:1 the mystery is salvation through the cross of Christ, while in Romans 16:25 Paul links his preaching of the gospel of salvation with making known the mystery. In Colossians the content of the mystery is Christ, "Christ in you, the hope of glory", cf., 2:2, 4:3. So, the mystery is actually the gospel, "what God has done in Christ", Lincoln, and it is very unlikely that Paul has changed his tune in Ephesians.

Paul was given the privilege of making known the mystery, ie., "this grace was given to me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ", v8. Paul is addressing of the consequences of the communication of the mystery / gospel, namely, the creation of a new community in Christ, the one new man, where "Gentiles are heirs tother with Israel, members together of one body", v6, cf., O'Brien, p109-10; Caragounis, *The Ephesian Myserion*, 1977.

The manifold wisdom of God revealed to the spiritual powers in heavenly places, v10. "The rulers and authorities" are "heavenly beings, good and bad alike", O'Brien (see ταις αρχαις και ταις εξουσιαις below) who exist within "the spiritual environment in which unseen forces compete for man's allegiance", Caird (see εν τοις επουρανιοις below). Divine reconciliation realized in the formation of the one new man, the church, through the redemption wrought by Christ, reveals to these "heavenly beings" "the manifold wisdom of God." This making known to them is not just the making known of information (see γνωρισθῃ below), but the revelation of a life-changing power which engages the spiritual realm in the divine plan to reconcile all things in Christ, things on earth and things in heaven. The church is not only tasked with realizing oneness / unity as an expression of divine reconciliation for the promotion of human

reconciliation, with one another and with God, but also for the reconciliation of the unseen forces of the cosmos.

v] Greek:

The passage begins in v1 with an anacoluthon (lost syntax) where Paul, responding prayerfully to the idea of Jews and Gentiles as God's temple, as one new person in Christ, commences an intercessory prayer, τουτου χαριν, "for this reason .....", but breaks off to speak about the mystery of Christ and of his role of making it known to the Gentiles, v2-13. In v14 he picks up where he left off in v1 with τουτου χαριν, "for this reason [I kneel before the Father]." The digression consists of three clauses in the Gk., v2-7, 8-12, 13, forming a single sentence consisting of 189 words. Verse 7 is most likely transitional linking the point made in the first clause with that of the second.

vi] Homiletics: *The Epiphany*

The Epiphany is one of the oldest feast-days in the Christian Church. It was first celebrated in the Eastern Church to commemorate the manifestation of Christ to the World. The word "epiphany" means "manifestation" in Greek. The day celebrated the manifestation of Jesus at his birth, his baptism and his first miracle at Canna in Galilee. The focus of the celebration was on the manifestation of the Divinity of Christ. When this "high" day moved to the Western Church, it focused on the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, as portrayed in the story of the visit of the Magi to the infant Jesus. By the fourth century, Epiphany was celebrated on January 6, and here it has stayed till today.

Our reading today from Ephesians is read as the Epistle for Epiphany because it focuses on a wonderful consequence of the gospel, namely that "the Gentiles are heirs with Israel, members together in one body, and sharers together in the promises in Christ Jesus," 3:6. It was Paul's honour to manifest Christ to the Gentiles through the proclamation of the gospel, in the full knowledge that they could share in the "promises in Christ Jesus". Whereas, in the past, the Gentiles were second rate citizens to the Jews, all this is now changed in and through the person and work of Christ. We Gentile believers now have equal standing with Jewish believers.

The Old Testament prophets certainly spoke of the incoming of the Gentiles and of Israel as a light to the Gentiles. Yet, equal standing was something beyond their understanding. Jews and Gentiles, in Christ, now have equal access into the presence of the living God.

Let us respond to God's manifestation of his grace to us by recognizing anew the mercy of God. We, the outcasts, now fully share in "the promises

in Christ." And let us reaffirm how this is so. It is not by attending the right church, nor is it by right behaviour, rather it is totally a gift of God's grace appropriated through faith.

Text - 3:1

The mystery, v1-13: i] Paul's intercessory prayer for the Gentiles begins, but at the mention of being a "prisoner of Christ" he moves into a digression, v1. "God has appointed him to enlighten them about the mystery, and as a result he undergoes suffering for them", O'Brien. Paul repeats this point in v13 when he again sets out to pray for the Ephesian believers.

τουτου χαριν "**for this reason**" - FOR THE SAKE OF THIS. The preposition χαριν expresses cause / reason, "because of this / for the sake of this", τουτου being anaphoric / referring back to the ideas presented in 2:11-22, so Best. Yet, as Merkle argues, it is likely that the construction replaces δια τουτο, again a causal construction, but treated as inferential, "therefore".

ὁ δεσμιος [ος] "**the prisoner**" - [I PAUL] THE PRISONER. Nominative in apposition to "Paul", which is in apposition to "I". Paul is Christ's ambassador in chains.

του Χριστου [ος] "**of Christ**" - OF CHRIST [JESUS]. The genitive is possessive, "Christ's prisoner", or relational, although Hoehner suggests it also expresses cause, "it was the cause of Christ that made him a prisoner."

ὑπερ + gen. "**for the sake of**" - ON BEHALF OF [YOU GENTILES]. Expressing advantage, "for the sake of / on behalf of."

v2

ii] Paul's stewardship of the mystery, as it relates to the inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God, v2-7. Paul reminds his readers that he was appointed by Christ to administer the communication of the gospel of God's grace to the Gentiles, ὁτι ("that is", assuming it is read), "the mystery", a secret *mostly* hidden in the past, but now *fully* revealed. So ειναι ("as a result of", inf. = adv., consecutive, but not epexegetic; see v7) the proclamation of the mystery / gospel, Gentiles are heirs with Israel, sharing together in the promised blessings of the covenant.

ει γε aor. "**Surely [you have heard]**" - IF INDEED [YOU HEARD]. The particle γε is emphatic, while the conjunction ει introduces a conditional clause, 1st. class, where the condition is assumed to be true, "if indeed, *as is the case*, you heard ..... *then* [I therefore ask you not to despair .....(v13)]." So, the protasis of the conditional sentence runs from v2 to 12, with the apodosis in v13. Although a rather long sentence, it is not unusual for a digression.

την οικονομιαν [α] "***about* the administration**" - THE MANAGEMENT, PLAN. The verb ακουω, when meaning "to hear", usually takes the genitive, "hear of the administration" = "hear about / concerning the administration." Used of the administration / stewardship of a household, but also going on to mean the provision of a service, or an arrangement. Paul was given the honour of managing the communication of the gospel to the Gentiles.

χαριτος [ις ιτος] "**[of God's] grace**" - OF THE GRACE [OF GOD]. The genitive is usually classified as adjectival, verbal, objective, "the administration concerning the grace of God", but better classified as epexegetic / of definition, or idiomatic / content, "the stewardship *which comprises / consists of* the grace of God", Merkle, Best, Larkin, or idiomatic / source "the grace *that comes from* God." Here possibly of God's kindness toward Paul in giving him the privilege of managing gospel- outreach to the Gentiles. Although Paul persecuted the church, God "kindly gave" (grace) him the responsibility of taking the gospel to the Gentiles. Yet, "grace" here can also take the more common meaning of the mercy of God offered in the gospel - the gift of a free and eternal right-standing in the sight of God through faith in Christ. In this sense, Paul has the responsibility of administering the communication of God's grace in the gospel, entrusted to him for the Gentiles. This more common meaning seems best.

της δοθεισης [διδωμι] aor. pas. part. "**that was given**" - HAVING BEEN GIVEN. The participle is adjectival, attributive, as NIV.

μοι dat. pro. "**to me**" - Dative of indirect object.

εις "**for [you]**" - TO, INTO [YOU]. Here expressing advantage, as NIV; "for you."

v3

Paul describes the gospel of grace as a "mystery" now revealed to him, cf., 1Cor.2:1. It is a mystery in that the message of the gospel was once hidden, but now revealed.

ὁτι "**that is**" - THAT. If original, this conjunction serves to introduce an object clause / dependent statement of perception expressing what "you have heard", as NIV.

το μυστηριον [ον] "**the mystery**" - [ACCORDING TO REVELATION] THE MYSTERY, SECRET. Paul uses this word to describe a secret, or hidden truth, which is now revealed. It was once a secret and therefore a mystery, but now that the secret is revealed, it is no longer a mystery. The mystery, or secret, that Paul refers to, is the gospel of God's grace, or better, the gospel (in the sense of important message) which concerns God's grace. The phrase "the manifold wisdom of God", v10, further describes this mystery, as does the phrase "the

unsearchable riches of Christ", v8, and "of Christ", v4. cf. Col.1:27, "Christ in you, the hope of glory", and Col.2:2, where the mystery is simply "Christ". At first glance, the mystery is further described in v 6, but this is misleading since Paul is speaking of the consequences of the gospel / mystery, namely the brotherhood of Jew and Gentile in Christ. It should be noted that most commentators do not hold this view, so for example, Hoehner, "Ephesians views God's sacred secret (the mystery) as believing Jews and Gentiles untied into one body."

μοι dat. pro. "**to me**" - [WAS MADE KNOW] TO ME. Dative of indirect object.

κατα "**by [revelation]**" - ACCORDING TO [REVELATION]. Here adverbial, possibly expressing manner, or standard / reason, "in accord with / because of", Larkin / Lincoln, but better means, Hoehner, Merkle, "by means of revelation", as NIV. "It was by direct revelation that God told me of his secret plan", Barclay.

καθως "**as**" - JUST AS. Introducing a concrete example / characteristic quality, rather than a comparison; similar to a Hebrew predicate accusative, "exactly as I have already written briefly".

προεγραψα [προγραψω] aor. "**I have already written**" - I WROTE BEFORE. "Written already" rather than "written before", as if to imply that Paul has written to the church in a previous letter. It is an aorist so best translated as a perfect here. He is simply saying he has already touched on this subject in this letter.

εν + dat. "-" - IN. The preposition here is probably adverbial, expressing manner, "with few words".

ολιγῳ dat. adj. "**briefly**" - LITTLE, FEW *words*. The adjective serves as a substantive; "I have already touched briefly on this matter in the opening section of my letter to you."

v4

The substance of the mystery "of Christ" ("of Christ" in the sense of "revealed in the person and work of Christ") is something the Ephesians can understand because Paul has already touched on the subject in this letter.

προς ὃ "**in reading this**" - TOWARD WHICH. Here expressing reference, "with reference to [which]", Bruce, or standard, "in accordance with", O'Brien, Merkle.

αναγινωσκοντες [αναγινωσκω] pres. part. "**to understand**" - [YOU ARE ABLE] READING [TO UNDERSTAND]. The AV treats this participle as adverbial, temporal; "whereby, when ye read." This is followed by the complementary infinitive νοησαι, "to understand", completing the verb δυνασθε, "you are able." The participle may also be instrumental, "you are able, by reading, to understand." "As you read, you will ..... be able to comprehend", Cassirer.

συνεσιν [ις εως] "**insight**" - THE DISCERNMENT, INTELLIGENCE, UNDERSTANDING, INSIGHT [OF ME]. Often with εν, "discernment in ....."

εν "**into**" - IN. Local, expressing sphere; "indicating in or into what Paul has insight", Hoehner, although Larkin suggests that here εν is used for εις, expressing goal; "my insight into the mystery relating to the Messiah."

του Χριστου [ος] gen. "**of Christ**" - [THE MYSTERY] OF CHRIST. O'Brien suggests that this adjectival genitive is most likely epexegetic, defining, "the mystery which consists in Christ", "the mystery which is disclosed in him", Bruce; the meaning of the mystery is exegeted in the person and work of Christ, cf., Col.4:2. Larkin opts for reference, "the mystery relating to Christ", Abbott, while Hoehner opts for a verbal genitive, objective, the mystery is about, or concerning Christ; "the hidden purposes (now revealed) which God was fulfilling in Christ", Mitton. An epexegetic sense seems best, in fact it is possible to say that the mystery is Christ, although this is not widely accepted. Those who argue that the mystery is the uniting of Gentile and Jewish Christians tend to hold that it is "of Christ"; it is only through Christ that the union of Jew and Gentile believers is attained, so for example Best, p304.

v5

The Old Testament saints had an understanding of the mercy of God, but they had no insight into the extent of God's grace in and through the person and work of Christ. Only the apostles and New Testament prophets possess this insight.

ὁ "**which [was made known]**" - WHICH [WAS REVEALED]. The antecedent of this pronoun is "the mystery."

τοις υἱοις [ος] "**to men**" - TO THE SONS [OF MEN]. Dative of indirect object with the attributive genitive "of men" - a Semitic phrase; "in former times that secret was not told to men (revealed to mankind)", Barclay.

ἑτεραις dat. pro. "**in other]**" - IN OTHER [GENERATIONS]. Local dative, temporal, referring to a time before Paul's generation. Possibly "to other generations." For the Old Testament saints, the knowledge of the free grace of God was only understood in general terms.

ὡς "**as**" - AS, LIKE [NOW IT WAS REVEALED]. Expressing a comparison, yet a comparative sense for this adverbial phrase is somewhat tricky. A comparison of degree seems likely in that a limited understanding of the mystery of God's grace was available to God's people in the past. In fact, even if Gentile inclusion is taken as the meaning of the mystery, there was a limited understanding of divine inclusiveness, of "the stranger within the gates." So, the sense is "in the same degree as / not so clearly as", Caird. This is opposed by most commentators who take the conjunction here as descriptive rather than restrictive, such that "no

revelation of this mystery was given in the OT, but that it was revealed for the first time in the NT era", Hoehner, so Mitton, O'Brien, Best, ...

εν πνευματι [α ατος] dat. "**by the Spirit**" - IN SPIRIT. The preposition εν is instrumental, expressing means; "by means of the Spirit."

τοις ἁγιοις dat. adj. "**to *God's* holy**" - TO THE HOLY [APOSTLES OF HIM AND PROPHETS]. Dative of indirect object. "Holy" probably qualifies both apostles and prophets. See 2:20.

v6

The secret truth, now revealed, concerns God's free and gracious acceptance of all who trust Christ. For Paul, the implication is worth underlining - Jew and Gentile share the promise together, Rom.8:17, Gal.3:6-29.

εἶναι [ειμι] pres. inf. "***This mystery* is that**" - [THE GENTILES] TO BE. The infinitive is usually treated as epexegetic / appositional, expressing the content of "the mystery", v4, so "that is / namely." Most commentators regard that this is the intent of the infinitive and so treat the verse as a summary of the "mystery of Christ", v4, so O'Brien, Hoehner, Lincoln, Best, Schnackenburg, Mitton, Robinson. The lack of a demonstrative pronoun mitigates against this view. None-the-less, most translations head in this direction, some making a similar leap of exegetical faith as the NIV, eg. "and the mystery is this", CEV. Other commentators assume that the infinitive is introducing an object clause / dependent statement, expressing what "has been revealed by the Spirit", namely the content of "the mystery", giving the same sense as above, so Morris, Barth, Bruce. The AV is surely heading in the right direction by taking the infinitive as adverbial, introducing a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that through the gospel (mystery) the Gentiles may be joint heirs ..... [with Israel]", or possibly better, hypothetical result / result, "so that." What we have here is the gospel / mystery at work uniting Jew and Gentile. Paul's point is that the gospel / mystery (God's gracious offer of eternal acceptance through faith in Christ) serves to gather both Jew and Gentile into one body.

δια + gen. "**through [the gospel]**" - [JOINT HEIRS AND A JOINT BODY AND JOINT PARTAKERS OF THE PROMISE] THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [THE GOSPEL, NEWS, IMPORTANT MESSAGE]. Instrumental, expressing means.

συγκληρονομα adj. "**heirs together**" - SHARING INHERITANCE TOGETHER. The three compound words, all predicate accusatives of the verb to-be, are used by Paul to describe the joint relationship of Jews and Gentiles in Christ - the words are uncommon. Only συγκληρονομος is used elsewhere in the New Testament, Rom.8:17, Heb.11:9 and 1Pet.3:7. As a consequence of the gospel (the mystery), Gentiles are joint heirs with Israel, belonging to the same body

(lit. coincorporate) and fellow partakers (joint-sharers) of the covenant promises now realized in Christ. "Share in", CEV.

της επαγγελιας [α] gen. "**in the promise**" - OF THE PROMISE. The genitive is probably adverbial, expressing association; "sharers together with the promise."

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST JESUS]. Locative, expressing sphere / incorporative union; "in union with Christ."

v7

Paul was appointed by God to minister this mystery to the Gentiles. Of this appointment Paul says it was an act of divine grace, an act of kindness.

οὗ gen. pro. "**of this gospel**" - OF WHICH. Referring to the genitive του ευαγγελιου, "[through] the gospel", of v6, so "gospel" is understood. Lit. "of which I became a minister", ie., of the task of preaching the gospel of God's grace to the Gentiles. Paul is stating his function as apostle to the Gentiles.

διακονος [ος] "**minister**" - [I BECAME] A MINISTER. Paul is a steward, or manager of Gentile evangelism.

κατα + acc. "**by [the gift]**" - ACCORDING TO [THE GIFT]. Expressing a standard / norm, "in accordance with", "in conformity with the gift of God's grace", or possible cause / reason, "because of ....." Paul's commission "arises from, and can only be understood within, the context of God's overflowing grace", O'Brien.

της χαριτος [ις ιτος] "**[of God's] grace**" - OF THE GRACE [OF GOD]. The genitive is adjectival, either epexegetic, "the gift that consists of God's grace", or appositional, "the gift which is God's grace", Hoehner. The genitive "of God" is either possessive, "belonging to God", or idiomatic / source, "from God". Here definitely not used of God's saving grace in Christ, but of a "gift" of divine kindness exhibited in trusting Paul with the responsibility of gospel ministry to the Gentiles.

της δοθεισης [διδωμι] gen. pas. part. "**given**" - HAVING BEEN GIVEN. The participle is adjectival, attributive; "which was given."

μοι dat. "**me**" - TO ME. Dative of indirect object.

κατα + acc. "**through**" - ACCORDING TO. Mitton suggests a rare adverbial usage here, manner / means, "by", as NIV here and above, but standard is to be preferred, Larkin; "according to the working of his power", Hoehner.

την ενεργειαν [α] "**the working**" - THE OPERATION, EFFECTUAL WORKING, ACTION. In describing God's work of dragging him from persecutor to Christian missionary, Paul uses the same language used of the power necessary to raise Christ from the dead, Eph.1:19.

της δυναμεως [ις εως] gen. "**of [his] power**" - OF THE POWER [OF HIM]. The genitive is probably adjectival, possibly attributive, limiting "working", "his powerful working", or attributed, "the effectiveness of his power", Cassirer.

v8

iii] Paul's stewardship of the mystery in God's eternal purposes, v8-12. a) Paul explains how God's kindness ("grace") was applied to him, not just the least of the apostles, but "the least of all the Lord's people", v8-9. He was given the task of preaching a divine word to the Gentiles, the content of this communication being the mystery, the gospel of "the boundless riches of / concerning Christ."

τῳ ελαχιστοτερῳ dat. comp. adj. "***although I am* less than the least**" - [TO ME] THE LEAST. The comparative is used for a superlative; "less than the least", NIV, etc. Standing in apposition to εμοι, so taking the dative case. Probably Paul's own word-play for his Latin name "little". It is unlikely that Paul is overly embarrassed by his past life, rather, he writes with an understanding of God's forgiveness and total acceptance, able to declare openly that his "righteousness is but filthy rags."

παντων αγιων gen. adj. "**of all God's people**" - OF ALL HOLY *ones* [WAS GIVEN]. The genitive is adjectival, partitive, or comparative.

εμοι dat. pro. "**[this grace was given] me**" - TO ME. Dative of indirect object. Emphatic by position and form.

ευαγγελισασθαι [ευαγγελιζω] aor. inf. "**to preach**" - [THIS GRACE] TO PREACH. The infinitive may be verbal, so forming an adverbial clause expressing purpose, modifying the verb "was given"; "given in order to preach", Arnold. Then again, it may be epexegetic, specifying "grace"; "this grace was given to me, namely to preach to the Gentiles." Hoehner opts for the second option.

τοις εθνεσιν [ος] dat. "**to the Gentiles**" - Dative of indirect object.

το ανεξιχνιαστον adj. "**the unsearchable**" - THE UNABLE TO TRACK, UNTRACEABLE [WEALTH]. This adjective serves as a substantive, qualified by the adjectival genitive "of Christ", and serving as the object of the infinitive "to preach." Possibly "unexplorable / incomprehensible", but possibly better in a positive sense, "boundless". In Romans 11:33 Paul uses the same word in a similar context. The inclusion of the Gentiles in the covenant promises illustrates the depth of Christ's redeeming grace. "Unfathomable", REB. "Paul uses rhetorical language to show that his proclamation is about the wealth of divine grace and glory which Christ possesses in himself, and which he lavishly gives to others", O'Brien.

του Χριστου "**of Christ**" - OF CHRIST. The genitive is probably adjectival, epexegetic, "the unsearchable riches concerning Christ", Best, or possessive, O'Brien, or idiomatic / source, "from Christ", Larkin

v9

Although the mystery was once hidden, God's intention was that all would inevitably understand his action-plan.

και "**and**" - Here coordinating, linking the infinitival construction "to enlighten all" to "to preach to the Gentiles", although possibly epexegetic, such that "to make a plan ....." specifies what Paul means by "to preach to the Gentiles."

φωτισαι [φωτιζω] aor. inf. "**to make plain**" - TO BRING TO LIGHT, MAKE SEE, SHED LIGHT UPON, ENLIGHTEN. The infinitive here takes the same sense as ευαγγελισασθαι "to preach", in v8, ie., adverbial, expressing purpose, or epexegetic. Here "to make all see" is best, and this by means of the public disclosure of something hidden.

παντας adj. "**to everyone**" - ALL. Strong variant accepted by most translations. The adjective serves as a substantive, accusative direct object of "to enlighten"; "all human beings", as NIV.

τίς "-" - WHAT. Interrogative pronoun; "what is the arrangement with respect to the mystery?"

ἡ οικονομια [α] "**the administration [of this mystery]**" - *is* THE MANAGEMENT, STEWARDSHIP, THE PROVISION OF, THE ARRANGEMENT [OF THE MYSTERY]. Predicate nominative of an assumed verb to-be; "what is the administration." In v2, the "administration" is Paul's administration, in the sense of an assignment given to Paul for him to manage, but here it is the same as 1:10, "a plan for the fullness of time." As such, it is more likely God's plan of action, strategy, and therefore refers to His provision and organization of the intended blessings associated with the mystery / gospel. The "inner workings", NJB, of the mystery is God's business, and it was Paul's privilege to make them known.

του αποκεκρυμμενου [αποκρυπτω] gen. perf. pas. part. "**which [for ages past] was kept hidden**" - HAVING BEEN HIDDEN. The participle is adjectival, attributive, as NIV.

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM [THE AGES]. Temporal use of the preposition.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [GOD]. Local, expressing sphere.

τῳ .... κτισαντι [κτιζω] dat. aor. part. "**who created**" - THE ONE HAVING CREATED [ALL *things*]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "God".

v10

b) Paul outlines the purpose / intent of God's plan, namely that God's manifold wisdom realized in the church (the gathering of believers), through the redemption of Christ, might be made known to the spiritual powers and authorities in heavenly places, v10-12. The ministry of the gospel of God's grace (the mystery) was graciously given to Paul in order that, through the building of an inclusive church in Christ, the extent of God's multi-layered wisdom might be revealed to the powers and authorities, before whom "this object lesson of divine wisdom is displayed", Bruce.

ἱνα + subj. "**His intent was that**" - THAT [MIGHT BE MADE KNOWN]. Introducing a final clause, expressing purpose, "in order that", modifying the verb "[this grace] was given [to me]", v8, so Best. "To the intent that", rather than "His intent was that", given that "his" is not in the Greek; "so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known .....", ESV.

νυν adv. "**now**" - Temporal adverb.

δια + gen. "**through [the church]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [THE ASSEMBLY, CHURCH]. Instrumental, expressing means. The church is the intermediate agent through which the revelation of God's grace is mediated to the rulers and authorities.

πολυποικιλος adj. "**manifold**" - THE MANY-FACETED, MANY-COLOURED. A poetic sense is possible, "variegated, an intricately embroided pattern of many hues; "richly diversified wisdom", O'Brien, possibly "multi-layered".

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [WISDOM] OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "God's wisdom", O'Brien, or descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*which is from*."

γνωρισθῇ [γρωριζω] aor. pas. subj. "**should be made known**" - MIGHT BE MADE KNOWN. This word is never well rendered in English because knowledge for us is intellectual, whereas intellectual assent is not the *knowing* referred to here. The spiritual powers are not being given interesting information, but rather life-changing revelation. This is the kind of knowing realized in marriage. God's intention is that His gracious action-plan for humanity, contained in the gospel (the "mystery" - "the manifold wisdom of God") and evidenced in the creation of a church consisting of both Jew and Gentile believers, should engage with the "rulers and authorities ....." The evidential reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in the Christian fellowship, is the starting point for God's gracious plan of reconciliation through Christ, a reconciliation that effects both on earth and in heaven (the spiritual realm, not God's dwelling place). The church serves to display to the rulers and authorities the knowledge that "through faith in Christ we may approach God with freedom and confidence", v12.

ταις αρχαις [α] dat. "**to the rulers**" - TO THE PRINCIPALITIES [AND THE POWERS]. Dative of indirect object. The words can refer to secular authorities, but here probably spiritual forces in "heavenly places." In 6.12 they are not flesh and blood, but are spiritual (forces / hosts?). It is not overly clear whether they a good or evil. The implication seems to be that they are both, "the principalities and powers are neither wholly good, nor wholly bad", Caird / "the whole host of heavenly beings, good and bad alike", O'Brien, or in more general terms, "angelic rulers", Hoehner. One wonders why God wishes to display reconciliation at work in the church to these spiritual beings. It seems that reconciliation in the church, the one new man, through Christ, is but a foretaste of cosmic reconciliation. In this our guardian angels rejoice, while Satan and his minions tremble, and work even harder to destroy the apple of God's eye.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE HEAVENLIES]. The εν is local, expressing space / sphere. As already indicated, "the heavenly places" is not referring to God's place of residence, but rather the spiritual domain. The location of this domain depends on one's cosmology, eg., between earth and heaven, in the waters surrounding the earth and sky, the lower reaches of heaven, etc.... Caird's definition is worth considering: "the spiritual environment in which unseen forces compete for man's allegiance." The fourth dimension???

v11

This verse explains God's sovereign intent in the process of reconciliation, achieved through Christ.

κατα + acc. "**according to**" - Expressing a standard, "in accordance with."

των αιωνων [ων ωνος] gen. "**eternal [purpose]**" - [*the* = *his* PLAN] OF THE AGES. The genitive is probably adjectival, attributive, as NIV, "eternal plan", or possibly subjective, "the purpose that runs through the ages", Abbott, or it may even be objective, "the purpose about / concerning the ages", or it may even be adverbial as in Romans 8:28. If the latter, "in accordance with" may dictate its meaning here, although as a descriptive genitive, v11 and 12 then serve to further exegete what is revealed. The plural "ages" = eternal. "The purpose of the ages", RV. "According to the eternal purpose" , Mitton / Bruce.

εποιησεν [ποιεω] aor. "**he accomplished**" - [WHICH] HE MADE, DID. Possibly "make a plan", Calvin, although better "accomplish a plan", as NIV. "God's making known his many-splendid wisdom through the church to the authorities in the heavenly realms was his intent from all eternity, and he has now accomplished this in Christ Jesus", O'Brien.

εν + dat. "**in]**" - IN [CHRIST JESUS]. Local, identifying the sphere in which God's purposes were accomplished.

τῳ κυριῳ dat. "**Lord**" - THE LORD [OF US]. Dative in apposition to "Christ Jesus."

v12

Paul further explains the content of the "manifold wisdom." God's purposes are accomplished through Christ's faithfulness ("faithfulness of him" rather than "faith in him") which believers appropriate in union with him.

εν + dat. "**in [him]**" - IN [WHOM]. Local, expressing the sphere of our identification with Christ in his accomplishment of the divine purpose.

δια + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF. Instrumental, expressing means.

αυτου gen. pro. "**[faith] in him**" - [FAITH] OF HIM. Usually regarded as an objective genitive, as NIV, where the faith does not belong to "him", the subject, namely Christ, but to the one who believes and who places their faith "in Christ". Far too many adjectival genitives are classified as verbal, objective, and this is a classic example. Those commentators who question an objective classification, opt for subjective, so Best, Barth, O'Brien, but surely it is simply possessive. God's purposes are accomplished through / by means of the faithfulness of Christ which believers appropriate εν ᾧ, "in him." See Excursus: *Faith of Christ*.

παρρησιαν [α] "**freedom**" - [WE HAVE] BOLDNESS, CONFIDENCE, FREEDOM, PLAINNESS OF SPEECH. In Greek society the word was used of the right and freedom of a person to speak openly and plainly in a democratic society. Probably here of the right of a person, through Christ, to approach God.

εν + dat. "**-**" - [AND ACCESS] IN [CONFIDENCE]. The preposition is being used adverbially, expressing manner, "with confidence." The word is only used 6 times in the NT. "In complete confidence", NJB.

v13

iv] Paul's sufferings, due to his stewardship of the mystery, are not a source of discouragement, and this because of the outcome, v13. Here Paul asks the Ephesians not to lose heart due to his afflictions / his imprisonment.

διο "**therefore**" - THEREFORE [I ASK *you*]. Inferential, drawing a logical conclusion. Introducing the apodosis of the conditional clause which began in v2.

μη εγκακειν [εγκακεω] pres. inf. "**not to be discouraged**" - NOT TO BE A COWARD, TO BE DISCOURAGED, LOSE HEART. The infinitive serves to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Paul asks. Paul's readers should not be discouraged by Paul's sufferings, for his work in the gospel is to their gain and glory. There is a sense where suffering prepares us for our reign with Christ, 2Cor.4:17. Paul notes in Colossians 1:24-25, that the suffering

of one member of the body of Christ is shared by all. So, as he suffers from his house arrest in Rome, there is glory to be found in it for Paul and therefore, glory for all his brothers and sisters in the Lord.

εν + dat. "**because of**" - IN. Here functioning adverbially: attendant circumstance; or manner; or as NIV, causal, "on account of / because of", so O'Brien, Lincoln; or instrumental, "by means of", "so then, it is my prayer that you will not be discouraged by the troubles I am going through", Barclay.

μου gen. pro. "**my [sufferings]**" - [THE SUFFERINGS, AFFLICTIONS] OF ME. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, in that the suffering is his, he possesses the experience, but often viewed as verbal, objective, "I suffer [something]", Merkle.

ὑπερ + gen. "**for**" - FOR [YOU]. Expressing advantage; "for the sake of, for the benefit of."

ἥτις pro. "**which**" - Although an indefinite relative pronoun, it is actually referring to something that is definite, namely Paul's tribulations, and it takes the number of its predicate, namely singular, rather than its antecedent, which is plural, namely tribulations, not tribulation. Hoehner views it is taking a causal sense; "the reason that they should not lose heart due to his sufferings was because it was their glory."

δοξα [α] "**glory**" - [IS] GLORY [OF YOU]. Predicate nominative of the verb to-be. "Glory" here, not in the sense of "prestige = benefit", but in the sense of last-days-glory / eschatological glory. Suffering is a prelude to glory, and Paul "views himself as contributing to the completion of the messianic woes prior to the consummation in glory", O'Brien.

3:14-21

3. Paul's part in the mystery - making all one in Christ, 3:1-21

ii] Paul's prayer - one in love

Argument

In writing this letter, Paul has already prayed for the Ephesian believers, but now, having completed his argument proper, he returns again to prayer. Paul has explained something of God's plan for cosmic reconciliation in the church through the redemption wrought by Christ, and now he prays that the Ephesian believers, this people who are one in Christ, Jew and Gentile, may grow together in love such that "the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms", v10.

Issues

i] Context: See 3:1-13. As already indicated, the structure of Ephesians is not overly clear. Some commentators argue that the first three chapters is a prayer for the Ephesians, interrupted by a number of asides. This seems unlikely, but none-the-less, what we have in this passage is Paul's fourth major prayer point. In praying that the spiritual life of the Ephesians might be enriched, Paul prayed that they might be grounded on the hope of their calling, that they might understand the wealth of God's glorious inheritance that is theirs in Christ, and that they might experience the greatness of God's power that is now theirs through the indwelling Christ. Now, in this fourth point, Paul prays that "the Ephesians might know Christ's strengthened love which surpasses all knowledge", Hoehner.

It is probably better to argue that Paul surrounds his argument proper with prayer. Given the central issue of this letter, namely, the unity of Jew and Gentile realized through the mystery / gospel, "Christ in us." Paul now prays for love, the divine glue that will unite the two into one.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *A prayer for the Ephesian believers*:
Opening address to God as Father, 14-15;
Paul's prayer for love, v16-19;
Doxology, v20-21.

iv] Interpretation:

Paul's prayer is all about love, and he comes at his subject with a whole range of descriptive phrases. So, what presents as three separate prayer

points is actually one prayer point, namely, that his readers may be filled with the love of God in Christ. Paul prays that the Spirit may strengthen their inner being; that Christ may dwell in their hearts; that they may be filled with all the fullness of God. Paul wants his readers bound together with all God's people in the love of Christ.

The word "love" itself is a woolly idea in its usage today. A word like "charity" from the AV would help if it wasn't for the fact that the word "charity" today means little more than superficial kindness. We are talking about compassion, and when it comes to divine compassion, we are looking at mercy, forgiveness, or better, that all-encompassing word "grace". It is that aspect of love which makes for oneness in the assembly of believers, the church. Love is acceptance of the unacceptable, the outsider, the awkward, the fallen, the failed, the foolish, ...; love is grace in action.

Note that the Greek in v15-19 forms one sentence. The "for this reason", v14, picks up on v1 where Paul was about to pray, but then spoke of his ministry with respect to the mystery. In v14 he begins the prayer again, addressing God as Father.

v] Homiletics: *Knowing God's love*

In the early1700's, John Wesley, an Anglican clergyman, met a Moravian believer from Europe. The Moravians were fired-up children of the Reformation. They were noted for their simple faith and communal life-style. The English church had slipped into Low-church formalism. Wesley was someone searching for substance in his faith, but following the tendency of his day, he saw his Christian life in the terms of a "continued endeavour to keep the whole law, inward and outward, to the utmost of my power". Only by this means was Wesley persuaded that he "should be accepted of" God. Bohler, the Moravian, understood the Christian life "as reliance on the finished work of Christ". Faith for him was still in the terms of the Anglican Homily from the time of the Reformation - "a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven and he reconciled to the favour of God." Bohler, writing to Count Zinzendorf, said "our way of believing is so easy to an Englishmen, that they cannot

reconcile themselves to it. If it were a little more artful, they would sooner find their way into it."

Wesley's meeting with Bohler opened him to the gospel. On attending a prayer meeting in 1738 and hearing a reading of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, he came to understand the grace of God. "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation." From Wesley's discovery of the depth of God's grace, a great revival swept England, a revival focused on the impossible possibility of a personal relationship with the living God in Christ, apart from our own personal worthiness, or unworthiness. It was a revival focused on the truth presented in our reading today - that Christ takes residence in our beings and overwhelms us with his love, by grace through faith.

In our reading today, Paul prays that we might be strengthened in our inner being throughout the journey of life and that we might come to know the extent of God's love, of his grace realized in us through Christ. He prays that we might be complete in Christ's love. Let us not fail to pray for God's amazing grace, for that love that transcends all knowledge.

3:14

A prayer for love: i] Address to God, v14-15. The prayer is directed to God the Father, the Father of all families, both in heaven and earth. It seems likely that the image of family is being used of the fellowship of believers, the union of Jew and Gentile reconciled in Christ under God the Father. The church, formed from disparate segments of a diverse humanity, is a family united by God's reconciling love. This family, the church, the local gathering of believers, will be the instrument through which the divine plan is realized for the reconciliation of all things, not just on earth, but in the heavenlies, the spiritual realm of the "rulers and authorities", cf., 3:10.

χαριν + gen. "**for [this] reason**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF [THIS]. Expressing reason, cf. v1.

καμπτω pres. "**I kneel**" - I BEND [THE KNEES OF ME]. The Jewish posture in prayer is to stand with head bowed, but here a deeper devotion is expressed by a prostrated stance. "I offer up prayer for you to the Father."

προς + acc. "**before**" - Spatial. Possibly expressing direction, so "toward", but better relationship, "before".

τον πατρα [ηρ ρος] "**the Father**" - Variant text has "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" formed by a series of relational genitives.

v15

God's fatherhood is emphasized by noting that fatherhood takes its shape from the fatherhood of God. God is the archetypal father.

εξ + gen. "**from**" - FROM, OUT OF [WHOM]. Expressing source / origin, the antecedent being "the Father." "God the Father is the one who creates (3:5) and thus names every family in heaven and on earth. He is the God who is alive and acting in the present time", Hoehner.

πασα πατρια "**the whole family of believers**" - EVERY FAMILY. The word "family" refers to any group with a single ancestor. The NIV is obviously taking the phrase to refer to the church as God's family, but the Greek is "every family." Paul is referring to groups of heavenly groups (eg., angels), and earthly groups (racial or tribal groupings, even different species). "From whom every family in heaven and earth takes its name", NEB.

εν .... επι "**in .... on**" - IN [HEAVENS AND] UPON [EARTH]. Both prepositions are local, expressing space.

ονομαζεται [ονομαζω] pres. pas. "**derives its name**" - IS NAMED. Of giving a name to a thing or person, and where named, ascribe rights and authority belonging to that which is named. Naming is not just labelling. God, as the sovereign creator, gives each group its "name" and therefore confers the rights associated with that group. "Receives its name", BDAG.

v16

ii] The prayer request - that love may prevail within the Christian fellowship, v16-19. If the church is to serve as an instrument of God's plan to reconcile all things in heaven and earth, then it must know (not intellectually know but assimilate, become one with) the love of Christ. What we have in this passage is a prayer for love expressed in a number of different ways. Paul prays that his readers may be strengthened with power by the holy Spirit, or put another way, that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith. Without the rest of the passage, we would be struggling to understand what this actually means, but given what follows, it is clear that Paul is praying that they may know / assimilate the love of Christ. He prays that his readers be rooted and grounded in love, that they grasp the fullness of love, that they know / assimilate love, or put another way, that they "may be filled to the measure of the fullness of God" - let there be love!

"**I pray**" - Added for meaning.

ἱνα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [HE MAY GIVE TO YOU]. Introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of the prayer.

κατα + acc. "**out of**" - ACCORDING TO. Here expressing a standard; "according to the riches / wealth of his glory." "Glory" in the sense of the essence of God's being.

της δοξης [α] gen. "**glorious [riches]**" - [RICHES] OF THE GLORY [OF HIM]. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "riches", as NIV, or attributed, "rich glory."

δῳ [διδωμι] aor. subj./opt. "-" - HE MAY GIVE. Most likely the subjunctive is original, but the variant optative δῳη has some support. "I pray that .... he may grant", NRSV.

δυναμει [ις εως] dat. "**with power**" - [TO BE STRENGTHENED] IN / BY / WITH POWER. The dative is possibly instrumental, "by power", or better adverbial of manner, "with power", as NIV.

κραταιωθηναι [κραταιοω] aor. pas. inf. "**he may strengthen you**" - TO BE FORTIFIED, STRENGTHENED, BRACED, EMPOWERED. The infinitive is possibly complementary, completing the sense of "may give", "may give to become empowered." On the other hand, the infinitive may form an object clause / dependent statement; "I pray that ..... he may grant that you may be strengthened ..... with power", NRSV. It may also be categorized as an epexegetical infinitive, so Robertson. Given the context, this empowering from God is a strengthening to stand firm in the face of suffering, 3:13. "To be strengthened by His Spirit with power permeating your inmost being", Weymouth.

δια + gen. "**through [his Spirit]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [THE SPIRIT OF HIM]. Expressing agency. "Strengthened with God's power to act", Hoehner.

εις + acc. "**in**" - IN. Local, space / sphere; rendered "in" usually means "into, to", but sometimes takes the sense "in", a local sense rather than movement toward. Possibly here adverbial, expressing reference / respect; "with regard to your inner self", NJB. Most likely used here as if εν, "in", local, space, metaphorical.

ἔσω adv. "**[your] inner [being]**" - [THE] INNER [MAN]. The meaning of this phrase is probably the same as "heart" (our conscious centre) in v17, a person's innermost being. It is the "centre of one's personality, the thoughts, will, emotions and whatever else lies at the centre of our being", O'Brien.

v17

Paul now restates himself, but in different words, namely, that the indwelling Christ, through faith, may strengthen his people, enabling them to stand firm in difficult times, that they be rooted and grounded in God's love in Christ.

κατοικησαι [κατοικεω] aor. inf. "**so that [Christ] may dwell**" - THAT [CHRIST] MIGHT DWELL. This second infinitival clause is a restatement of the prayer request v16, not an explanation of "strengthening", and therefore the NIV's purpose / result clause "so that" is misleading. The infinitive introduces a dependent statement; "and that Christ may dwell in your hearts", NRSV. Paul

prays that the Father "may grant you inward strength and power through his Spirit, that through faith Christ may dwell in your hearts in love", REB.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE HEARTS OF YOU]. Local, expressing sphere - incorporative union. Christ is known to us in the all-encompassing word "love". He is the compassionate one - the self-giving, other person centred, caring one. "Christ relates to us (dwells in our heart) in love."

δια + gen. "**through**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [FAITH]. Instrumental, expressing means. Presumably out trust / reliance, but possibly Christ's faithfulness - always tricky!

ερριζωμενοι και τεθεμελιωμενοι perf. pas. part. "***and I pray that you* being rooted and established [in love]**" - HAVING BEEN ROOTED AND HAVING BEEN FOUNDED [IN LOVE]. This phrase is often understood as a second prayer request, the two participles being taken as forming a dependent statement of perception, expressing a wish, cf., Bruce. It is even possible, although unlikely, that they are imperatival, "be rooted and grounded in love", so Barth. Yet, it is probably better to understand the phrase "[you], being rooted and established in love", as establishing the basis of the first prayer point, or even better, summarizing the prayer, and so serving as a lead into the further expansion of the prayer for love. As such, the participles are adjectival, "[you] who are rooted and grounded in love." The participial phrase would then sit with the following *hina* clause, further expanding the prayer point; "[I pray] that you, who have been rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to grasp ..."

v18

Paul wants his readers to grasp the totality of this love, a wisdom beyond knowing; "it is higher than heaven, what can you do? Deeper than Sheol, what can you know? Its measure is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea", Job.11:8-9.

ἱνα + subj. "-" - THAT [YOU MAY HAVE POWER, BE STRONG ENOUGH, BE ABLE]. Introducing a dependent statement / epexegetic, expressing / specifying the content of the restated prayer point. Many commentators suggest it is a second prayer point, but it is better viewed as a restatement / clarification of the first ἱνα, "I pray that .....", v16. The need for "[divine] power" indicates the difficulty of achieving what follows.

καταλαβεσθαι [καταλαμβανω] mid. inf. "**to grasp**" - TO GRASP, FIND, UNDERSTAND (in the middle voice). The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "may be able". To understand what? Whatever it is, "all the saints" know it, and we are to grasp how wide, long, etc. it is. O'Brien lists the following suggestions from the main commentators:

- the mighty power of God;

- the mystery of salvation;
- the manifold wisdom of God;
- the matchless love of Christ.

O'Brien suggests it is "Christ's all-encompassing love", "the love of Christ", Hoehner, and given the context, this does seem the best solution. The NIV (following Phillips?) adds the words "is the love of Christ", and although not in the Greek, and certainly something more than a dynamic equivalent, the phrase is a reasonable stab at the meaning.

συν + dat. "**with**" - TOGETHER WITH [ALL THE SAINTS]. Expressing association. "Saints" probably means "Jewish believers."

τί pro. "**what**" - WHAT [*is* THE BREADTH AND LENGTH AND HEIGHT AND DEPTH *of God's love in Christ*]. Interrogative pronoun / indirect question. The figurative construction terms may serve to image the wisdom of God, or the power of God, but most likely the love of God, so O'Brien, Lincoln, Hoehner, ...

v19

This love is "the love of Christ," Christ's love, a love full of grace. Such love can be observed in Christ's sacrifice for us, Gal.2:20, a love of "surpassing worth", Phil.3:8.

τε "-" - This conjunction indicates a strong connection between this clause and the one preceding, nearly explanatory; "What I am praying for you is this, that you may soak up the love of God in Christ, be filled with the fullness of God."

γνωναι [γινωσκω] inf. "**to know**" - TO KNOW. "May be able / have power .... to know", ie., the infinitive is again complementary, as with καταλαβεσθαι, "to grasp", v18, completing the verb "may have power" v18." The phrase "to know this (the) love of Christ that surpasses knowledge" serves to further develop the idea of divine love which Paul's readers must "grasp" (understand). This is assuming that it is "love" that we must "grasp".

του Χριστου [ος] gen. "**love of Christ**" - [THE LOVE] OF CHRIST. The ever-present problem we face with the objective, or subjective, genitives, again greets us in this verse. It is obviously not objective, our love for Christ, but it may be subjective, or probably better, adjectival, possessive, "Christ's love".

την υπερβαλλουσαν [υπερβαλλω] pres. part. "**that surpasses**" - THE EXCELLING, SURPASSING [KNOWLEDGE]. The participle, with the comparative genitive "of knowledge", is adjectival, attributive, limiting "love". For the love that surpasses it is easy to think in terms of a mystical presence of Christ within, but we are probably safer to think in terms of God's grace in Christ for lost humanity. Of course, a personal awareness of God's grace does transcend our knowledge of systematic theology.

ἱνα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [YOU MAY BE FILLED]. Probably introducing another dependent statement, "I pray that .....", ie., the last prayer point, or better, the final restatement of Paul's prayer. Possibly introducing a purpose / result clause "so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God", NRSV, so Hoehner. In Colossians, Paul states that believers are already full, full in their incorporation in Christ, cf., 1:19, 2:9, 10. The New Testament always carries the tension of our being perfect in Christ, along with our need to strive toward perfection. So here, Paul prays that his readers may be filled "to the measure of all the fullness of God", NIV, or better, "filled with all God's fullness", Wallace. O'Brien suggests Paul is praying that his readers may "be all that God wants them to be", ie., "spiritually mature." Yet, in the end, it is likely that this is just another way of experiencing the love of God in Christ.

εις + acc. "**with**" - TO, INTO. Expressing the goal of the prayer point; "toward the fullness of God."

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [ALL THE FULLNESS] OF GOD. Usually read as a subjective genitive, ie., "the fullness that God provides." Yet, objective is possible, "the fullness that fills God", although better, adjectival, possessive, "the fullness that belongs to God" = God's love / grace???

v20

iii] Concluding praise, doxology, v20-21. The prayer ends with a doxology to the God who can do far more than we could ever dare to ask, or think. To God be glory, particularly in the church, and in Christ who made the church possible. As Caird notes, this doxology "differs from all other doxologies, in setting the church alongside Christ as the agent through which the glory of God is to be displayed and acknowledged."

δε "**now**" - BUT/AND. Transitional connective, indicating the next step in the argument / paragraph marker, as NIV.

τῳ δυναμενῳ [δυναμαι] dat. pres. pas. part. "**to him who is able**" - TO THE ONE BEING ABLE. The participle functions as a substantive, dative of ascription / possession, while the antecedent is presumably "God". "Now to him who by the action of his power is able to do all", Moffatt.

ποιησαι [ποιεω] aor. inf. "**to do**" - TO DO. Complementary infinitive, completing the sense of the participle "being able."

ὑπερ adv. "-" - BEYOND [ALL THINGS]. Comparative adverb; introducing an adverbial phrase modifying the verbal aspect of the participial phrase "being able to do"; "beyond all measure", Zerwick.

ὑπερεκπερισσου adv. "**immeasurably more**" - SUPERABUNDANTLY, EXCEEDING ALL BOUNDARIES, FAR BEYOND. Comparative adverb; the prefixes ὑπερ and εκ intensifies. The doxology is a short praise to the God who is not only

able to do as Paul has prayed, but will do it, and do it superabundantly. The doxology expresses Paul's reliance on God's intention to always do as he has promised. "Is able to do so much more", TEV.

ὧν gen. pro. "**[than] all**" - WHICH [WE ASK OR THINK]. The pronoun is genitive by attraction to its assumed antecedent, a genitive of comparison, τουτων, "*than the things* which we ask or think", cf., Larkin.

κατα + acc. "**according to**" - ACCORDING TO [THE POWER]. Expressing a standard; "in accordance with, corresponding to."

την ενεργουμενην [ενεργεω] pres. part. "**that is at work**" - THE THING / ONE WORKING. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting "the power", "which is at work in us." Taken as a middle voice so reflecting the work of the Holy Spirit within / in relation to a believer, cf., v16.

εν + dat. "**within [us]**" - IN [US]. Local, space; with the sense "in our hearts", cf. v16-17.

v21

αυτῳ dat. pro. "**to him *be***" - TO HIM. Dative of ascription / possessive; an optative or subjunctive verb to-be is assumed; "*may / let* glory *be* to him"

η δοξα [α] "**glory**" - Used here in the sense of praise offered to God by a worshipping community.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE CHURCH AND] IN [CHRIST JESUS], The sense is a little difficult to grasp and this is caused by the meaning of the preposition "in, within, by." The NIV opts for a local sense, "in", but an instrumental sense is possible, "by". It is even possible that it takes separate meanings in each phrase, "glory in the church (the assembly of worshipping believers), through our union with Christ Jesus", TNT, although either a local sense for both, or instrumental sense for both seems best. Note that the linking conjunction και is missing in some manuscripts, but this is possibly a consequence of the order being questioned, ie., "in the church" being placed before "in Christ Jesus". If the conjunction is dropped, the order can be read "in Christ Jesus in the church". The point though is clear enough: "God is to be glorified in (by??) the church because his power and splendour are displayed there and he is glorified in (by??) Christ Jesus because Christ's work, which pleased the Father, made the church possible", Hoehner.

εις "**throughout**" - TO, INTO. Spatial, expressing direction of action / arrival at, but possibly temporal

τας γενεας "**generations**" - Presumably human generations, ongoing human existence which is ultimately subsumed into eternity.

του αιωνος των αιωνων gen. "**for ever and ever**" - OF THE AGE OF THE AGES. The intent of the genitive is unclear. Larkin suggests that the first could

be partitive and the second epexegetic; "for all the generations of the age, that is, the ages", but supports Best in it being an idiomatic way to express "eternity".

4:1-16

4. The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9

i] Mutual ministries

Argument

The introduction to this passage, "I urge you to walk worthily of your calling", heralds a move from theology to ethics - from what we are in Christ, to the business of being what we are in Christ, namely, living a life worthy of our calling. In the passage before us, Paul deals with the substantial issue of how the diverse Spirit-empowered ministries promote unity in Christ. The Ephesian believers must strive to build community in their church through love, through respect and forgiveness of each other in their life together, v1-3. Unity is the very nature of church, v4-6, but unity is not conformity, given the diversity and variety of spiritual gifts which have been bestowed on the church by Christ through the Spirit, v7-10. Of this diversity of gifts, the word gifts take precedence because they serve to build knowledge and thus maturity in the Christian life, v11-13. Given that error is all around, God's revealed truth is the most important tool we possess for building a church community, v14-16.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-2. In deliberative rhetoric, having laid out his argument, the *probatio*, a speaker will often develop some of the points of his argument in a *digressio*. In his letters / sermons, Paul tends to follow up his argument with ethics - doctrine followed by duty. In Ephesians, practical instruction and exhortation (*paraenesis*) further develops the issues raised in the first three chapters. In chapters 1-3 we have one imperative, but in chapters 4-6 we have 40 imperatives. There is little in the way of exhortation in the first three chapters, whereas the next three are dominated by exhortations.

It is possible to divide up Paul's application of his *all one in Christ* theme by his use of the verb περιπατεω, "to walk" = "to conduct oneself." Each use of the word seems to indicate a different aspect of the Christian walk / life, cf., 4:1, 17, 5:2, 8, 15. Hoehner offers the following structure:

Walk in unity, 4:1-16;
Walk in holiness,4:17-32;
Walk in love, 5:1-6;
Walk in light, 5:7-14;
Walk in wisdom, 5:15-6:9.

In the opening three chapters, the Ephesian believers are reminded of their status and their destiny in Christ, reconciled to God and each other, and

reconciling all things, in heaven and on earth. This high calling demands that they live it. The opening passage, 4:1-6, serves as an overview of the more detailed community and household responsibilities which follow in 4:7-6:9 - "I urge you to live a life (walk) worthy of the calling you have received", 4:1. Paul then explains "how diversity may be combined with unity", Best, 4:7-16, before moving into the more practical issues of believers living in community. In 4:17-24 the reader is reminded that through faith in Christ they have put off the old self and put on the new, they have died with Christ and are risen anew with Christ. The reader is then called upon to abandon the corruption of the old life and live out the new, some of the elements of which are described in 4:25-5:2. These elements further developed in 5:3-14, and this with an eye to divine judgment and the need for the church to confront sin within its ranks. The passage that follows, 5:15-20, serves as a bridge to Paul's practical instructions - the Christian walk, of a life lived within these evil days which is supported by corporate Spirit-filled worship in word and song. Practical household matters dealing with marriage, family and business obligations follow in 5:21-6:9.

So, The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9, presents as follows:

Mutual ministries, 4:1-16
Cast off the old and put on the new, 4:17-24
Imitators of Christ, 4:25-5:2
From lust to light, 5:3-14
Living in the light, 5:15-20
Marriage, 5:21-33
Family obligations, 6:1-4
Business obligations, 6:5-9

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *Mutual ministries*:

Unity in the church, v1-6:
A call to maintain unity, v1-3;
The unifying realities for those in Christ, v4-6;
Diversity in unity, v7-16:
Proposition: The diversity of gifts in the church, v7;
Text: Psalm 68:18, v8;
Exposition: v9-10;
The nature and purpose of ministry gifts, v11-16.

iv] Interpretation:

The nature of the church is expressed in its oneness in Christ, under God. Yet, in this unity, there is diversity, particularly noted in the diversity

of ministry gifts. Christ has given a range of spiritual abilities to his people to use in the upbuilding of the church. The "gift" (blend of spiritual abilities) is given to the individual to minister. This ministry is also, in a sense, a gift of Christ to the church. The ministries of the Word (requiring personal gifts of "wisdom", "knowledge"... etc. cf., 1Cor.12:7-11) are listed in order of importance. "Apostles" are listed first. Although the gifted word-ministry of apostle does not exist today, their ministry served to convey God's revelation of the new / renewed covenant, which revelation is recorded for us in the New Testament. The ministry of "prophet" may refer to those who also provided primary revelation now recorded in the New Testament. Yet, it seems more likely that Paul is referring to those who strengthen, encourage and comfort us in the exposition of the Bible within the framework of Biblical theology, cf., 1Cor.14:3. "Pastors and teachers" are most likely one group - those who lead us through instruction of the Scriptures. Fee argues that this list most likely defines function rather than office, although this is disputed by most commentators.

The quotation from Psalm 68:18, v8, and its interpretation, v9-10. This passage has prompted numerous interpretations. The four possible meanings of Christ's descent are:

- to hades, and then to heaven;
- to the earth at the incarnation, and then to heaven;
- to the earth / grave at the crucifixion, and then to heaven;
- up to heaven and then to earth at the descent of the Spirit.

The fourth meaning is to be preferred and is argued by DWB Robinson. Robinson proposes that the quotation was taken at the time to refer to Moses going up Mount Sinai, receiving the law, descending from the mountain, giving the law to the people of Israel gathered below and then leading them to the promised land. So, this depiction of Moses is used to describe Christ's going up to heaven, his ascent on high to the throne of the living God (the ascension), then descending as the Spirit of Christ upon his church to pour out his ministry-gifts upon his people. The order, therefore, is not down and then up, but up, v9, followed by down, v10.

Hoehner opts for the third option, O'Brien, Mitton, Bruce, Schnackenburg, ... opt for the second, "the one who came down is the one who went up victorious", while the first option is supported by a large number of commentators ranging from Aquinas through to Alford, Meyer, Beare, ... These notes, following Robinson, opt for the fourth option: the coming down follows the victorious ascent, and refers to the coming down of the Spirit of Christ at Pentecost.

v] Homiletics: *Mutual Ministry*

In our reading today, the apostle tells us that all believers have spiritual gifts. We all have natural abilities which are energized, empowered, by the Spirit of Christ. Although we are united together in our common relationship with God in Christ, we are all different, in that we all have a different range of abilities. We are all touched differently by the Spirit of God, but touched we are - *touched* in a nice way. And these abilities in each one of us can be welded together into a gift of ministry - a capacity to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Paul is particularly focused on Word-ministries, but there are many others: prayer, encouragement, generosity, faith, kindliness, hospitality, welcoming, a practical helping hand..... As each one of us comes to understand our gifts, let us shape them into a ministry, and apply them for building up the brotherhood and reaching out to the lost. It is then that we grow our church, becoming Christ to each other and to the world.

Text - 4:1

Mutual ministry: 4:1-16: i] Believers must strive to maintain the unity they possess in Christ, v1-6. a) An exhortation for unity, v1-3. Paul begins by encouraging his readers to maintain fellowship in their congregation. From his prison (somewhere in Rome between 56-60AD) he urges his readers to live a life worthy of their standing as followers of Christ. He gives practical expression to this exhortation in v2. He calls for humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance and tolerance, cf., Col.3:12-13. So, in v3, Paul encourages his readers to strive to live in unity with one another in the Christian fellowship, and in so doing, maintain the integral union they have with God through the Spirit of Christ.

εγω "-" - [THEREFORE] I [A PRISONER]. Emphatic by use. "Prisoner stands in apposition to "I".

εν + dat. "**for [the Lord]**" - IN [*the* LORD]. Probably expressing space, "in union with / in relationship with", but possibly a dative of interest, as NIV. "Lord" is most likely Jesus. Note 3:1, "prisoner of Christ Jesus."

ουν "**then**" - THEREFORE. Drawing a logical conclusion - on the basis of the theology laid down in the previous chapters, and Paul's standing as an apostle in chains, "I therefore urge you ...." Alford is too specific when he argues that the referent is τουτου χαριν, "because of this ..... I therefore urge you ...", 3:1, 14.

παρακαλω [παρακαλεω] pres. "**I urge you**" - I ENCOURAGE, URGE, EXHORT [YOU]. "I beg you", Phillips.

περιπατησαι [περιπατεω] aor. inf. "**to live a life[worthy of]**" - TO WALK [WORTHILY OF]. The infinitive introduces a dependent statement of indirect speech, exhorting, expressing what Paul urges, "I urge that you live ..." "Walk"

in the sense of conduct one's life. A typical Pauline imperative where indicative balance is maintained - the believer is set apart in Christ and is therefore, as Christ is, but is still encouraged to conduct their life in accord with their standing in Christ.

της κλησεως [ις εως] gen. "**the calling**" - Genitive after the adverb of manner αξιως, "worthily".

ἧς gen. pro. "**[you received]**" - WHICH [YOU WERE CALLED]. Genitive by attraction to της κλησεως - more properly accusative.

v2

"Walking worthily" is explained by three qualities, the first being humility, lowliness; "I urge you to walk worthily ..... with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering." In common use, the word carries the sense of servility, or weakness, but in the Bible it carries the sense of divine recognition and submission. Jesus is the perfect example of a person who is "meek and lowly in heart." The "all" serves to accentuate the quality

μετα + gen. "**[be completely humble]**" - WITH [ALL HUMILITY]. Here the preposition is adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of a believer's walk; "with all humility and gentleness, with patience", ESV.

πραυτητος [ης ητος] "**gentle**" - [AND] MEEKNESS, GENTLENESS. Again, a quality found in Jesus. A gentle attitude toward others which is accepting and non-judging.

μακροθυμιας [α] "**patient**" - [WITH] LONG-SUFFERING. As God is patient with us so we should be patient with others, in the sense of forgiving.

ανεχομενοι [ανεχομαι] pres. part. "**bearing with**" - FORBEARING [ONE ANOTHER]. This participle, along with σπουδαζοντες "being eager", v3, may be adverbial, instrumental, expressing means; "I urge you to walk ..... by forbearing one another." Larkin suggests that it is a periphrastic participle missing the imperative verb to-be. It may well just be attendant on the infinitive "to walk", in which case it serves as an imperative; "I urge you ..... to bear / that you bear with one another in love and be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit." Paul encourages his readers to bear with the faults / sins of their brothers and sisters, "forbear"; "patiently put up with each other", CEV.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [LOVE]. Possibly describing the type of "bearing", a loving bearing, ie., adverbial, modal = manner, but also possibly identifying the ground of "bearing", namely, the divine character of love which is ours in Christ. "Lovingly bear with one another", Barclay.

v3

σπουδαζοντες [σπουδαζω] pres. part. "**make every effort**" - BEING EAGER, ZEALOUS, GIVING DILIGENCE TO, MAKING EVERY EFFORT. The participle as for "forbearing" above, is probably attendant on "to walk"; "I urge you to / that you walk ..... to be / that you be zealous ..." "Yours is the initiative! Do it now!" Barth.

τηρειν [τηρεω] pres. inf. "**to keep**" - TO KEEP, MAINTAIN, PRESERVE. Epexegetic infinitive specifying the participle "being eager", although Larkin suggests that it is complementary, in that it completes the sense of the participle.

του πρευματος [ος] gen. "**of the Spirit**" - [THE ONENESS] OF THE SPIRIT. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / of production, cf., Wallace - in that the Spirit produces the unity. Possibly a genitive of author, so BAGD, or a genitive of originating cause, Ellicott, or a genitive of source, O'Brien. The Spirit establishes the unity in Christ where both Jews and Gentiles are one. It is the responsibility of believers to keep / maintain that unity.

εν "**through**" - IN [THE BOND OF PEACE]. The NIV takes the preposition as instrumental, expressing means, "through"; peace is the means by which the unity is maintained. O'Brien suggests that it is locative; peace is the bond in which (rather than by which) their unity is maintained, ie., expressing space, so also Hoehner. Believers should maintain the unity of the Spirit in that state of peace which exists in the godhead and between the godhead and redeemed humanity. "In the uniting bond of peace, the unity given by the Spirit", Weymouth.

v4

b) The basis for unity, v4-6. The unity / oneness that should exist in the fellowship of believers is now supported by seven descriptives which show the close alignment that believers possess through their relationship with Christ, v4-6. The descriptives serve to establish the basis for unity. Unity is intrinsic for the brotherhood, for we are all members of the same body, having the same Lord, faith, baptism and God.

Note: there is no linking verb or conjunction as we move from exhortations, v1-3, to statements of fact, v4-6; Paul builds on a trinitarian formula; Alignment, rather than unity, is highlighted by the use of "one", ἑἷς, μια, ἓν. Although usually translated "one", it is far better to take the adjective to mean "same"; we are one together as believers because we are all part of the <u>same</u> body, united by the <u>same</u> Spirit etc.....

"***There is***" - The verb is assumed and we may rightly also assume γαρ, "for", introducing a causal clause explaining why we are one people in Christ; "*for we share* the same body and the same Spirit."

ἑν adj. "**one**" - ONE = SAME [BODY AND ONE = SAME SPIRIT]. Nominative subject of an assumed verb to-be. As already indicated, if we understand "one" to mean "same", we can see how these words of Paul back up his exhortation. We all serve the same Lord. We are all saved on the basis of the same faith. We are all filled by the same Spirit. We all worship the same God and Father.

καθως "**just as**" - AS, LIKE, JUST AS [ALSO]. Comparative, as NIV, rather than adverbial, "even as", ASV.

εκληθητε [καλεω] aor. pas. "**you were called**" - YOU WERE CALLED. We share in the same hope that springs from our calling. The clause breaks the sequence of the list of phrases, but still serves to define the unity shared by believers. "Just as you were called."

εν + dat. "**to**" - IN [ONE = SAME HOPE]. Possibly instrumental, "by one hope", but better local, sphere, "in the same hope of your calling."

της κλησεως [ις εως] "**when [you] were called**" - OF THE CALLING [OF YOU]. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / temporal, as NIV, or source, hope springs from / out of our calling. Hoehner, or verbal, subjective, "hope *produced by* your call."

v5

κυριος "**Lord**" - [ONE = SAME] LORD. We all serve the same Lord. The translation "one Lord" has prompted the martyrdom of many!!!!

μια πιστις [ις εως] "**one faith**" - Either, "one faith" means "the same body of belief", or "the same means of salvation", ie., by grace through faith in Christ.

ἑν βαπτισμα [α ατος] "**one baptism**" - The reference to "one baptism" has been used to argue against rebaptism where a person, initially baptized as an infant, is later baptized again as a believing adult. Those who take a *catholic* position (Romans, Anglicans, Lutherans, etc.) argue that it is against scripture to baptize a second time. Those who support believers' baptism claim that baptism as an infant is invalid and therefore, they don't really rebaptize. This problem has grown out of a flawed understanding of ἑῖς, "one = same", and βαπτισμα, "baptism = immersed." We automatically think that βαπτισμα refers to water baptism. If that is the case here, then the focus would not be on the sign, but rather that which the sign signifies, namely "repentance". None-the-less, most references to "baptism / immersed" in the New Testament have to do with "the baptism / washing of the Holy Spirit" - the gift of the Spirit at the time we put our faith in Christ. This is most likely the meaning here. So, the sense is: "the same baptism *of the Spirit*."

v6

παντων "**of all**" - [ONE = SAME GOD AND FATHER] OF ALL. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic, expressing subordination; "over all"; "God and Father over all. He *is* over all ....." Paul concludes his list with an ascription of praise to God for his providence. Yet, is this providence over "all" people (masculine) or over "all" things (neuter)? If "all people", the sense is most likely of God's providential care over all believers, rather than all humanity. The εν, "in all", properly applies to believers and not all humanity; "in union with all believers." We should also note that the New Testament often uses "all" in the sense of "all believers." If "all things", the sense is of God's providential care of the cosmos.

ὁ "**who**" - THE ONE. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the coordinate prepositional construction into a substantive standing in apposition to "the same God the Father."

επι + gen. "**over**" - OVER [ALL]. Expressing influence; God's sovereign authority over all believers.

δια + gen. "**through [all]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [ALL AND IN ALL]. Instrumental, expressing means. God "accomplishes his purposes through the instruments of believers", Hoehner.

v7

ii] Paul now appeals for diversity in unity, and this for maturity, v7-16: a) The giving of gifts of ministry, v7. Paul has made the point that there is an integral unity in the Christian fellowship. This is based on the commonality of our faith - the same God, etc. He now introduces the idea of unity in diversity. The diversity has to do with the diverse gifts of the Spirit.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional connective marking a step in the argument and therefore not translated. Paul now qualifies the unity possessed of believers by identifying the diversity that exists within unity. Unity does not mean uniformity.

εκαστῳ dat. adj. "**to each**" - TO EACH [ONE]. Dative of indirect object / interest, emphatic by position.

ἡμων gen. pro. "**one of us**" - OF US. The genitive is adjectival, partitive, as NIV.

ἡ χαρις [ις εως] "**grace**" - GRACE [WAS GIVEN]. Here χαρις does not mean "unmerited favour", but, given the particularizing article and the context, "gifts" (gifts of ministry) is intended, even though Paul is focused on the provider of the χαρις and his kindness exhibited in the gift. These "gifts" are abilities which are apportioned to each member of the Christian fellowship by Christ to enable each to minister for Christ. They are most likely spiritually accentuated natural

abilities which we all have. Here Paul uses the phrase "to each one of us grace has been given". He has often used the word "grace" to describe the gifts of ministry, particularly for himself. He can never quite get over the free and unmerited favour ("grace") of God toward him in giving him the ministry of apostle to the Gentiles, especially since he once persecuted the church. So, here "grace" takes the particular sense of "gift of ministry."

κατα + acc. "**as**" - ACCORDING TO [THE MEASURE OF THE GIFT]. Expressing a standard.

του Χριστου [ος] gen. "**Christ**" - OF CHRIST. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / source, or verbal, subjective / agent; "the overflowing measure of grace that flows from / is apportioned by Christ."

της δωρεας [α] gen. "**apportioned it**" - [THE MEASURE] OF THE GIFT, BOUNTY. The genitive is adjectival, attributive; "the bountiful measure of Christ."

v8

b) Scriptural support, v8-10. The quotation from Psalm 68:18 was, at the time, understood to refer to Moses going up Mount Sinai, receiving the law, descending the mountain, giving the law to the people of Israel and then leading them to the promised land. Paul now applies this thinking to Jesus. Jesus ascended on high, to the very throne of the living God (his ascension), received glory and power, descended as the Spirit of Christ upon his church, and now pours out his ministry-gifts upon his people.

Sometimes this passage in Ephesians is used to support the idea that Jesus descended into hell after his crucifixion, and then rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. But note the movement. It is not down and then up, rather it is up and then down. The Spirit, who came upon us bearing gifts, is the same one who ascended from earth after his crucifixion. He comes upon us in order that he might "fill the whole earth" - pervade the whole universe with his presence. See extended note above.

διο λεγει [λεγω] "**this is why it says**" - THEREFORE IT SAYS. Serving to introduce a quote from scripture. The inferential διο, "therefore", serves to indicate that the point just made can be deduced from this scripture. Note that the sense "gifts of ministry" for "grace" is confirmed by this quote from Psalm 68:18.

αναβας [αναβαινω] aor. part. "**when he ascended**" - HAVING ASCENDED, GONE UP [TO HEIGHT]. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, as NIV.

ᾐχμαλωτευσεν [αιχμαλωτευω] - aor. "**he led captive**" - HE CARRIED OFF [CAPTIVITY]. The quote concerns the Lord's triumphant ascent of Mount Zion as the victorious king and was later interpreted in terms of Moses ascending Mount Sinai, receiving the law and coming down the mountain to give the law to the

gathered people. The image is therefore of Christ's victory over sin and death, although if we take G.V. Smith's line (below), the captives are believers.

εδωκεν δοματα "**gave gifts**" - HE GAVE GIFTS. These words carry the weight of the quote in that the victorious king gives gifts to his people, namely, gifts of ministry. The problem is that both the Hebrew and Greek texts have "[you] received gifts" rather than "gave gifts". G.V. Smith suggests that Paul has in mind God's action of taking and receiving the Levites as a gift, then giving them back to his people in order to minister to the congregation. If Smith is correct, Paul expounds the verse in terms of captive believers ascending with Christ and then being given back to the church to minister (a bit left-field!).

τοις ανθρωποις [ος] "**to men**" - Dative of indirect object / interest, advantage.

v9

c) Exposition of the quote, v9-10.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional connective, indicating a move to the exposition; "now".

το "-" - THE. The article serves as a nominalizer, introducing an element from the text to be studied; "as to the meaning of the *element from the text stating* 'he ascended'." In referencing the text, the whole text may be intended, but it is more likely just the verb "he ascended", so O'Brien.

τί εστιν [ειμι] "**what does [he ascended] mean**" - WHAT IS [THE GOING UP, ASCENDING]? "now, as to the meaning of this quote / what is the meaning of 'he ascended'?"

ει μη ὁτι και "**except that [he] also**" - IF NOT = EXCEPT THAT ALSO [HE DESCENDED]. The ει μη introduces an exceptive clause which establishes a contrast by designating an exception - the και is adjunctive, "also". The conjunction ὁτι, "that", is epexegetic, specifying the content of the exception, namely that the one who ascended obviously also descended. "The fact that he ascended can't mean anything else except that he also obviously descended"; not previously descended, but subsequently descended.

της γης [η] gen. "**[the lower] earthly [regions]**" - [INTO THE LOWER PARTS] OF THE EARTH. The genitive is adjectival, partitive, although often taken as comparative, "into the parts lower than the earth", ie., ref., Jesus' descent into Hades, an ancient error which still lives with us today, cf., 1Pet.3:18. See "Interpretation" above.

v10

ὁ καταβας [καταβαινω] aor. part. "**he who descended [is the very one]**" - THE ONE HAVING DESCENDED [THIS ONE IS ALSO THE ONE HAVING ASCENDED]. The participle serves as a substantive.

ὑπερανω + gen. "**higher than**" - FAR ABOVE [ALL THE HEAVENS]. Locative.

ἱνα + subj. "**in order to**" - THAT. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose.

πληρωσῃ [πληροω] aor. subj. "**fill [the whole universe]**" - HE MIGHT FILL [ALL THINGS]. Referring to Christ's rule over all things through the Spirit, cf. Jer.23:24.

v11

d) The distribution of the gifts of the Spirit, v11-16. Still with the idea of Moses bearing the Word of God to the gathered people at Mount Sinai, Paul lists the gifts of ministries which make known the Word of God: apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers.

και "**so**" - Sometimes the connective, και takes an explanatory sense "that is", so a continuation of the explanation of the quote from the Psalms, so Merkle.

αυτος εδωκεν [διδωμι] aor. "**it was he who gave / Christ himself gave**" - HE GAVE. The αυτος, "he / Christ", is emphatic by position. "Gave" in the sense of "gifted."

μεν .... δε "-" - Here as a coordinate construction, rather than an adversative comparative construction; "on the one hand ..... and on the other ....."

τους "**some to be [apostles] / the [apostles]**" - APOSTLES [AND THE PROPHETS]. The article may be taken as definite, as NIV11, or a substantive, taken with the noun as a predicate, "he gave some to be apostles", as NIV.

και "**and**" AND [THE EVANGELISTS] AND [THE PASTORS] AND [TEACHERS]. Coordinate, although some argue that with "teachers" it is epexegetic; "pastors, that is, teachers." Note that "teachers" is anarthrous, possibly indicating a dual function; "pastor-teachers,"

v12

The purpose of the Word ministries, v12-13: Ministries of the Word prepare and train God's people for service within the church, and in so doing, strengthen the fellowship, such that the individual members are shaped into the image of Christ.

προς ..... εις ..... εις "**to ..... for ..... so that .....**" - TOWARD ... TO/INTO ..... TO/INTO ..... Note that there are two ways of understanding how the three prepositions in this verse work grammatically:

- The first phrase expresses the reason Christ "gave" the gifts of ministry, the second is subordinate to the first and the third sums up the two. The change in the preposition is the main support for this argument;
- The three phrases are equally dependent on Christ's gift of ministries. The argument is that the two different prepositions used in the Greek have

much the same meaning, either "to" or "for", and are not being used differently.

The second option seems best, ie., all three express purpose / goal. "Christ gives the gifts of ministry, for the equipping of believers, for mutual ministry, and for the building up of the fellowship of believers."

τον καταρτισμον [ος] "**[to] prepare / equip**" - [TOWARD] THE PERFECTING, EQUIPPING, QUALIFYING [OF THE SAINTS] "For the equipment of the saints", των ἁγιων, "of the saints" (objective genitive, Hoehner??), here probably in a more general sense, "to equip God's people", rather than "the saints", meaning Jewish believers. All ministries exercised in the church, contribute toward the wholeness of the group - the Christ-likeness of the group. When the church is working well, with members exercising their gifts, it is then that mutual ministry serves to release, encourage, build up, strengthen each individual member. Each intern adds to the fellowship and the upbuilding of the whole. In this way, the church becomes Christ to the individual member. The church, as the "body of Christ", becomes Christ ministering to us, constantly shaping us into his image.

διακονιας [α] gen. "**[works] of service**" - [TO THE WORK] OF MINISTRY. The genitive is adjectival, limiting (by definition / epexegetic) works, works which are of the service kind.

του σωματος [α ατος] gen. "**the body [of Christ may be built up]**" - [TO BUILDING UP] OF THE BODY [OF CHRIST]. The body obviously belongs to Christ, a possessive genitive, while the building-up concerns / is toward the body, an objective genitive; "building and strengthening the congregation, fitting those chosen to serve, for their task of serving and grooming still others for the work of bringing maturity to the congregation", Junkins.

v13

μεχρι + subj. "**until**" - This conjunction followed by a subjunctive forms an indefinite temporal clause, time up to, indicating the end purpose of the gift of ministries - the bestowal of ministries will continue <u>until</u> we attain to ..... .

καταντησωμεν [κατανταω] aor. subj. "**we [all] reach [unity]**" - WE [ALL] ATTAIN, REACH THE GOAL, ARRIVE. Believers are to minister until "we all" reach / attain / arrive at the goal.

εις "-" - TO, INTO. The preposition here expresses goal / purpose, rather than direction, or arrival at, such that each of the three phrases it introduces in this verse explains the goal of the equipping, v12, namely unity of faith / full knowledge, maturity and fullness.

την ενοτητα [ης ητος] "**unity**" - THE UNITY. First, the quipping to build up the body of Christ has as its purpose the preservation / creation of a unity of theological truth. Faith and knowledge are being used here as synonyms.

της πιστεως [ις εως] gen. "**in the faith**" - OF THE FAITH. As is so often the case, the genitive is problematic. As noted above, "the faith" is used, not of the act of believing, or of faithfulness, but of what is believed. Hoehner thinks the genitive is objective, a unity about / concerning the faith, a "unity in the faith", Best; "God's people are moving toward the goal of appropriating all that is included in the one faith", O'Brien. Larkin thinks it is a genitive of reference. He discounts a genitive of source / origin, although a unity that comes out of a knowledge of the faith is not an unreasonable way of understanding Paul's intended sense.

της επιγνωσεως [ις εως] "**in the knowledge**" - [AND] THE KNOWLEDGE. Genitive, standing in apposition to "faith".

του υἱου [ος] gen. "**of the Son**" - OF THE SON [OF GOD]. The genitive "of God" is adjectival, possessive / relational, but the genitive "of the Son" is less clear, although most opt for an objective genitive such that the object of the knowledge is the Son of God. It is also possible to classify the genitive as adjectival, epexegetic, limiting the knowledge by defining its central content.

τελειον adj. "**become mature**" - [TO, INTO] A COMPLETE / PERFECT / MATURE [MAN]. Second, the equipping to build up the body of Christ has its purpose mature manhood. "In understanding be a full-grown adult."

εις + acc. "**attaining to**" - TO, INTO. Again, expressing goal; see above.

του πληρωματος [α ατος] gen. " **of the fullness**" - [MEASURE OF MATURITY / COMING OF FULL AGE] OF THE FULLNESS / COMPLETENESS [OF CHRIST]. The genitive ἡλικιας, "of maturity", is adjectival, appositional; "to the measure, namely, the maturity of the fullness of Christ." This genitive is followed by του πληρωματος, "of the fullness". Hoehner thinks it is epexegetic, "a maturity which consists of the fullness of Christ." The next genitive, του Χριστου, "of Christ", is possessive. "The goal to be reached is mature manhood, and this is defined by the fullness of Christ", O'Brien. So, third, the equipping to build up the body of Christ has as its purpose our crafting into the stature of Christ in all his completeness. "The glorified Christ provides the standard at which his people are to aim", Bruce. "Measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ", NEB.

v14

The ministry of the Word of God, in all its diversity, produces maturity in the believer, v14-15. It helps us stand firm in our faith against the constant tide of popular thought. It shapes us into the image of Christ.

ἱνα + subj. "-" - THAT. Probably serving to introduce a purpose clause; "in order that we no longer be", ie., Paul is giving us a more immediate goal of the gifting, although a result clause is certainly possible, "then ....", as NIV.

ὡμεν [ειμι] subj. "**we will [no longer] be**" - WE SHOULD [NO LONGER] BE [INFANTS]. If a purpose clause, then it serves to identify Christ's intention behind the building up of the fellowship of believers through mutual ministry. It was so that the "body" would not be overwhelmed by immaturity and insecurity, but rather ..... v15.

κλυδωνιζομενοι [κλυδωνιζομαι] aor. part. "**tossed back and forth**" - BEING THROWN INTO CONFUSION, BEING TOSSED BY WAVES. This participle, as with the one following, περιφερομενοι, "being carried about", is adjectival, attributive, limiting "infants."

ανεμῳ [ος] "**by [every] wind**" - [AND CARRIED AROUND] IN = BY [EVERY] WIND. Instrumental dative expressing means. "We must not let deceitful people trick us by their false teaching, which are like winds that toss around from place to place", CEV.

της διδασκαλιας [α] "**of teaching**" - OF TEACHING. The genitive is adjectival, best taken as attributed; "every fluffy doctrine."

εν .... εν + dat. "**by**" - IN [THE CUNNING OF MEN] IN [CRAFTINESS]. Both prepositions are likely to be instrumental, expressing means, "by the cunning of people, by deceitfulness", although O'Brien thinks the second use is adverbial, intensifying the first prepositional phrase, "by the cunning of men with craftiness."

των ανθρωπων [ος] "**of men / people**" - The genitive is probably adjectival, attributive, "human trickery", or verbal, subjective; "at the mercy of the slick cleverness of men", Barclay.

προς + acc. "**in**" - TOWARD. Expressing direction / intent, so Hoehner; "craftily calculated to lead us astray", Barclay.

της πλανης [η] gen. "**deceitful [scheming]**" - [THE SCHEMING] OF DECEPTION. The NIV is surely right in taking the genitive as adjectival, attributive, limiting "craftiness / scheming", "deceitful scheming", Barth. Hoehner also opts for an adjectival genitive, Best for an objective genitive, "toward the scheme that produces the error" and Larkin for a subjective genitive where the error produces the scheming.

v15

δε "**instead**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument, here to a contrasting point, "but rather"; "No, this is what we must do, ...", Cassirer.

αληθευοντες [αληθευω] pres. part. "**speaking the truth [in love]**" - SPEAKING TRUTH / HOLDING TRUTH, BEING TRUTHFUL. The participle is adverbial, probably instrumental expressing means; "by speaking the truth." Paul is probably making the point that God's people will grow through the preaching and teaching of gospel-truth, a word-ministry exercised with a God-like compassion. Yet, most commentators argue that the sense is of "living out the truth", Bruce, Mitton, ..., rather than "speaking the truth", O'Brien, or "being truthful", Hoehner.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [LOVE]. Probably adverbial, expressing manner; "with love."

αυξησωμεν [αυξανω] aor. subj. "**we will ... grow up**" - WE MAY GROW. The verb may be taken in a transitive sense (cause to grow), with the subjunctive taken as hortatory. Intransitive is best, (we are to grow), the subjunctive being linked with ἱνα in v14, so forming a purpose clause, "in order that ..." - here the positive goal; "in order that we may grow into Christ."

τα παντα "**in all things / in every respect**" - IN EVERY WAY, IN ALL RESPECTS. Accusative of respect. We are to grow in Christ-likeness in every way, not just in knowledge.

εις + acc. "**into / to become [in every respect the mature body of him]**" - INTO [HIM THE ALL THINGS]. Goal; the "growth of the body has Christ as its goal: he is the one into whom we are to grow", O'Brien.

ἡ κεφαλη [η] "**the head [that is, Christ]**" - [WHO IS] THE HEAD, [CHRIST]. "Christ" obviously stands in apposition to "head". The NT encourages us to grow in faith, love, knowledge, ..., but here we are encouraged to grow into Christ, the head of the body. The image probably describes a growth in maturity, a maturity which images the person of Christ - Christ-likeness, as expressed in the NIV11 text. Of course, a more spiritual / mystical sense may be intended, ie., an incorporative union with Christ, and thus living out the truth with love serves as the means of realizing the oneness we possess in Christ through faith. Best is of the view that growing into Christ means more than just becoming like Christ.

v16

Paul concludes by using his "body" image to restate how mutual ministry serves to make real our oneness in Christ. Each member, with their different gifts, is like the different parts of a body, each serving the whole. We minister to each other out of the compelling love of Christ, and thus, all are strengthened, trained, built up, as disciples of Christ.

εξ οὑ "**from him**" - OUT OF WHOM. The preposition εξ expresses source / origin. Christ is the head of the body (rules and governs the church) as well as

the goal of the body's growth, but he is also the source from which the body takes its sustenance.

συναρμολογουμενον [συναρμολογεω] pres. pas. part. "**joined**" - [ALL THE BODY] BEING FITLY JOINED TOGETHER, FITTED TOGETHER [AND BEING UNITED, HELD TOGETHER]. This participle, as with "being united / held together", is adjectival, attributive, limiting "body". The ministry of individual believers serves the unity of the whole. "Formed into a harmonious whole", Barclay; "As a harmonious structure knit together", Phillips.

δια + gen. "**by [every supporting ligament]**" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [EACH JOINT / LIGAMENT / CONTACT POINT OF THE SUPPORT, SUPPLY]. Instrumental, expressing means, with the genitive της επιχορηγιας, "of the support, supply", being adjectival, epexegetic, as NIV; "held together by every joint with which it is equipped", ESV. Some argue that the key supporting points are those members with a special ministry, but the role of each individual member is surely intended. "Every joint adding its own strength", NJB.

εις + acc. "**[builds itself up in love]**" - [MAKES THE GROWTH OF THE BODY] TO [BUILDING UP OF ITSELF IN LOVE]. Probably expressing purpose, "for / in order to." The shape of the building is εν αγαπῃ, "in love", "in *the sphere of* love", in line with the character of divine compassion. Possibly "it grows and becomes strong because of love", CEV.

κατ [κατα] "**as [each part does its work]**" - ACCORDING TO [WORKING IN *the* MEASURE OF EACH SINGLE PART]. Expressing a standard, "in accordance with, corresponding to." The function of this prepositional phrase is unclear. Technically, no conclusion is obvious:

- The prepositional phrase may modify the main verb ποιειται such that the body grows in accordance with the function of each member;
- It may modify the two participles and thus align with the prepositional phrase introduced by δια, thus the first gives the means of being jointed and united, while this phrase provides the manner of the jointing together;
- It may qualify the prepositional phrase introduced by δια so making the point that each individual member of the body plays a part in its upbuilding, not just gifted ministers.

The third option is probably the point Paul is making. The preposition εν introduces a subordinate prepositional phrase modifying κατ ενεργειαν, expressing the measure of the working of each individual part of the body, such that εν here takes the sense "amounting to", Robertson; "in accordance with a power / working proportionate / commensurate to each individual part." As for the genitive modifier, ενος εκαστου μερους, "of each single part", it is usually

taken as verbal, subjective, modifying "according to working", not "in measure"; "the measured working of each individual part", Larkin.

4:17-24

4. The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9

ii] No longer old but new

Argument

In preparation for his ethical instructions, 4:25-5:14, Paul reminds his readers of their old pagan life, a life alienated from God, unable to make moral judgments, or discriminate between good or evil, v17-19. He then reminds them of their new standing in Christ. A *walk* in holiness rests on the fundamental truth, that in Christ a believer has put off the old self and put on the new - we have died with Christ and are risen with Christ, alive in Christ through the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, v20-24. Given that "in Christ" (in union / relationship with Christ) we have put off the old self and put on the new, Paul goes on to explain, in the next passage for study, how to be what we are. We are to cast off our old way of life, just as we cast off a worn-out coat, "you must put off falsehood .....", v25ff, and we must put on the new way of the Spirit, "be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you", v32ff.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-16.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: This passage, *No longer old but new*, presents as follows:

The old self, v17-19;
No longer like the old self, v17;
The nature of the old self, v18-19.
The old self and spiritual renewal, v20-24.
The renewal they "learned" from Christ, v20-21;
The nature of spiritual renewal - what they "learned", v22-24.

iv] Interpretation:

Given that we are one together in Christ (ουν, "therefore", v17), we are no longer godless pagans, unbelievers lost in the futility of a corrupt mind, v17; in that life we were dead, v18-19. The reason is provided in v20-24, namely that by being in Christ we have put off the old self and put on the new.

What is involved in putting off the old self and putting on the new? The putting off of the old self is often understood in the terms of ethical renewal (taking the infinitives "to put off", v22, "to be renewed", v23, and

"to put on", v24, as imperatives, rather than indicative statements of what "you were taught"), so Hoehner, Mitton, ..., but v20-24 is all about receiving rather than doing. The instruction (what "you were taught") entails seeing oneself dead to sin and alive to God in Christ, cf., Rom.6:11. Paul is reminding his readers of their being "in Christ", the old man put off and the new man put on (v22 / 24, aorist infinitives, the action is perfective / complete), in which state they are being renewed (v23, a present infinitive, the action is imperfective / durative / ongoing). So, Paul is presenting an indicative fact, that Christ died and rose again for our salvation, such that in our union with Christ we have put off the old man (died with Christ) and put on the new man (raised with Christ), and this through our identification with Christ. This indicative fact will empower the imperatives found in 4:25-5:14, which imperatives amount to *be what you are*.

In response to the indicative, the old self put off, the new put on, we look to cooperate with the renewal of our beings by the indwelling Spirit of Christ. In Colossians 3:9-10 Paul tells his readers to put away immorality because they have put off the old man with its evil practices and have put on the new man which "is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator." It is this renewing with which we cooperate. As we cooperate with the renewal of our beings by the indwelling Christ, so we begin to be what we are. Law / Biblical instruction / New Testament ethics, guides this renewal, and to this end, Paul instructs his readers: "therefore (διο) put away falsehood .....", v25, ... "be kind and compassionate ....", v32. It is then that righteous living begins to be shaped in our lives; we begin to become what we are.

v] Homiletics - *Western woes*

Alan Dupont, writing in the Australian Newspaper, 8/7/2017, identifies six elements in the West's strategic crisis. In his last point he notes the "the eclipse of Christianity" as a major structural change in the West which robs it of its "cultural and political identity", draining it of its "moral capital." "Without transcendent belief, there is no ultimate philosophical obstacle to the pursuit of power as the highest human purpose." Western societies are drifting from a Christian world view, drifting from an other-person-centred morality focused on family and community, the good-old *what can I do for my country?* attitude. The drift is toward a narcissistic *what's in it for me* individualistic world which doesn't really work. We are moving from suburban cottages open to the street with unlocked front doors to family compounds surrounded by 3-

meter concrete block walled / gated communities. The consequential downside of the collapse of Christianity in Western societies is ignored, if not denied. As former Australian Prime Minister Paul Kelly recently wrote; "The reality is staring us in the face. Yet it cannot be spoken, cannot be entertained, cannot be discussed because there is no greater heresy and no more offensive notion than that the loss of Christian faith might have a downside."

The West's march toward paganism / atheism evidences all the elements of the *walk* Paul asks his readers to no longer live in, v17-19. Idolatry associated with power, wealth, pleasure, ... blinds humanity to the true purpose of life, v17. Alienated from God, people are controlled by ignorance, unable to make moral judgments or discriminate between good or evil, v18. The modern pagan becomes focused on self, on selfies, "look at what I had for breakfast", rather than make sacrifices for the good of the wider community, eg., to have my tax raised, or my benefits cut to control the national debt. Having lost moral sensitivity, public decency is depreciated, v19. "I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Pagans do."

Text - 4:17

Walking in holiness, v17-24: i] The walk of the old man, v17-19. a) Paul begins by reminding his readers that they are no longer godless pagans, v17. Before detailing his ethical exhortations, Paul will give a short description of his readers' old life in paganism, v18-19, and then provide the doctrinal ground upon which his exhortations are based, v20-24, ie., establish first that in Christ they are holy, before moving on to 4:25-5:14 in order to instruct them be holy - be what you are!

ουν "**so [I tell you]**" - THEREFORE [I SAY]. Drawing a logical conclusion from the previous section, although Hoehner thinks it only references v1-3, so also Best, ...

τουτο pro. "**this**" - Probably cataphoric / forward referencing, what Paul is about to teach, but possibly referring to what he has already taught, anaphoric; "All this being so", Cassirer,.

εν + dat. "**in [the Lord]**" - [AND TESTIFY] IN [LORD]. Local, expressing space, metaphorical / incorporative union; Paul testifies / declares the following words on the basis of his connection with the Lord. It is though, a widely used phrase by Paul that sometimes drifts toward an idiomatic sense, "as an apostle under the Lord's authority", even "as a believer."

περιπατειν [περιπατεω] pres. inf. "**live**" - [NO LONGER YOU] TO WALK. "Walk", in the sense of "conduct yourself, live." The infinitive may be viewed as

epexegetic, specifying τουτο, "this", so Larkin, or recitative, introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what Paul λεγω, "says", Merkle. Either way it may serve as an indicative statement, or an imperative. It is usually treated as an imperative, as NIV; "I order you to stop living like stupid godless people", CEV. These notes suggest a statement of fact; the Ephesians no longer live like the Gentiles in the futility of the mind, darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God ....." The accusative ὑμας, "you", serves as the subject of the infinitive.

καθως "**as**" - AS [ALSO THE GENTILES WALK]. Here expressing a characteristic quality, rather than a comparison; not like a Gentile sinner, but as a Gentile sinner.

εν + dat. "**in**" - Local, expressing sphere; the sphere in which the mind of the godless operates. In describing pagans as bound in the "futility of their thinking", Paul identifies the cause of their evil living. They do not know God, and therefore, they have little understanding of ethics.

του νοος [ους ος] gen. "**[the futility] of [their] thinking**" - [THE FUTILITY, EMPTY, LACKING CONTENT] OF THE MINDS [OF THEM]. The genitive is adjectival, attributed, "futile mind", Arnold.

v18

b) The nature of the old self, v18-19. In describing pagans, Paul says, "they are darkened in their understanding." Not knowing God ("separated from the life of God", cf., Col.1:21) only corrupts an understanding of the truth, of ethics, and so prompts evil living. This "ignorance" of the truth increases with the "hardening of their hearts." As the conscience is slowly desensitized, so it is increasingly unable to convict.

The function and relationship between the three participles and the two prepositional phrases in this verse is unclear and so makes for difficult exegesis. Larkin, p87, offers a credible approach, but Mitton, Best, Lenski, Lincoln and Hoehner, should not be discounted. Larkin suggests that the first participle, εσκοτωμενοι, "having been darkened", is adverbial, causal, modifying περιπατει, "[do not walk/live as also the Gentiles] walk / live", v17. The second participle, ὄντες, the verb to-be, "being", is causal, modifying the first participle, while the third participle, απηλλοτριωμενοι, "having been alienated from", is adjectival, serving as the predicate of the second participle. The prepositional phrases introduced by δια, are causal, each independently explaining the participial constructions as a whole. "Now this I say .... that you no longer walk as indeed the pagans walk ..... because they have been darkened in their understanding, since they have been alienated from the life of God, because of

the wilful ignorance that is in them, [and] because of the hardness of their hearts", Larkin.

εσκοτωμενοι [σκοτοω] perf. part. "**they are darkened**" - HAVING BEEN DARKENED. "[Because] they live blindfolded in a world of illusion", Phillips.

τῃ διανοιᾳ dat. "**in their understanding**" - IN THE UNDERSTANDING, MIND, THOUGHT. The dative is local, sphere = in the sphere of their understanding, or possibly reference / respect, "with respect to ...." The word is interchangeable with "heart" and means "the centre of human perception", O'Brien.

ὄντες [ειμι] pres. part. "-" - BEING. See note above, although Merkle classifies it as periphrastic. Expresses "forcibly the persistence of the .... state of things", BDF.

απηλλοτριωμενοι [απαλλοτριοω] perf. pas. part. "**separated**" - HAVING BEEN ALIENATED FROM, ESTRANGED, SEPARATED FROM. See note above. The perfect tense expresses the sense of having entered a continuous state. "Their minds are darkened and they are alienated from the life of God", Barclay.

της ζωης [η] gen. "**from the life**" - OF THE LIFE. Genitive of direct object after the απο prefix verb "to be separated from."

του θεου [ος] gen "**of God**" - [THE LIFE] OF GOD. The genitive is probably adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source; "the life that comes from God."

δια + acc. "**because of**" - BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF. Causal.

την πωρωσιν [ις εως] "**the hardening**" - THE HARDNESS, STUBBORNNESS. The "ignorance" of the Gentiles is due to "the progressive inability of their conscience to convict them of wrongdoing", Bruce. "They no longer have any feelings about what is right", CEV.

της καρδιας gen. "**of [their] hearts**" - OF THE HEARTS [OF THEM]. Wallace classifies this genitive as adjectival, attributed, where the lead noun limits the genitive noun "heart"; "hard hearted." An ignorance due to a hardened heart aligns with the more modern idea of dullness of mind.

v19

Continuing with the idea of the "hardening of their hearts", Paul restates the phrase in different words: "having lost all sensitivity". As the skin can become callous and less sensitive, so can the conscience. The result is that a pagan tends to hand themselves over to evil; they give themselves to "sensuality", often called "debauchery" - the flaunting of sexuality without shame. They also give themselves to "impurity", which is again some form of sexual misconduct. Also, to "lust", or more rightly "covetousness". Of course, saying to his readers *You are no longer this person*, Paul is well aware they can be, given that sin is a human problem, not a pagan problem. It is for this reason that Paul follows up his indicatives with imperatives.

απηλγηκοτες [απαλγεω] perf. part. "**having lost all sensitivity**" - [WHO] HAVING PUT AWAY REMORSE, FEELINGS. The participle is adverbial, probably causal, Hoehner; "they have given themselves over to sensuality because they lost all sensitivity." They have lost all feeling of shame", TEV.

οἵτινες pro. "**they**" - WHO. Functioning as a substantive, subject of the verb παρεδωκαν, "gave"; "who, having lost sensitivity, gave themselves."

παρεδωκαν [παραδιδωμι] aor. "**have given [themselves] over**" - GAVE, DELIVERED OVER [THEMSELVES]. Usually, the scriptures have God doing the abandoning, but here the pagans "have abandoned themselves to shameless immorality", Barclay.

τῃ ασελγειᾳ [α] dat. "**to sensuality**" - TO VICE, UNCLEANNESS, FILTHINESS, SENSUAL BEHAVIOUR, EXTREME IMMORALITY, DEBAUCHERY. Dative of indirect object.

εις + acc. "**so as to**" - FOR [WORK, GAIN, PRACTISE]. Here expressing purpose; "for the business of impurity", Moffatt.

ακαθαρσιας [α] gen. "**impurity**" - OF UNCLEANNESS. The genitive is verbal, objective, so Larkin. This word often has sexual overtones.

εν + dat. "**full of**" - IN [COVETOUSNESS]. The preposition is adverbial here, expressing manner, Hoehner; "greedy to practise every kind of impurity", ESV. "Greed" is often related to idolatry, a desire for this world's things that transcends a desire for God. But possibly here just a lust for evil; "in their greed for the things which no man has a right even to desire", Barclay.

v20

ii] The spiritual renewal of the old self, v20-24. Paul now speaks of the nature of the new man, making the point that his readers were taught that they have put off the old man and put on the new, and are being renewed in the attitude of their minds such that the pagan life is certainly not what they learned from Christ. In the Gk., these verses form a 1st. class conditional clause where the condition is assumed to be true. The protasis, the "if" clause, consists of v21-24 (or possibly v21a), with the apodosis, the "then" clause, formed by v20; "if indeed, *as is the case*, you have heard about him (Christ) [.....???] *then* (v20) you did not in this manner (ie., the evil behaviour of the pagans v18-19) learn Christ. Caird says of this sentence that it is "chaotic".

δε "**however**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating the next step in the argument, here contrastive; "but that is not the way you learned Christ", ESV.

οὑτως adv. "**that way / [is not] the way of life**" - [YOU DID NOT] THUS, SO. Here establishing a comparative contrast. "This is not how Jesus has taught us to live."

εμαθετε [μανθανω] aor. "**come to know [Christ] / learned**" - LEARN [CHRIST]. The Greek expression is unclear, but the sense seems obvious. Paul's readers were taught about Christ's will on matters of ethics and they know that none of the above evils are sanctioned. "You have learned nothing like that from Christ", Phillips.

v21

When the Ephesians became believers they "learned Christ", v20, ie., they welcomed him as a living person and were shaped by his words, so O'Brien; in simple terms this means that they learnt about Christ and assimilated his teaching. The statement "learned Christ" is now explained: the Ephesians "heard about / of Christ" and they were "taught in him."

ει γε "**surely**" - IF INDEED. Introducing a 1st. class conditional clause; see note above, v20. The γε is probably emphatic; "if indeed." Of course, the Greek does not imply doubt, but rather the opposite; "given that you have heard ...." As noted above, this is a somewhat complex conditional clause.

αυτον "**[you heard] [of him / about Christ]**" - YOU HEARD [HIM]. As Best notes, if the sense is that the Ephesians heard "about Christ / about him", then a genitive, rather than an accusative would be expected. "Heard *about* him" is widely accepted, but Best opts for "heard *in those who proclaim* him." The language only "makes sense when it is assumed that Christ himself speaks in those who proclaim him", Barth. "I have no doubt that you have been instructed in the way of Christ."

εδιδαχθητε [διδασκω] aor. pas. "**were taught**" - WERE INSTRUCTED. It is quite possible that "you were taught" begins a new sentence which runs through to the end of verse 24. The infinitives in v22-24 would serve as the objects of this verb. The NIV develops this structure by repeating "you were taught" at the beginning of v22, but see the introductory note on the conditional clause in v20. The teaching is most probably the form of instruction given to a new believer. We call this catechistic instruction. The comment seems to indicate that the readers were not Paul's own converts. This is to be expected, given that it is likely that the letter to the Ephesians is a general letter to a wider group of people.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [HIM]. Not instrumental, "by him", but expressing sphere, incorporative union; "in communion with him", Meyer.

καθως "**in accordance with**" - AS, JUST AS [TRUTH IS]. Possibly causal, "you were taught in communion with him (Christ) <u>because</u> the truth is in (embodied in) Jesus", although more likely comparative, "just as." The point is simple enough; "you heard about him and learnt about him", CEV.

εν + dat. "**in [Jesus]**" - IN [JESUS]. Local, sphere; Jesus is the embodiment of truth.

v22

b) The nature of spiritual renewal - what they "learned", v22-24 (see "Interpretation" above). They were taught, says Paul, that they have put off their old corrupted self. When a person believes in Jesus the old sinful self is cast off like a worn-out coat, it is put to death, it dies with Christ. In their identification with Christ, the old sinful self is buried with him and is replaced by his perfect righteousness, thus creating a new self. As already noted, translations often treat the three infinitives in v22-24, "to put off", "to be renewed", "to put on", as if imperatives, rather than the indicative objects of εδιδαχθητψε, "you were taught." This is unlikely to be Paul's intent.

κατα + acc. "***You were taught*, with regard to [your former way of life]**" - ACCORDING TO [THE = YOUR FORMER WAY OF LIVING]. Here probably expressing reference / respect, "with respect to ...", rather than expressing a standard, "in accordance with." The NIV approach to the arrangement of this sentence is widely supported, but it is possible to read the Greek as "you were taught to put away your former way of life", NRSV, but it is surely "you were taught to put off the old man."

αποθεσθαι [αποτιθημι] aor. inf. "**to put off**" - [YOU *were taught*] TO PUT OFF, PUT AWAY, REMOVE. The infinitive most likely serves as the object of the verb εδιδαχθητε,"you were taught", v21 / dependent statement of indirect speech stating what they were taught. The teaching is often regarded as a command / exhortation; "you were taught that you must put off your old self ...", so Hoehner. Sometimes translated as a straight imperative, although an imperative infinitive is probably an invalid classification; "Get rid of your old life (without Christ)", TEV. Yet, as already indicated, it seems more likely that it is indicative, rather than imperative, "you were taught that you have put off the old man ....", so O'Brien, along with most of the oldies, Eadie, Ellicott, Moule, ..., although most are unable to completely let go the imperative - the *is / aught* dilemma. The teaching the Ephesian believers received is that through faith in Christ they have died with Christ and are risen with Christ, the old man is dead, the new man alive, and in that state they are being renewed daily be the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

τον φθειρομενον [φθειρω] pres. pas. part. "**which is being corrupted**" - [THE OLD MAN] THE ONE BEING CORRUPTED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting / describing the "old man." "The old man", the old sinful self, is subject to corruption, ruin and decay, and this as the durative present tense indicates, is an ongoing condition. Although the old man has died with Christ, he twitches until deposited in the grave, and to this end, Paul will follow up with a series of moral instructions, 4:25-5:14.

κατα + acc "**by**" - ACCORDING TO. As above, although Hoehner opts for standard, and O'Brien argues for ground / basis.

της απατης [η] gen. "**deceitful [desires]**" - [THE DESIRES, LUSTS] OF DECEITFULNESS. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "desires", as NIV, but possibly source, "desires out of deceit", so Arnold. "Lusts wrought by deceit", Cassirer.

v23

They were taught, says Paul, that they are being made new in the attitude of our minds - a present and ongoing renewal through the Spirit.

ανανεουσθαι [ανανεοω] pres. pas. inf. "**to be made new**" - TO BE RENEWED (to cause something to become new and different, with the implication of becoming superior, to make new, renewal*). Again, the infinitive forms a dependent statement explaining what "you were taught", see above. The present tense expresses ongoing action, as distinct from the aorists used for putting off the old man and putting on the new. The verb may be middle, with the sense "renew oneself", but better passive in that in Christ we are being renewed (through the Spirit???). "Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day", 2Cor.4:16. We are being "transformed", Rom.12:2, cf. Col.3:9-10.

τω πνευματι [α ατος] dat. "**in the attitude**" - IN / BY THE SPIRIT. The dative is instrumental, expressing means, or reference / respect. Paul's words may be a reference to the renewal of the mind by the Holy Spirit, which action the Spirit does perform. Yet, is the Gk. saying "in/by the spirit / Spirit"? The "spirit" may mean our "human spirit", our "inmost being," "Mentally and spiritually remade", Phillips, or the "Holy Spirit", "Let the Spirit change your way of thinking", CEV. Many modern commentators lean toward "the Holy Spirit", so Schnackenburg, Houlden, ... while others opt for "the human spirit", so Abbott, Meyer, Lincoln, O'Brien ("The sphere of this renewing work ... is the person's inmost being" - the inner person), ...

του νοος [ος] gen. "**of [your] minds**" - OF THE MIND [OF YOU]. The genitive is adjectival, epexegetical, so Larkin, although Hoehner suggests it is a genitive of place, so "in your mind." Bruce suggests that "spirit" and "mind" are in apposition to each other; "it involves spiritual renewal, the renewal of your minds."

v24

They were taught, says Paul, that they have put on the new self, that they are righteous as Christ is righteous, holy as Christ is holy. Given that we have put on

this new self, put on Christ, let us strive to be what we are in Christ. In the next passage for study Paul will outline an ethical response to our standing in Christ.

ενδυσασθαι [ενδυω] aor. mid. inf. "**to put on**" - [AND] TO PUT ON, CLOTHE [THE NEW MAN]. The infinitive serves as the object of "you were taught" / dependent statement of indirect speech expressing what they were taught. As noted above, we are inclined to think in terms of putting on morality, although putting on Christ through our identification with Christ, is more likely. For a believer, the ethical imperative addresses what we are already in Christ. It is when we are dressed "in true righteousness and holiness", that we can strive to image Christ-likeness in our day-to-day life.

τον κτισθεντα [κτιζω] aor. pas. part. "**created**" - THE ONE HAVING BEEN CREATED. The participle is adjectival, attributive, limiting the "new man/self"; "which is created in God's likeness", TEV.

κατα + acc. "**to be like [God]**" - ACCORDING TO [GOD]. Expressing a standard / comparative, "in accordance with God / similar to God, God-like."

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [RIGHTEOUSNESS]. Here probably adverbial, reference / respect; "created after the likeness of God with respect to righteousness and holiness" This prepositional phrase most likely modifies "created" and therefore describes the "new man", rather than "God".

της αληθειας [α] gen. "**true**" - [AND HOLINESS, SANCTITY] OF THE TRUTH. The genitive is probably adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "which is from", "a righteousness and holiness *that originates from / comes out of* truth", although note NIV which treats it as attributive. Righteousness and holiness originate from "the truth", ie., "from God himself ... who is the truth", O'Brien. You were taught to put on the new self, "which was divinely created, and which shows itself in that justice and holiness, which are the products of the truth", Barclay.

4:25-5:2

4. The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9

iii] Imitators of Christ

Argument

Paul has set out in 4:17 to remind his readers that a pagan lifestyle does not reflect the new person they are in Christ; they have put off the old man and put on the new - died with Christ, alive with Christ, daily renewed by Christ. Now, in the passage before us, Paul gives practical examples of the behaviour that properly reflects their new life in Christ. Since we have already put on Christ, his "righteousness and holiness", let us act in love toward others in our daily lives - let us be what we are.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-16.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *Imitators of Christ*:

The doe's and don'ts, 4:25-5:2:
- Speak the truth, v25;
- Keep anger in check, v26-27;
- Work rather than steal, v28;
- Let speech edify rather than debase, v29-30;
- Be forgiving rather than malicious, v31-32.
- Be imitators of God and walk in love, 5:1-2.

iv] Interpretation:

Paul's ethical instructions, dealing with the conduct of the new self, present in two parts. In the first part, the ethical instructions are presented negatively and positively, along with a reason for the proposed action. The instructions are framed in exhortatory sentences that call for specific ethical action covering common vices and virtues. Such lists were common in Hellenistic Judaism.

Ethics and a believer's identification with Christ: Having established that believers in Christ have put off the old self and put on the new, Paul now states διο αποθεμενοι, "therefore put off ...." What we have here is a simple indicative-imperative match. Paul's readers have put off the old self in Christ, and so "therefore" they are to put off the old self in their daily life, ie., be what they are. They are to "put off falsehood .....", and put

on kindness, compassion, and forgiveness, v32; they are to "walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us", 5:2.

Believers are to put off the old self and put on the new. Putting on the new man / self is outwardly expressed by ethically putting on Christ-likeness - a being clothed with Christ-likeness. Through the power of Christ's Spirit-inspired word, we are made new in the attitude of our minds and are thus assisted in the business of putting off the "old self, corrupt and deluded in its lusts" and of putting on the "new self, created according to the likeness of God". Both putting off the old self and putting on the new, is integrally linked to our identification with Christ, our being clothed with Christ, in his death and life / resurrection. In dying with Christ our old life is put to death - we are no longer slaves to sin; sin has lost its power. In rising with Christ, we are enlivened to live for God - renewed by the indwelling-compelling of the Spirit of Christ. When we cooperate with this reality, by grace through faith, it is then we have the power to "put away falsehood" and "speak the truth." In the NT the imperative always rests on the indicative.

v] Homiletics: *Be loving as Christ is loving*

I was recently involved in a discussion with a friend who had reached a point of despair in his Christian life. He saw no value in pushing on, no point in struggling along the hard and narrow way. He was close to giving up his faith because it was all too hard. No matter how hard he tried to serve the Lord, he continually failed.

Repeated failure, in the end, leads to a debilitated will. We often find it easier to do nothing, at least then we don't fail. We usually label this conundrum *the problem of recurrent sin*. Some deal with it honestly by facing the problem, while others deal with it by hiding in pharisaical piety.

Let me say, my friend faced it down in a way that only made the problem worse. He analysed his recurrent sin in relation to the sovereignty of God. He argued, that since God is a sovereign Lord, and as his grace is sufficient for us, then the Spirit of God should have acted to bear the fruits of the Spirit in his life. My friend deduced that his failure to overcome recurrent sin evidenced that he was probably not one of the chosen children of God. He was in deep trouble.

We need to understand that when we are exhorted to do good, as we are in our reading today, we are not being asked to do it to demonstrate or confirm that our standing as a believer is valid. Our salvation is totally based on what Jesus has done for us, not on what we can or can't do. Nor are we being asked to do it to please God. If we have believed in Jesus

Christ, then he rejoices over us; the angels are singing with joy for us. We may be struggling in the mud a bit, but we are totally covered by the perfect obedience of Christ. It is in Christ's perfection that heaven rejoices.

In Christ we are a "new creation", and so the Bible encourages us to be what we are, to put off the old self and put on the new. We are encouraged to move away from falsehood, bitterness, slander and the like. We are encouraged to be kind, compassionate, forgiving.... loving, to be "imitators of God." Some of these requirements are ideals that we can only but aim at, others are deeds that can sometimes be done. Through the renewing touch of the Spirit of Christ, our lives will move toward Christ-likeness, albeit always short of perfection. So, let us strive to do the best we can, and leave it at that.

Text - 4:25

Six exhortations concerning the conduct of a believer, v25-32: i] Speak the truth, v25. Paul encourages his readers to put off lying and put on truth-telling. God is the God of truth and the Devil the father of lies, Jn.8:44. So, don't lie to one another. Be like your heavenly Father and tell the truth to each other, Col.3:9. The members of Christ's body should be truthful.

διο "**therefore**" - THEREFORE. Inferential, establishing a logical connection with the preceding paragraph. Since we are clothed with the new self, let us therefore ..... "Therefore, for this reason."

αποθεμενοι [αποτιθημι] aor. part. "**[each of you] must put off**" - HAVING PUT OFF. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the imperative verb "let us speak [truth]", and so therefore also imperatival, as NIV; "Lay aside falsehood", Moffatt.

το ψευδος [ος ους] "**falsehood**" - DECEPTION, FALSEHOOD. Accusative direct object of the participle "having put off." The old lifestyle was one of deception.

λαλειτε [λαλεω] pres. imp. "**speak**" - LET US SPEAK [TRUTH]. The first in a series of 12 imperatives. Most likely with Zechariah 8:16 in mind. Although, reflecting popular ethics of the time, the "neighbour" is one's brother or sister in the Lord. This exhortation to truth-telling in the church is supported by noting that believers are fellow members of Christ's body, and that the body grows when the members speak the truth to each other in love, 4:15. cf., Rom.12:5.

μετα + gen. "**to [your neighbour]**" - [EACH ONE] WITH [THE NEIGHBOUR OF HIM]. Expressing association / mutual interaction.

ὁτι "**because**" - Introducing a causal clause.

αλληλων gen. pro. "**of one body**" - [WE ARE MEMBERS] OF ONE ANOTHER. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

v26

ii] Be angry, but sin not, v26-27. How do we deal with the idea that Paul seems to encourage anger? Jesus clearly states that if we are angry with a brother we place ourselves under the judgment of God, Matt.5:22. We can get around Jesus' words by defining our "anger" as "righteous indignation", but the truth is that anger is anger, and it is but another sign of our sinful condition, and thus of our need for divine mercy. This, of course, is the point that Jesus was making - all have sinned and stand under the judgment of God. The simple fact is that we all get angry from time to time. Given the reality of our sinful condition, Paul encourages us to not let our anger become irrational and out of control such that it turns into bitterness and hate. "Don't get so angry that you sin", CEV.

οργιζεσθε [οργιζομαι] pres. pas. imp. "**in your anger**" - BE ANGRY. It is often argued that this phrase is a conditional imperative, "if you are angry do not sin." Such a translation would solve the problem associated with Paul seemingly encouraging anger. The trouble is that both verbs are imperatives, rather than an imperative followed by an indicative, Wallace, Syntax 491. It is far better to take both as simple imperatives, "be angry but do not sin", Moffatt.

μη ἁμαρτανετε [ἁμαρτανω] pres. imp. "**do not sin**" - [AND] DO NOT SIN. The negated imperative forms a prohibition.

ὁ ηλιος μη επιδυετω "**do not let the sun go down**" - DO NOT LET THE SUN SET. In the Deuteronomic Law, the setting of the sun signals the ending of action toward another, eg. the return of a poor man's coat held as collateral for a loan, or the payment of wages due to a poor man. So, the setting of the sun is a good time to end one's outrage for some failure, or personal hurt caused by a fellow-believer.

επι + dat. "**while**" - UPON. The preposition here is temporal, as NIV.

παροργισμῳ [ος] dat. "**angry**" - THE ANGER [OF YOU]. The word for "anger" here usually refers to some provocation to anger, a source of anger. This irritation promotes the inflaming of a hurtful response made up of cutting words, or actions.

v27

Anger can lead to bitter resentment which, over time, can multiply the need for payback.

μηδε "**and [do] not [give]**" - NEITHER. The use of this negation serves to continue the list of "don'ts". "And do not ...."

τοπον [ος] "**a foothold**" - [GIVE] A PLACE, FOOTHOLD. Here an opportunity, chance, foothold, possibility. "Don't let anger fester away such that it allows hate to grow."

τῳ διαβολῳ [ος] dat. "**the devil**" - TO / FOR THE ENEMY, ADVERSARY, SLANDERER. Dative of indirect object. The word is only used here and in the Pastorals. Paul normally uses the word "Satan."

v28

iii] Don't steal, but rather give to the needy, v28. Replace stealing with hard work. In the first century, pilfering was part of everyday life, but such a way of life is not to be practised by a Christian. So, give up living by your wits and advancing yourself at the expense of others, rather, apply yourself to productive hard work whereby you earn a good living and have resources spare to use for an eternal purpose.

ὁ κλεπτων [λκεπτω] "**he who has been stealing [must steal no longer]**" - [LET] THE ONE STEALING [STEAL NO MORE]. The participle is taken in the NIV to precede the action of the main verb "steal" ie., he who used to steal must steal no more. Yet "the one stealing" is best taken as equivalent to a substantive, "the thief." Therefore "let the pilferer steal no more."

κοπιατω [κοπιαω] pres. imp. "**[he] must work**" - [BUT/AND RATHER] LET HIM APPLY EFFORT, LABOUR. Paul often uses the word to describe his striving in ministry. The sense is "let them labour to the point of weariness."

εργαζομενος [εργαζομαι] pres. part. "**doing**" - WORKING. Wallace classifies this participle as adverbial, expressing the means (pos. manner) of the toil; "let him labour by working hard with his hands." "Put his hands to a useful task", Moffatt.

το αγαθον adj. "**something useful**" - THE GOOD. The adjective serves as a substantive, direct object of the participle "working"; "that which is good, useful."

ταις χερσιν [χειρ ρος] dat. "**with [his own] hands**" - The dative is instrumental, expressing means. Paul is not promoting manual labour, rather he is promoting honourable work instead of pilfering. The variant "one's own [hands]" may possibly be making the point that one's own hand is to be put to life's tasks rather than constantly using servants. "Doing an honourable day's work with his own hands", Barclay.

ἱνα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [HE MAY HAVE]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose, "in order that ..."

μεταδιδοναι [μεταδιδωμι] pres. inf. "**to share**" - TO SHARE WITH, DISTRIBUTE. The infinitive may express purpose, "in order that he might have *and* to share / so that he can share ..."; "His aim must be to have enough to share ...", Barclay. Hoehner takes the infinitive as complementary, completing the sense of the subjunctive verb εχῃ, "may have"; "in order that he might share ..."

Believers are to work in order that they might possess, and as a consequence, are then able to give to the needs of the brotherhood.

τῳ .. εχοντι [εχω] dat. pres. part. "**with those [in need]**" - THE ONES HAVING [NEED]. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object / interest.

v29

iv] Don't use vulgar language, but rather let your speech be edifying, v29-30. Replace corrupt speech with edifying speech. Unwholesome talk probably means foul language, but it also covers destructive, nasty, back biting, and even frivolous speech. Aim at speech that is helpful for building others up according to their needs. One of the functions of the Holy Spirit is to unite the fellowship of believers in love, so when we affront each other with destructive words, we "grieve" the Holy Spirit.

μη εκπορευεσθω [εκπορευομαι] pres. imp. "**do not let ..... come out**" - [EVERY ROTTEN WORD FROM THE MOUTH OF YOU] SHOULD NOT PROCEED, GO OUT, COME OUT. The NIV has treated the negation with the imperative as a prohibition. "No spoken word should be harmful."

σαπρος adj. "**unwholesome [talk]**" - ROTTEN, CORRUPT. Attributive adjective limiting "word / talk", subject of the negated verb "should not proceed." The word literally means decayed, but here it takes on the meaning "harmful". "Do not let vulgar / slanderous / contemptuous talk ..."

εκ + gen. "**out of**" - FROM. Expressing source / origin, "from", or separation, "away from."

βυτ "BUT" - Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "let no ....., but ....."

ει + ind. "-" - IF, *as is the case*, [ANY GOOD *word is uttered, then let it be* TOWARD BUILDING UP = EDIFICATION]. Introducing a 1st. class conditional clause where the proposed condition is assumed to be true.

προς + acc. "**for**" - TOWARD. Probably serving to express object / purpose, "so as to edify"; "let your words be for the improvement of others", NJB.

της χρειας "**according to their needs**" - OF THE NEED. Often treated as an objective genitive, sometimes as adverbial, reference / respect, so Ellicott, but it is possibly just adjectival, attributive, limiting "edify", "the needed upbuilding", Barth, the building up of believers when there is a need for it, or an opportunity opens for doing so, so Best, cf., NRSV, REB and NJB. We must use our speech in a constructive way, to build up rather than pull down. "For the building up of what is needed or lacking", BAGD.

ἱνα + subj. "**that [it may benefit]**" - THAT [IT MAY GIVE GRACE]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose, although a consecutive clause expressing result

is possible; "in order that" / "with the result that." "Presenting the rationale of the implied imperative in the αλλα, "but", clause", Larkin, as NIV.

τοις ακουουσιν [ακουω] pres. part. "**those who listen**" - TO THE ONES HEARING. The participle serves as a substantive, dative of indirect object.

v30

μη λυπειτε [λυπεω] imp. "**do not grieve [the Holy Spirit]**" - [AND] DO NOT CAUSE SORROW TO, SADNESS, DISTRESS. "The Spirit who makes men attest to the truth is put to shame when the saints lie to one another and utter foul talk", Barth. We should also note that the term "grieve the Holy Spirit" is a very personal one. The choice of the word "grieve" supports the view that the Spirit is a person and not just the impersonal power of God.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - [THE HOLY SPIRIT] OF GOD. The genitive here prompts numerous ways to view how the Spirit and God relate. Taking θεος as the Father, the genitive may be adjectival, relational, "God's Holy Spirit", or idiomatic / source, "from God." Relational seems best.

εν + dat. "**with**" - BY [WHOM]. The sense may be local, "in whom", or it may express association, as NIV, or be instrumental / agent, "by whom", ESV. Instrumental / agent seems best; "by whom God's sign of ownership has been set upon you", Barclay.

εσφραγισθητε [σφραγιζω] pas. "**you were sealed**" - The term "sealed" may seem a little unusual, but it is simply describing the Spirit as a pledge, or evidence, of the inheritance which will one day be ours.

εις "**for [the day of redemption]**" - TO, INTO. The NIV, as with most translations, has opted for a final (purpose) sense, but a temporal sense is possible, "until."

απολυτρωσεως [ις εως] gen. "**of redemption**" - [*the* DAY] OF REDEMPTION. The genitive is most likely adjectival, attributive / idiomatic, temporal, "the day when God's redeems his people" limiting the "day". This phrase, "the day of redemption", refers to the day of the glorification of the saints of God, Rom.8:19, 2Thes.1:10.

v31

v] Don't be malicious, but rather be forgiving, v31-32. Paul now gives a list of things to get rid of: "bitterness" - annoying pinpricking; "rage and anger" - outbursts of uncontrolled anger; "brawling" - public quarrelling; "slander" - back biting, whispering; "every form of malice" - maliciousness and ill-will. Instead of these evils, we should seek to be: "kind" - mutual kindness; "compassionate"; "forgiving". These qualities are exhibited by God and they express the Christ-

like nature a believer has put on in him, and therefore we should seek to exhibit these positive characteristics in our own lives.

αρθητω [αιρω] aor. pas. imp. "**get rid of**" - REMOVE, TAKE AWAY [FROM YOU]. The passive is stylistic; "this must be removed", O'Brien. The preposition απο, "from", expresses separation, "away from".

πικρια [α] "**bitterness**" - [ALL] SOUR, CRABBY, UNCHARITABLE, INTENSELY RESENTFUL, HATEFUL [AND ANGER AND WRATH AND CLAMOR AND SLANDER]. "Resentment", Phillips; "bitter", CEV.

συν + dat. "**along with [every form of malice]**" - WITH [ALL EVIL]. Expressing association; "along with all maliciousness", Barclay.

v32

δε "-" - BUT/AND. This variant may be original; transitional, indicating a step in the argument to a contrast.

γινεσθε [γιμομαι] pres. imp. "**be**" - LET BE [KIND TO ONE ANOTHER, TENDER-HEARTED]. "Be kind toward (εις, "to", expresses direction / goal) toward one another, tender hearted, mutually forgiving", Berkeley.

χαριζομενοι [χαριζομαι] pres. part. "**forgiving**" - FORGIVING, SHOWING FAVOUR TOWARD. Is the participle adverbial, modal, expressing the manner in which the action of the verbs "be kind and compassionate" is fulfilled, or means, so Hoehner, or substantival, nominative predicate of the verb "be", as Berkeley above? Here taking the particular sense of "forgiving", as NIV. For believers, forgiveness fulfills neighbourly love.

ἑαυτοις dat. reflex. pro. "**each other**" - ONE ANOTHER. Dative of direct object / complement.

καθως και "**just as**" - JUST AS ALSO. Possibly carrying a comparative sense; we are to forgive as Christ forgives us. Yet, it could also carry a causal force; we are to forgive because Christ forgave us, so Best. "Because the Lord has forgiven you, so you should forgive one another", Col.3:13.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHRIST]. Either an instrumental sense, "through Christ", or a local sense, "in your union with Christ", O'Brien.

ὑμιν dat. pro. "**[forgave] you**" - [GOD FORGAVE] TO YOU. Dative of direct object after the verb "to forgive."

5:1

vi] Be loving, v1-2. Paul sums up his exhortation by encouraging his readers to "live a life of love." The love he speaks of is the type of love exhibited by Christ - a self-giving love. To make his point, Paul uses an Old Testament image - a "fragrant offering and sacrifice to God". The reference is to the sacrificial

offerings given to God at the temple. Paul applies this image to the life of the believer.

ουν "**therefore**" - Drawing a logical conclusion / inferential, harking back to 4:1, 17, and "making another application from the first three chapters", Hoehner.

μιμηται [ης ου] "**be imitators / follow [God's] example**" - BE IMITATORS. This is the only reference in either the Old or New Testament where a child of God is encouraged to "imitate" God. The sense is carried in other exhortations: walk worthily of our calling, walk by the Spirit, be merciful as our Father is merciful, Lk.6:35-36. Paul often encourages his readers to imitate him as he imitates Christ, 1Cor.4:16 ..... In v2 we are encouraged to imitate Christ, to love as he loves. This imitation is of Christ's self-sacrifice, not of his style of living, and explains what imitating God entails, cf., και, v2..

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - Usually treated as an objective genitive, so Hoehner, Larkin; of imitating God.

ὡς "**as**" - AS [BELOVED CHILDREN]. Possibly introducing a comparison, "you must try to be like God", Barclay, but better here introducing a characteristic quality denoting the manner in which a person imitates God; "follow God's example in the manner of dearly beloved children."

v2

και "**and**" - AND. Here the conjunction takes on an epexegetic task, introducing an explanation of what the imitation of God entails. "That is, ..."

περιπατειτε [περιπατεω] pres. imp. "**live a life / walk**" - WALK. A believer's life should be characterized by compassion, as imaged in God's compassion toward us in Christ.

εν + dat. "**of / in the way of [love]**" - IN [LOVE]. Local, expressing sphere; "the sphere in which one lives, or ought to live, so as to be characterized by that sphere", BDAG; "live in a loving way", Berkeley.

καθως "**just as**" - See 4:32: we are to love just as Christ has loved us, or because Christ loved us. The model and / or the ground of our love is Christ's sacrificial love for us.

και "-" - AND. Here adjunctive, "also"; "just as Christ also loved us."

παρεδωκεν [παραδιδωμι] aor. "**gave [himself] up**" - [CHRIST LOVED US AND] GAVE HIMSELF. The verb "gave over", "deliver over", with the reflective pronoun "himself", indicates that Jesus gave himself up to the cross - he went to the cross as a willing victim.

ὑπερ + gen. "**for [us]**" - ON BEHALF OF [US]. Here expressing representation / substitution, "in place of / instead of", ie., with the same meaning as αντι, but possibly advantage, "for us."

προσφοραν [α] "**offering**" - AN OFFERING [AND SACRIFICE]. With "sacrifice", the accusative complement of the direct object "himself" standing in a double accusative construction. The term serves to include all forms of sacrifice, grain and animals, cf., Ps.40:6. Christ's offering and sacrifice is "a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice which is pleasing to God", Phil.4:18.

τῳ θεῳ [ος] dat. "**to God**" - TO GOD. O'Brien and others treat this dative as if a dative of interest, advantage, the advantage being God's good pleasure, thus we are to walk in the way of love, a way which is "well-pleasing to God", a sweet aroma / a sacrifice for him. The NT rests on the idea of a God who acts for our advantage, a gracious God, before whom we can offer nothing. All we can do is be accepting of his grace in Christ. So, a dative of direct object is a better classification, rather than a dative of interest.

εις + acc. "-" - TO, INTO [AN ODOUR, AROMA]. Possibly expressing purpose, "for", "an offering and sacrifice made to God <u>for the purpose of</u> a fragrant odour", but more likely expressing result, as Cassirer below.

ευωδιας [α] gen. "-" - OF FRAGRANCE. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "aroma"; "giving forth a saviour which was sweetness itself", Cassirer.

5:3-14

4. The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9

iv] From lust to light

Argument

Paul continues with practical exhortations on Godly living - practical holiness / righteousness. In the passage before us he encourages his readers to move from darkness to light, from immorality to morality.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-16.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *From lust to light*:

The conduct of the *new man* in Christ

- Abstain from evil, v3-6:
  - Avoid sin, particularly sins of a sexual nature, v3-4;
  - The reason - the sinner has no place in the Kingdom, v5-6.
- Walk in the light and not in the darkness, v7-14:
  - Do not partner with darkness, v7-10;
  - Do not practice the deeds of darkness, v11-13;
  - Conclusion - Christ enlightens, v14.

iv] Interpretation:

In 4:17-24 Paul reminds his readers that they are no longer part of the world of paganism, but are now part with Christ; they are no longer alienated from God, futile in their thinking, rather, they have now found truth in Christ - they have put off that old life and put on a new one. Having reminded his readers what they are in Christ, Paul, from 4:25, sets out to encourage his readers to be what they are.

In the passage before us, 5:3-14, Paul continues with his ethical instructions. Believers can no longer indulge the sensual self, can no longer allow themselves to be carried away by the "gross sensuality and ruthless self-indulgence of paganism, or the intellectual atmosphere these vices breed in", Caird. Such behaviour has no pace "in the kingdom of Christ and of God" and ultimately faces "God's wrath", v3-6.

Therefore (ουν), believers must break from their pagan past, they must abandon a life shaped by moral darkness, and seek a life shaped by moral light. Life lived in darkness is sterile; a life lived in the light is fruitful and pleasing to the Lord, v7-10.

Not only should believers have nothing to do with darkness, they should expose the darkness. This exposure is most likely achieved by "their righteous lifestyle", O'Brien, ie., the light of Christ in a believer exposes the ugly reality of sin hidden in the darkness, v11-13. Yet, this light does more than just expose evil (makes visible), it transforms the evil, v14. "This disclosure of people's sins effected through believers' lives enables men and women to see the nature of their deeds. Some abandon the darkness of sin and respond to the light so that they become light themselves", O'Brien.

The object of this exposing and transforming of evil is often viewed as societal change, although it is more likely that Paul has in mind the hidden sins of the Christian community - Paul's words are primarily focused on the church community, not society at large. A pagan lifestyle has no place in a Christian community.

v] Homiletics: *Live as children of light*

Although we are primarily responsible for our own actions before God, there is a sense where the community of believers is bound to take responsibility for immoral behaviour within their own fellowship group.

Paul warns us of three areas of immorality, with a particular focus on sexual immorality:

- The deed itself. The word used is "immorality" (uncleanness) which covers all areas of sexual activity outside marriage.
- The intent. The word used is "covetousness". This is the constant imagining and preparing for immoral behaviour such that it becomes our centre of being. Paul is not speaking about the careless thought.
- Filthy talk.

Paul gives three reasons for "having nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness":

- Such behaviour is "improper for God's holy people." It does not reflect Christ, whose image the fellowship bears.
- It denies "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ." A believer can slip and fall, but involvement in a life-style of immorality aligns the believer with those who have no place in God's eternal family.
- It inevitably prompts "God's wrath". A determined use and abuse of others stirs God's anger.

Paul encourages his readers to do three things:

• "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness." There shouldn't even be a hint of impurity or covetousness within the fellowship.

• "Live as children of light". Affirm "goodness, righteousness and truth."

• "Expose" immorality within the fellowship. Certainly not in a judgemental way, but through the exposition of God's Word. Remember, Jesus' words have the power to reclaim the "sleeper".

Text - 5:3

Live as children of the light, v3-14: i] Abstain from evil, v3-6; a) Avoid sin, particularly those sins of a sexual nature, v3-4. Having just spoken about divine love, compassion, Paul now has something to say about the denigration of love in sexual conduct and speech.

δε "**but**" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument. Paul has just encouraged his readers to walk in love, and so now he mentions the negative side of the coin - "Yet, as for fornication .... may they be not so much as mentioned among you", Cassirer.

εν + dat. "**among [you]**" - [FORNICATION AND ALL IMPURITY OR GREEDINESS, LET IT NOT BE NAMED] IN [YOU]. Here Local, expressing space, association; "among you."

μηδε ονομαζεσθω [ονομαζω] pres. pas. imp. "**there must not be even a hint of**" - LET IT NOT BE NAMED. Probably "should not even be so much as mentioned", Barclay, by way of underlining the evil rather than prohibiting discussion on such human failings. Possibly in the sense of encouraging behaviour which even removes the opportunity of gossip, let alone the sin itself; "no one should ever have a reason to talk about any of you ever doing such things", TH.

ακαθαρσια "**impurity**" - IMPURITY, UNCLEANNESS. Along with "fornication" and "greediness", nominative subject of the verb "to be named." Possibly the phrase "sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity" may well read "fornication which is impurity." As for πορνεια, it refers to sexual activity outside of a marriage relationship.

πλεονεξια "**[or] of greed**" - [OR] GREEDINESS, COVETOUSNESS. Probably alluding to sexual thought or intent.

καθως "**because**" - AS [IS PROPER]. Sometimes with a causal sense, so NIV, although usually serving as a comparison of manner; "such is the proper way for saints", Berkeley. Some commentators handle this clause as if referring to the discussion of sexual evils, rather than the doing of them. Surely the issue is sexual

misconduct, whereas the issue of filthy talk is raised in v4. "This is the proper course for saints (believers) to take", Moffatt.

ἁγιοις [ος] dat. "**for God's holy people**" - tO BELIEVERS, SAINTS. Dative of interest, advantage, as NIV, although Larkin suggests a dative of reference, "with respect to the saints."

v4

As for conversation, avoid foul language, "foolish talk" (possibly "dirty talk"), and sexual innuendoes (dirty jokes). It would be better to talk about all we owe to God.

και "**nor should there be**" - AND. Possibly adjunctive, "also", but better just as a connective. The NIV states the assumed μηδε ονομαζεσθω, "let it not be named."

αισχροτης [ης ητος] "**obscenity**" - FILTHY TALK. As with the two nouns following, nominative subject of the assumed verb "let it not be named." All three nouns refer to sexually inappropriate talk - dirty jokes and the like. "You must have nothing to do with obscene language and stupid and frivolous talk", Barclay.

και "-" - AND [ALL IMPURITY OR GREEDINESS]. Probably coordinative, as NIV; "neither obscenity, nor foul talk, nor (ἢ, "or"), course jesting." Possibly epexegetic, so Larkin; "nor obscene speech, that is, silly talk or ribald humour."

ουκ ανηκεν [ανηκω] imperf. "**[which] are out of place**" - [WHICH (referring to all three examples of indecent speech)] ARE NOT BELONGING TO, FITTING. The imperfect is durative expressing "very much unfitting and still going on." "All this is wrong for you", NJB.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT [RATHER]. Adversative.

ευχαριστια [α] "**thanksgiving**" - THANKFULNESS. Again, nominative subject of the implied verb "let it be named." One would expect the opposite of grubby talk to be gracious talk. Instead of allowing our minds to work on the dirt-track we would do better to talk about "all that we owe to God", Phillips.

v5

b) We must avoid acting like unbelievers, for unbelievers, with all their immorality, have no place in the kingdom of God, v5. Such behaviour stirs up the wrath of God, v6. It is very unlikely that Paul is saying that a believer who is "immoral, impure or greedy" has no place in the kingdom. It is a sad fact, but true, we are all to some degree, and at times blatantly so, immoral, impure or greedy. We are all flawed, and it is but by the grace of God that we are able to stand acceptable in his sight. Paul's point is that as believers, we are a new person in Jesus, and as such we must strive to not live like the old person, that person who has no place in the kingdom of God and for whom divine wrath is inevitable.

γαρ "**for**" - BECAUSE. Introducing a causal clause explaining why the readers should not ....., v3, 4, namely, because this is the behaviour of a person who has no part in the kingdom of God.

τουτο "**of this**" - THIS. Forward referencing to the content of the dependent statement following, namely, "that no immoral, impure ....."

γινωσκοντες [γινωσκω] pres. part. "**[of this you can be] sure**" - [YOU KNOW] KNOWING. It is likely that the verb ιστε [οἶδα, "to know") + the participle, forms an unusual periphrastic construction used to express a common Aramaic form, intensifying verbal aspect, as NIV. As such the verb imperative verb "to know" is treated as an indicative.

ὁτι "-" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they can be sure of.

ὅ neut. rel. pro. "**such a man / person [is]**" - [EVERY FORNICATOR, OR IMPURE PERSON, OR COVETOUS PERSON] WHICH [IS]. The antecedent of this relative pronoun is the nominative masculine noun πλεονεκτης, "greedy person", rather than all three persons. It is neuter, rather than masculine, since it is addressing the idea of greed rather than the greedy person, so, "with reference to the whole idea of [idolatry]", Moule.

ειδωλολατρης [ης ου] "**an idolater**" - AN IDOLATER. The link between covetousness and idolatry is an interesting one, cf., Col.3:5. Covetousness involves worshiping the creation as if it were the creator. In this context it is sexual covetousness - sex as the centre of life. It is necessary to remind ourselves that all believers regularly sin, and all too regularly sin in the sexual department. For many, a broken marriage or relationship is the consequence, a situation compounded by the establishment of a new union. Yet, such failure does not bar us from the kingdom of heaven, for the kingdom is for redeemed people, not perfectly obedient people. None-the-less, we must avoid immorality, as best we can, for the habitual and determined flouting of God's moral guidelines is the behaviour of a person who does not stand under God's grace and who has no part in the kingdom of God. The clause works well as a parenthesis, "no one who is immoral, indecent, or greedy (for greed is a form of idolatry) ..." TEV.

εν + dat. "**in**" - [DOES NOT HAVE AN INHERITANCE] IN. Local, expressing space. A believer's inheritance is found in the domain ruled by Christ.

τῃ βασιλειᾳ [α] "**the kingdom**" - THE KINGDOM. The domain / dominion of God's righteous reign.

του χριστου και θεου "**of Christ and of God**" - OF CHRIST AND OF GOD, The genitives are adjectival, possessive / subjective. A possible example of Granville Sharp's rule where an articular noun joined by και to an anarthrous noun indicates that the second noun is explaining / describing the first. Such a

construction would support the doctrine of the trinity, yet here the articular noun "the Christ" serves as a title, and "God" (for "God the Father") is often without an article. Paul's reference to the "**kingdom of Christ and of God**" is unusual, to say the least. Paul sees the kingdom in terms of rule. Christ rules for the present, and when all is subject to his rule, he will hand over his rule (the kingdom) to the Father, although, in the end, their reign entails a partnership, so "the mutual reign of Christ and the Father." None-the-less, there are quite a few variants at this point and we may be safer with "can inherit the kingdom of God", RJB.

v6

μηδεις ... απατατω [απαταω] pres. imp. "**let no one deceive**" - LET NOT DECEIVE, MISLEAD [YOU]. The negation of the present imperative may express a command to cease an ongoing action. "Stop letting people trick you."

κενοις dat. adj. "**[with] empty**" - [IN] FOOLISH, EMPTY, WORTHLESS [WORDS]. Attributive adjective limiting the instrumental dative noun "words", "by empty words", or as NIV, expressing manner, "with empty words." Arguments that promote sexual permissiveness are "empty", they are "devoid of the truth", O'Brien.

γαρ "**for**" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why the reader should not be deceived with / by empty words.

δια + acc. "**because of**" - BECAUSE OF [THESE THINGS]. Causal. Referring to the sexual vices covered in v3-5.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**God's [wrath]**" - [THE WRATH] OF GOD. The genitive may be adjectival, possessive, as NIV, subjective, "God exercises wrath", or idiomatic / source, agent of the wrath.

ερχεται [ερχομαι] pres. "**comes**" - COMES. The present tense may indicate that those who ignore God face his anger, and thus his judgment, in the present. Possibly a futuristic present, "will come on", but more likely expressing judgment as part of an ongoing process of action, reaction; "it is these very things which bring down the wrath of God upon the disobedient", Phillips.

επι + gen. "**on**" - UPON. Spatial; "upon".

της απειθειας [α] "**[those who are] disobedient**" - [THE SONS] OF DISOBEDIENCE. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, "disobedient sons." A Semitic phrase used to refer to those who are disobedient to God's will. Paul may be referring to unbelievers, and certainly most commentators see Paul's words in this passage as drawing a distinction between believers (the children of light) and unbelievers (those in the darkness). Yet, Paul may be referring to unexposed sin within the Christian fellowship.

v7

ii] Walk in the light and not in the darkness, v7-14. Paul draws on the image of light to further his ethical instructions. A believer is to περιπατειτε, "walk / live / conduct oneself", in unity, holiness and love; we are to "walk" in light, live in a way that images the brightness of God's goodness rather than participate in the works of darkness. a) As children of light, do not partner with darkness, v7-10. Again, the indicative drives the imperative. We are children of light, v8, and because we are children of light we should not live in darkness, we should not partner it, v7, rather we should bear the fruit of our living in the light, the fruit of "goodness, righteousness and truth", v9.

ουν "**therefore**" - Introducing a logical conclusion / inferential.

συμμετοχοι [ος] "**partners**" - [BE NOT] JOINT PARTAKERS. Referring to someone who shares together with another; "don't have anything to do with anyone (anything?) like that", CEV.

αυτων gen. "**with them**" - OF THEM. The genitive is adverbial, expressing association. Probably, "with those type of things", ie., Paul is not telling us that we should not associate "with people like that", Barclay, but rather that we should not associate with / "participate in their lifestyle", Hoehner.

v8

Paul's readers were once in darkness, lost and alone, but in Christ they are light, therefore they should live as children of the light.

γαρ "**for**" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why Paul's readers should not participate in the lifestyle of those under the judgment of God, namely, because "you are all light now that you are in union with the Lord", Cassirer.

σκοτος ... φως "**darkness .... light**" - [YOU WERE ONCE] DARKNESS [BUT NOW] LIGHT. Here the imagery of darkness and light represents the life of a person lived in ignorance producing the fruit of immorality, while light represents the life of a person who, radiated by the divine Word (revelation, the knowledge of God), produce the fruit of holiness. The genitive noun φωτος, "light", is possibly epexegetic, "children who are characterized by light (Hoehner, "descriptive"), or attributive, "enlightened children", so Best.

εν κυριῳ "**in the Lord**" - IN/WITH LORD. Local, sphere / incorporative union; "in union with Jesus". A believer is a new person in Christ. As far as God is concerned, our old sinful self is no more, and this because we possess the righteousness of Christ. More than that, Christ's compelling love indwells us, shaping the image of Christ's righteousness within. Thus, we are "light in the Lord", and as a natural response, will tend to "live as children of light". So, Paul's exhortation is "be what we are." A child of the light will always fall short of

God's perfect standards, but thankfully we stand in Jesus' perfection. "Your connection with the Lord has made you light", Barclay.

περιπατειτε [περιπατεω] pres. imp. "**live**" - *therefore* WALK. "Walk" in the sense of "conduct oneself." An inferential ουν, "therefore", can be assumed. Its lack strengthens the imperative, so Larkin.

ὡς "**as**" - AS [CHILDREN OF LIGHT]. This comparative is not introducing a comparison, "like children of light", and certainly not "as if ...", but of a believer's alignment with a characteristic quality, "the standard of how believers are to walk", Merkle; "their lives are to be characterized by light", O'Brien.

v9

This verse is best taken as a parenthesis with v10 following on from v 8. Paul lists three fruits. First, "goodness", which may mean generosity, but is probably much wider in meaning. He could even mean purity. Second, "righteousness" - right doing in the fashion of God's behaviour, Eph.4:2. Third, "truth" - truth of speech, Eph.4:25.

γαρ "**for**" - Here more reason than cause, explanatory.

του φωτος [ως ωτος] gen. "**of the light**" - [THE FRUIT] OF THE LIGHT. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / of production; "the light brings as its harvest", Barclay.

εν "***consists* in**" - *is* IN [ALL GOODNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS AND TRUTH]. Local, expressing sphere, the sphere within which the fruit operates, although Merkle prefers reference / respect, ie., what the new life in the light is like. There is no verb in the sentence and so one must be supplied, so NIV "consists in"; "is characterized by", O'Brien.

v10

Paul encourages his readers to work out what is "acceptable" (better than "pleasing") to God.

δοκιμαζοντες [δοκιμαζω] pres. part. "**find out**" - TESTING, PROVING / BEING ACCEPTED AS PROVED, APPROVED. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the imperative verb περιπατειτε, "walk", v8; walk as children of light .... and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord", ESV. Possibly adverbial, modal, expressing the manner of the walk, "walk .... discerning", even temporal, "while endeavouring to learn", Cassirer. Of the two meanings of this verb, the sense "having evaluated the worth of" seems best here, as NIV.

ευαρεστον [ος] "**[what] pleases**" - [WHAT IS] ACCEPTABLE, PLEASING. The ethical idea of acting in a way that is pleasing to God is often used as a motivation for right living. Certainly, Paul in 2Cor.5:9 says "we make it our goal to please

him", but doesn't quite define what actually pleases God. It is reasonable to assume that "goodness, righteousness and truth" is pleasing to God, for these qualities are of his nature. The problem is that when exhibited in our lives, they are always compromised and could therefore never be pleasing to God - our "righteousness is but filthy rags." The only righteousness pleasing to God is Christ's righteousness, and so the only way we can please God is to possess that righteousness "in Christ" - a righteousness which is possessed as a gift of grace appropriated through faith. Since the word is used here in the context of ethics, we are best to move to the sense "acceptable"; "the test of the approval of the Lord", Barclay; "try to discover what the Lord wants you to do", NJB.

τῳ κυριῳ [ος] "**the Lord**" - TO THE LORD. Dative of indirect object. A classification of interest, advantage, is suspect in that nothing we do is to God's advantage.

v11

iv] As children of light, do not practise the deeds of darkness, v11-13. "Believers are not to be fellow participants with the evildoers, nor are they to become involved with their works. Rather they are to expose those works. The reason believers are not to become involved with such activity is because these works are too shameful even to mention", Hoehner. Given v12, Paul presumably has in mind the excesses of paganism, ie., he is not suggesting we become *wowsers*, Pharisees fussing about *insect* law while ignoring weightier moral issues. Given v13, Caird may be right in suggesting that the darkness is exposed by its comparison with the light - the godly behaviour of the committed believers. Once let in, the light "has the miraculous power, not only to reveal, but to transform", Caird. Illuminated by the Word of God, darkness is dispelled from a community of believers. Note that the division of v13 and 14 is disputed. The more modern division, as NIV11, is to be preferred.

και "-" - AND. Coordinative.

μη συγκοινωνειτε [συγκοινωνεω] pres. imp. "**have nothing to do with**" - DO NOT PARTICIPATE, HAVE NO SHARE IN, PART IN. It is not "don't associate with corrupted people", but rather, "don't associate with the corruption." "Don't take part in", CEV.

τοις εργοις [ον] dat. "**the [fruitless] deeds**" - IN THE [UNFRUITFUL] WORKS. Dative of direct object after a συν prefix verb, "fellow participants with."

του σκοτους [ος] gen. "**of darkness**" - OF DARKNESS. The genitive may be classified as adjectival, verbal, subjective, or idiomatic / source, "the unfruitful works out of darkness", even attributive, limiting "fruitless deeds"; "which have their home in darkness", Cassirer

μαλλον δε και "**but rather**" - RATHER BUT EVEN. An adversative comparative construction made up of the adverb μαλλον, "instead", the adversative, δε, "but" and the ascensive και, "even"; "but, on the contrary", NJB.

ελεγχετε [ελεγχω] imp. "**expose**" - EXPOSE, REPROVE, CONVICT. Most translators opt for the sense "expose" in the sense of "show up the deeds of darkness for what they are", rather than "convict, reprove", or "condemn", NAB. Commentators tend to agree, arguing that a believer exposes evil by the glare of their own righteous life, cf., v13-14a. It is, of course, possible to argue that deeds of darkness are "exposed" by the truth of God's Word. Is the Word of God the "light" which "enlightens"? cf., v13.

"***them***" - *them*. The object of the exposing is unstated in the Greek. Possibly referring to those who commit sin, such that a believer is to confront the perpetrator, but given the context, confronting the sin, with respect to our own lives, is more likely. We are to "expose / condemn" these "deeds of darkness." They are "fruitless" in that they have no worthwhile product. Not only must they not be done, but they must be exposed. If the exposure is beyond ourselves, then it is likely that the exposure is of evil within the church, Matt.18:15, rather than of evil within society. The prophets of Israel primarily confronted the evils of Israel rather than those of the godless nations. "Set your faces against them, those unprofitable deeds of darkness."

v12

It is even difficult to speak of such shameful things openly.

γαρ "**for**" - FOR. More reason than cause; "the reason the fruitless deeds of darkness are to be avoided and why certain sins must be exposed", Merkle, so also O'Brien. The Gk. sentence made up of v12-14, rather than stating a reason for not participating in evil, outlines the reason for exposing it; "because ...."

και "**even**" - [IT IS SHAMEFUL] AND = EVEN. Here ascensive, "even", as NIV.

λεγειν [λεγω] pres. inf. "**to mention**" - TO SAY. The infinitive serves as the subject of the verb to-be εστιν, "to speak is shameful"; "one is indeed shamed even to speak", Moffatt.

τα .. γινομενα [γινομαι] pres. part. "**what [the disobedient] do**" - THE THINGS BEING DONE. The participle serves as a substantive with the placement of the article making "the things being done" emphatic by position. These things done by the disobedient in secret are probably of a sexual nature and are so are debased - they really not something any decent person wants to talk about.

ὑπ [ὑπο] + gen. "-" - BY [THEM]. Expressing agency.

κρυφῃ dat. "**in secret**" - IN SECRET = SECRETLY. Often with the preposition εν + dat. so "in secret", adverbial, modal, expressing the manner the way the evil deeds are done; "secretly".

v13-14a

Once such deeds are illuminated by God's Word, particularly within a congregational setting, then they are seen for what they are. The light is "capable of 'showing up' everything for what it really is. It is even possible (after all, it happened with you!) for light to turn the thing it shines upon into light also", Phillips. The light of Christ's Word has the power to renew.

δε "**but**" - but/and. Here adversative, as NIV.

τα ... ελεγχομενα [ελεγχω] pres. part. "**exposed**" - THE [ALL] THINGS BEING CONVICTED = EXPOSED, ILLUMINED. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to become visible". "Exposed" is somewhat pejorative, so "illumined", NEB.

ὑπο + gen. "**by**" - BY [THE LIGHT]. The preposition expresses agency here. Often, particularly in Ephesians, a prepositional phrase precedes the verb or participle it qualifies, so "by the light" qualifies "becomes visible" rather than "exposed"; "everything exposed becomes visible by the light."

φανερουται [φανεροω] pres. pas. "**becomes visible**" - BECOMES KNOWN, REVEALED, ILLUMINED, VISIBLE. The sense of this sentence is unclear. It is often argued that a believer's practice of personal righteousness serves to expose "shameful things / shameful persons", but the psychological ramifications (pharisaism) of such an ethical imperative is troublesome. It is possible that "the works of darkness", these "shameful things", are exposed by the light of God's word. These deeds, probably of a sexual nature, are done in secret, not spoken of, and so survive in some acceptable form, but their evil is exposed when they are illumined by divine truth.

γαρ "**for / and**" - FOR. In earlier translations παν γαρ introduces v14, but it is obviously a continuation of v13. Yet, how does it contribute to v13? Many translations, as NIV, take the cause / reason line, "for", but how does v14a explain v13? TNIV takes γαρ as a connective, ie., as if γαρ here stands in for δε, "and". If this is correct, then we have is two balanced statements, one negative and one positive, with γαρ serving as a stitching device. The sexually corrupt lifestyle, quietly operating in the background with some social acceptance, is shown up for what it really is by the light of God's word, and at the same time that lifestyle, when illumined by God's word, can be healed, renewed, reshaped in line with God's intention for human life. "Light is capable of 'showing up' everything for what it really is. It is even possible (after all, it happened with you!) for light to turn the thing it shines upon into light also", Phillips.

το φανερουμενον [φανεροω] pres. pas. part. "**visible**" - [ALL] THE THINGS BEING ILLUMINED [ARE LIGHT]. The participle serves as a substantive, subject of the verb to-be. The light of Christ's Word has the power to renew; it moves us

from darkness to light. When our sin is exposed to the radiance of God's Word of grace, its power diminishes, its darkness fades, and we enter again the realm of light. "Everything thus illumined is light", NEB.

v14b

c) Concluding statement - in Christ there is enlightenment, v14. Believers have risen to new life in Christ, they are "illumined", and therefore they should be what they are.

The Greek form of these words is metrical, indicating a hymn source, so Barth, possibly alluding to scripture, eg., Isa.26:19, 51:17, 60:1. Leaney argues that it is part of a baptismal liturgy, possibly addressed to the catechumen, so Mitton. Moule notes a curious parallel with Acts 12:7, but it is obviously not its source. The point of the quote is that some of Paul's readers are sleeping in the unfruitful works of darkness and they need to wake up ("rise from the dead"). The statement "Christ will shine on you" seems to express approval, so Hoehner, and thus salvation, "make your face shine upon us that we may be saved", Ps.80:3, 7, 19. Possibly enlightenment may be the sense, "Christ will be a light to you", Christ will guide you. Variant "Christ will touch you", Jerome = "*you will be healed from sin*", reflects the difficulty that exists in interpreting the verse

διο "**this is why [it is said]**" - THEREFORE [IT IS SAID]. Inferential; drawing a logical conclusion. The use of an impersonal inscription, rather than saying "Isaiah wrote / said", reflects the tendency not to mention the name of God; "thus says the Lord God." This, of course, assumes that it is a rough quote from Isaiah 60:1. Other suggested sources include a baptismal liturgy, or an early Christian hymn, cf., NEB.

ὁ καθευδων [καθευδω] pres. part. "**sleeper**" - [ARISE] THE ONE SLEEPING. The participle serves as a substantive.

αναστα [ανιστημι] aor. imp. "**rise**" - RISE UP. Presumably the imperative has already been fulfilled in our conversion, that is, we have got up from our sleep, risen from the dead. So, the implication is that since we have now risen from the dead we are in the light and therefore we should live in the light and not retreat again into the darkness.

εκ "**from**" - OUT OF [THE DEAD]. Expressing source / origin, or separation from, "away from."

σοι dat. pro "**[shine on] you**" - [AND CHRIST WILL SHINE ON] IN YOU. Dative of direct object after the verb "shine on."

5:15-21

4. The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9

v] Living in the light

Argument

This passage summarizes the argument so far and serves as a bridge to the exhortations on relationships within the family. Living "a life worthy of the calling you have received", 4:1, entails living carefully and wisely: redeeming the time, 5:16, understanding the will of the Lord, v17, and being filled by the Spirit, v18. Paul goes on to explain the idea of the Spirit's filling in four clauses, v19-21. Each clause is introduced by a consecutive participle - "speaking", "singing and making music", "giving thanks" and "submitting."

Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-16. The exhortation to "live a life worthy of the calling you have received", 4:1, is expounded in detail through to 6:9. Our passage for study is a summary of the argument so far and serves as a bridge to the more practical issues covered in 5:22-6:9.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *Living in the light*:

The aim of a wise walk - make the most of every opportunity, v15-16.
The practice of a wise walk, v17-20:
Know the mind of Christ, v17;
Be filled by the Spirit, v18:
Communicating, v19a;
Singing, v19b;
Thanking, v20;
Submitting, v21.

iv] Interpretation:

Paul again uses the verb περιπατεω, "to walk", to introduce another aspect of the Christian life. He has called on his readers to walk in unity, holiness, love and light, and now he calls on them to walk in wisdom, "circumspectly", Hoehner. This is all about using the mind, thinking, adopting a proper perspective that enables an understanding of our corrupted environment, and to then make the best use of the limited opportunities we possess in service to our Lord.

Two elements that enable this walk are identified. The first is knowing the Lord's will, knowing the mind of Christ through the study of his word.

A walk in wisdom is governed by a mind which is instructed by the Word of God - knowing the mind of Christ enables our walk with Christ. The second is being filled by the Spirit. Alcohol does stimulate the senses, although we are very aware of its downside, but the inspiration of the Spirit is a far more reliable stimulant for the senses because it empowers our walk in wisdom.

Paul amplifies this *filling* with five participles: communicating, singing, making music, thanking and submitting. Although they are often translated as imperatives (attendant circumstance participles, attendant on the imperative "be filled [by the Spirit]"), it is more likely that they are adverbial, consecutive, expressing the result of this filling, so O'Brien; "Spirit-filled Christians are people whose lives are characterized by singing, thanksgiving and mutual submission", O'Brien. The last participle, "submitting", is applied to marriage, family and business obligations, 5:22-6:9. It is best to start the section on marriage, family and business obligations with v21, but it is also important to remember that "submitting" modifies the imperative "be filled by the Spirit."

Filled with / by the Spirit: The preposition εν causes some confusion here. It seems best to follow O'Brien who argues that the filling is not "with" the Holy Spirit, but is "by" the Holy Spirit, ie., instrumental, expressing means. A large number of commentators support the instrumental sense, such that the filling is undertaken by the Spirt, although they tend toward the view that the content of that filling is the Spirit, so "by" + "with"; Hoehner, Best, Robinson, Snodgrass, Lincoln, Bruce, Fee, ... If we follow O'Brien then the content of the filling is unstated. He argues that in Paul's letters *fullness* relates to being filled with the fullness of God, 3:19, or particularly Christ, Col.1:19, 2:9, ie., the Spirit is the one who facilitates the filling, he mediates the fullness of God / Christ to believers. "Paul's readers are to be transformed by the Spirit into the likeness of God and Christ", O'Brien. The means of this transformation seems likely to be the Word of God, its hearing, teaching and assimilation. Paul has explicitly stated this fact in v17, such that the wise walk of a Christian is a circumspect walk where the Word of God shapes Christ-likeness in a believer through / by means of the renewing work of the Spirit. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom by means of Spirit-inspired psalms, hymns and songs", Col.3:16.

Charismatic and Pentecostal brethren see "filled with the Spirit", along with "baptized with the Holy Spirit", as a second work of grace in the life

of a believer. It is widely held that a person believes in Jesus and is forgiven, and then later receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. Hard-line Pentecostals believe that this gift of the Holy Spirit (given through prayer and the laying on of hands) involves regeneration (being "born again") and so they believe that most mainline Christians aren't really Christians at all because they haven't received the "second blessing." Most Charismatic believers do not take such an extreme position. They believe that the Spirit is given, as a second work of grace (the first being regeneration - the washing of the Spirit to make a person a born-again child of God), to empower the believer to live the "spirit-filled" life. Before the turn of the century, the Holiness movement taught that the Spirit-filled life showed itself in holy living, even sinless living. Today, Charismatic believers focus on the "gifts of the Spirit", particularly the miraculous gifts, initially demonstrated in tongue speaking.

This two-level way of viewing the Christian life is less than satisfactory, given that "if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ he does not belong to Christ", Rom.8:9. When a person believes in Jesus they are indwelt with the Spirit of Christ, Act.2:38,39. At that moment they are born anew and may access the full potential of the Spirit's endowment. None-the-less, Charismatic brethren have rightly identified a substantial failure within mainline Christianity, namely, the failure to access the full potential of the Spirit's gifting.

v] Homiletics: *Be filled by the Spirit*

At the beginning of each year, we assess the achievements of the past, and we dream the dreams of the future. In fact, C.S. Lewis said that this was part of the human problem. We often tend to live in unreality. Our lives are focused on two areas. First, there is all that could have been, but never was. We live with regret, don't we? All those spent and wasted opportunities seem to eat at us. How we wish things could have been different. And second, there is all that we hope will be. The dreams for the future. We live them, relive them, but rarely see them come to anything. All that ever happens is that the years pass quickly, ever more quickly. Jesus addresses our problem with the words: "each day has enough trouble of its own". The moment is what matters, rather than worrying about the past, or the future.

There are different ways we can focus on the present moment, and Paul, in our reading today, gives us an idea to focus on. He encourages us to "be very careful how you live", or as Paul literally put it, "watch carefully how you walk." We must pay close attention to our behaviour.

Actually, his exhortation in v15 really repeats what he said in the first verse of Chapter 4 of Ephesians: "live a life worthy of the calling you have received."

Paul identifies three ways of walking worthily:

• Living wisely, v15, 16. God's Word reminds us that the "days are evil." This age is corrupt, and is corrupting. In this fading moment, living worthily entails being perceptive. As Paul reminds us in Colossians 4:5, "be wise in the way you act toward outsiders, make the most of every opportunity."

• Understanding the Lord's will, v17. An essential part of the Christian journey involves an ever-increasing understanding of God's eternal truth. We need to give time to hearing sermons, reading and studying the Bible, with the knowledge that the Spirit of Christ enlightens our minds and opens our hearts. Taking on the mind of Christ shapes what we are in Christ.

• Being filled by the Spirit v19-21. Being filled with divine characteristics, with graciousness, kindness, forgiveness.... is a work of the Spirit. This infilling prompts praise and thanksgiving in worship, along with a mutual submission to each other's spiritual gifts. Living worthily entails taking on the character of Christ.

So, as Bill Junkins put it, "behave in a manner in keeping with the life and task to which you have been summoned", 4:1.

Text - 5:15

Walk wisely, v15-21: i] The admonition, v15-16. Paul encourages his readers to be wise, thoughtful, circumspect, when dealing with life's difficulties, and to do so maximizing the opportunities for wise living, especially as the time is short - judgement is near, 1Cor.7:29. Make the most of every day and do so wisely.

βλεπετε [βλεπω] pres. imp. "**be [very careful]**" - WATCH [CAREFULLY, DILIGENTLY, WELL]. "Give close attention to your behaviour."

ουν "**then**" - THEREFORE. An inferential sense, as NIV, is possible, although a resumptive / transitional function, serving to introduce a new section / paragraph, is more likely; "Pay careful attention to the kind of life you live", Barclay.

πῶς "**how**" - HOW, IN WHAT WAY. After a cognitive verb this particle indicates an indirect question, "how", as NIV, but also a dependent statement, "be careful that you walk, not as unwise, but as wise." A variant reading exists where "how" is placed before the adverb "carefully" so modifying "live (walk)" rather than "be (watch); "see then that you walk circumspectly", AV.

περιπατειτε [περιπατεω] pres. "**live**" - YOU WALK. Conduct yourselves; "you must take very special care about your conduct", Mitton. This is the fifth and final usage of this verb in Ephesians. As already noted, Hoehner uses it as the key to the structure of the ethical section in Ephesians; walk in unity, holiness, love, light, and now wisdom.

αλλ [αλλα] "**but**" - [NOT AS UNWISE] BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction. Note the repeated counterpoint structure of v15, 17, and 18, namely, μη ..... αλλα, "not ..... but ....."

ὡς "**as**" - AS [WISE]. This comparative particle expresses a characteristic quality here rather than a comparison; not "like" wise people, but "as" wise people, ie., live wisely - denoting manner. The wise understand God's purpose and apply their life to it, while the foolish ignore it. So, the first thing a believer should pay close attention to is an understanding of the mind of Christ. "Do not live like ignorant people, but as wise people", TEV.

v16

This "evil age", Gal.1:4, is a time invaded by the powers of darkness, and as such, its time is short - its judgement is near, 1Cor.7:29. So, we must make the most of every day.

εξαγοραζομενοι [εξαγοραζω] pres. part. "**making the most of [every opportunity]**" - redeeming [the time]. The prefix εξ intensifies, so O'Brien. The participle is probably adverbial, possibly instrumental, expressing the means by which the reader is to be "wise", "by means of ...", but it could also be modal, expressing manner, how to walk wisely. The participle may even be attendant circumstance, expressing action accompanying the imperative "look [carefully how you walk]", in which case the participle would serve as an imperative, so Barth; "make the best use of time." "Making the most / redeeming / seizing the opportunity", is a word that comes out of commercial life, of making a good deal when the opportunity presents itself. So, the exhortation encourages believers to grab onto every opportunity to live wisely, isolating the moment for the Lord rather than wasting it. cf., Dan.2:8. "Make the best of the present time, for it is a wicked age", NJB.

ὁτι "**because**" - BECAUSE [THE DAYS ARE EVIL]. Here causal. The complete phrase picks up on the scriptural description of life in the here and now in the terms of "this present age", "the present evil age", an age that is "morally reprehensible." Of course, it is not the "days / time" that is evil, but those who operate in these days, ie., sinful humanity, so Best. There is the possibility that an eschatological sense is intended, ie., the "evil days" = "the last days", the time of tribulation before the return of Christ when believers must make the most of every moment, so "<u>because</u> we are living in the final moments of human history."

v17

ii] Practical instruction, v17-21: a) Do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is, v17. To shape practical morality in the life of the individual it is essential to be able to "test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will", Rom.12:2. In our age, the divine will is revealed to us in the scriptures.

δια τουτο "**therefore**" - BECAUSE OF THIS. Inferential rather than causal, so "therefore", as NIV. Often used to introduce an important proposition.

μη γινεσθε [γινομαι] pres. imp. "**do not be**" - DO NOT BE [FOOLISH]. The fool, in Old Testament wisdom, is the person who does not recognize their place under the Lord; they do not recognize that "the beginning of wisdom is the fear (respect) of the Lord." "Don't be vague, but firmly grasp what you know to be the will of the Lord", Phillips.

αλλα "**but**" - Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction.

συνιετε [συνιημι] pres. imp. "**understand**" - THINK ABOUT, REASON SOMETHING THROUGH, GAIN INSIGHT, COMPREHEND. The present imperative is best rendered "try to understand", NEB. God reveals his will, in this context his moral purpose, and the task of the believer is to understand it. As is always the case, "knowing" is more than intellectual assent.

του κυριου gen " **of the Lord**" - [WHAT *is* THE WILL] OF THE LORD. The genitive may be classified as adjectival, verbal, subjective, God does the willing, although better possessive, of characteristic truths possessed by Christ, "the Lord's will", TNIV. Although usually "God's will", here referring to Christ. Paul is again making the point that a believer's life is shaped "in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus", 4:20, 21. This idea has nothing to do with personal guidance, cf., TEV, but rather God's plan to gather a people to himself by grace through faith. The way of salvation is the truth we must understand.

v18

b) Don't get drunk with wine, but be filled by the Spirit; speaking, singing, giving thanks and submitting, v17-21. "Understand the Lord's will", or to put it another way, "be filled by the Spirit." As noted above, although the phrase often appears as "filled with the Spirit", as if the Spirit is the content of the filling, it is best taken as "filled by the Spirit", in the sense of the Spirit doing the filling. He fills us with "the fullness of God", fills us with Christ, in that he "leads us into all truth" and shapes within us the character of Christ, characteristics of "power and love and self-control", 2Tim.1:7.

μη μεθυσκεσθε [μεθυσκω] pres. imp. "**do not get drunk**" - [AND] DO NOT GET DRUNK. The present tense here is best taken as gnomic, so "don't get yourself

drunk", rather than "stop getting drunk." The present imperative here does not mean that Paul's readers are necessarily getting drunk, but rather serves as a prohibition against a particular course of action. This prohibition comes out of the blue. Does Paul know something of his readers? It is more likely he is using the prohibition as a foil for the following exhortation. The phrase reflects a quote from Prov.13:31 and expresses a sentiment often found in the New Testament, Lk.15:13, Tit.1:6, 1Peter.4:4. "Don't destroy yourselves by getting drunk", CEV.

οινῳ [ος] dat. "**on wine**" - WITH WINE. The dative is instrumental, expressing means; "with wine", ESV.

εν ᾧ "**which**" - IN / BY WHICH. This prepositional phrase, expressing result, refers to getting drunk due to an excess of wine, not to the wine itself. The use of the preposition εν here is unusual as εις would be expected when expressing purpose / result; "that way debauchery lies", Barclay.

ασωτια [α] "**debauchery**" - RECKLESS LIVING, DISSIPATION, DEBAUCHERY, EXTRAVAGANCE [IS]. Nominative subject of the verb to-be, Getting drunk "will only ruin you", TEV.

αλλ [αλλα] "**but**" - Concluding the third counterpoint construction; "not ..... but ....."

πληρουσθε [πληροω] pres. imp. "**be filled**" - BE FILLED. The present tense, being imperfective, durative, may express "be continually filled with / by the Spirit." As already noted, we are not told what this "filling" entails, although the phrase has already been used in this letter. We must be "filled with all the fullness of God" and this filling is achieved when we "let the word of Christ dwell in" us. The word of God's grace in Christ makes us gracious, makes us Christ-like, makes us like God. The Spirit, as a work of grace through faith, shapes us into the image of God, makes us Christ-like, enables us to become what we are already in Christ. So, the filling by the Spirit, of the fullness of Christ, here refers to a process which begins at a believer's conversion and continues as the believer accesses the Spirit in their day-to-day life.

εν πνευματι "**with the Spirit**" - IN / WITH / BY SPIRIT. Clearly the Holy Spirit is intended rather than the human spirit, or psyche. The preposition εν may be locative, space / sphere, "in", or more particularly content, "with", or instrumental, "by". Armitage Robinson suggests the last two meanings are intended, but is this likely? Bruce opts for "with", O'Brien opts for an instrumental sense, "by". In 2:22 and 3:5, εν is obviously instrumental and is therefore translated "by the Spirit". In 6:18 it is also probably instrumental where "praying in the spirit" means praying under the Spirit's influence, guidance and assistance. So, here in 5:18 are we secure in following the NIV and most other translations by translating the phrase "with the Spirit"? Wallace, in his syntax,

argues that there are no instances in the New Testament where εν, "in", + the dative is used for content, the Spirit being the content of the filling. So, "Be filled by the Spirit", O'Brien.

v19

Those of the darkness, filled with wine, will sing songs of drunkenness, celebrating the joys of Bacchus; those filled by the Spirit, will sing songs of praise to Christ.

The following set of participles, "speaking", "singing and making [music]", giving [thanks]" and "submitting" are often regarded as imperatival, (we are being exhorted to sing etc.), ie., attendant on the imperatival verb "be filled", v18. Taken adverbially, other possibilities include either means, manner, or result. Result seems best, so O'Brien, Hoehner, Larkin, Lincoln, Merkle, ..., identifying the outcome of the action of the main verb "be filled", although modal, expressing manner, should not be discounted. In Colossians we are to "teach and admonish" rather than "speak". Presumably the context for this meaningful communication is Christian worship.

λαλουντες [λαλεω] pres. part. "**speak / speaking**" - SPEAKING [TO ONE ANOTHER]. The first quality resulting from a person being "filled" by the Spirit, is their "speaking" to one another in song; "addressing one another .....", ESV.

εν + dat. "**with**" - IN. Variant reading, although the following datives indicate an instrumental intention; "by means of."

ψαλμοις και ὑμνοις και ᾠδαις "**psalms, hymns and [spiritual] songs**" - PSALMS, HYMNS AND [SPIRITUAL] SONGS. Some commentators like to distinguish between the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, but they are probably just different terms for religious songs. None-the-less, some commentators argue that Paul, in this passage, gives us a glimpse of a normal church meeting. The members sing to one another, ie. antiphonally. The singing is offered to the Lord, rather than to each other (Note how many modern hymns are not hymns of praise to God, but are rather prayers, exhortations, ... even love songs). "Singing truth to one another in Old Testament psalms and Christian compositions."

πνευματικαις adj. "**spiritual**" - SPIRITUAL, This adjective probably qualifies all three nouns, although Fee does not agree. "Speaking to one another in spirit-inspired psalms, hymns and songs", O'Brien.

ψαλλοντες [ψαλλω] pres. part. "**make music**" - MAKING MUSIC. See the participle "speaking" above. "Singing songs" and "making music" express a single idea and are best treated as a parallel idea to speaking to one another. So, being filled by the Spirit entails "singing truth to each other." When believers meet, they meet with Jesus, and in that meeting they adore (worship) him. This they do in prayer, thanksgiving, hearing, and as here, in songs of praise. Praise

expresses one aspect of "Spirit filled", not so much because of its structure, but because of its content - ie., it is of truth.

τῃ καρδιᾳ [α] dat. "**in / from [your] heart**" - IN THE HEART [OF YOU]. A variant preposition εν exists. The NIV has opted for space / sphere, "in", while the TNIV has gone with a Hebrew influence giving the sense "from", eg. Ps.9:1. Instrumental seems best, means, so O'Brien, but possibly accompaniment; "with your heart", ESV.

τῳ κυριῳ [ος] dat. "**to the Lord**" - TO THE LORD. Dative of indirect object; "the singing is directed to the Lord", Hoehner.

v20

The second characteristic of the Spirit's filling is thanksgiving. This thanksgiving is to be offered "always", or better constantly, even regularly, and for "everything", for all things, in all circumstances. As is typical of prayer, the thanksgiving is offered to the Father through Jesus. It is offered "in the name of", that is, by / under the authority of the person of Jesus.

ευχαριστουντες [ευχαριστεω] pres. part. "**giving thanks**" - GIVING THANKS [ALWAYS]. The participle, as for "speaking" above. Giving thanks serves as the second characteristic of a person filled by the Spirit. Modifiers describe the thanksgiving: a) "always", it is regular, or better it is "constant"; b) "for everything", it is comprehensive. This does not mean that the Spirit's filling is displayed in giving thanks for disasters; c) "in the name of the Lord...", it is directed to God through Christ.

τῳ θεῳ και πατρι dat. "**to God the Father**" - THE GOD AND FATHER. An example of Grenville Sharp's Rule, where two coordinated (linked by και) singular personal, but not proper nouns, are associated by the use of an introductory article. Dative of direct object after the participle "giving thanks", indicating the direction of the thanksgiving.

ὑπερ + gen. "**for**" - FOR [ALL THING]. Expressing either advantage, "for" (taking παντων as masculine; "for all people"), or representation, "on behalf of", or possibly reference / respect, so Merkle. Possible "for all people", but more likely "everything". A nice stab at a possible sense is "always and <u>everywhere</u> giving thanks", NJB.

εν + dat. "**in [the name]**" - IN / BY THE NAME [OF THE LORD OF US, JESUS CHRIST]. Here instrumental; "<u>by the authority of</u> the name." The "name" represents the person, and in the case of "the Lord", his authority. The genitive "Jesus Christ" stands in apposition to "Lord". The genitive pronoun ὑμων, possibly expresses subordination, "the Lord over us, Jesus Christ."

v21

The final characteristic that results from the filling by the Spirit is "submitting." The NIV opts for a strong imperative (attendant circumstance), but as indicated above, adverbial, result, is more likely. The verb describes the submission of someone to another who is above them in authority, eg., military rank. The meaning here is hotly debated, particularly in its close proximity to headship in the home, 5:22ff. "Submitting to one another" either refers to mutual submission in the sense of reciprocal subordination, or submission to those in authority over us, eg., an apostle, prophet, pastor / teacher. The Spirit-filled believer will, of course, tend to do both, ie., both are a characteristic of the Spirit's filling. None-the-less, mutual / reciprocal subordination is most likely intended, so Bruce, Lincoln, Barth, ... contra O'Brien, Hoehner, who hold the view that "submitting" here is "ordered relationship submission - submission is not mutual but is according to appropriate authorities", Merkle.

ὑποτασσομενοι [ὑποτασσω] pres. part. "**submit**" - BEING SUBMISSIVE. The participle is adverbial, consecutive, expressing result.

αλληλοις dat. pro. "**to one another**" - Dative of indirect object.

εν + dat. "**out of [reverence]**" - IN [FEAR, REVERENCE, RESPECT]. Although not common, the preposition is probably causal here; "prompted by your reverence for Christ." The word "fear" certainly carries the sense of awe, but also carries a sense of intimidation which is not implied in the original meaning, but is carried in the English word "fear". Eschatological "fear" may be intended which would make "respect" or "reverence" a bit soft. None-the-less, Paul probably has in mind the Old Testament notion of "the fear of the Lord" which, as an expression of piety, takes the sense of "respect / reverence / awe. "Honour Christ and put others first", CEV.

Χριστου [ος] gen. "**for Christ**" - OF CHRIST. The genitive is usually taken as verbal, objective, as NIV, but possibly attributive, so specifying the type of fear in mind.

5:22-33

4. The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9

vi] Marriage

Argument

Paul continues to develop the exhortation that his readers "live a life worthy of the calling you received", 4:1, a life worthy of a person who has "put on the new man". This behaviour reflects the renewal of the Holy Spirit which progresses in a believer's life by grace through faith. In 5:21-33, Paul deals with mutual submission in marriage, 5:21, 33, for the wife, v22-24, and for the husband, v25-32.

Issues

i] Context: See 4:1-16. The exhortation to "live a life worthy of the calling you have received", 4:1, is argued out in 4:1-5:14, and summarized in 5:15-21. The final characteristic resulting from a person's filling by the Spirit, namely "submitting", is now examined in detail as it relates to marriage, family and business obligations, 5:22-6:9.

Most modern translations begin this new section with v21, rather than v22, but of course the participle, "submitting" in 5:21 serves as the fifth adverbial participle, consecutive, expressing result, modifying the verb "filled by the Holy Spirit", v18, cf. AV, RV, Barclay.... Where v21 is treated as an introduction to the instructions concerning the relationship between a husband and wife, the participle is often translated as imperatival, "be subject." This translation is possible when the participle is taken to be attendant on the imperative πληρουσθε, "be filled", v18, but result is far more likely.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *Submitting in marriage*:

The principle - mutual submission, v21.
Submission in marriage, v22-33:
The responsibility of wives, v22-24;
Exhortation, v22;
Reasoning, v23;
Application, v24.
The responsibility of husbands, v25-32;
Exhortation, v25a,;
Illustration, v25b-27;
Application, v28-32.

Conclusion: responsibilities reviewed, v33.

iv] Interpretation:

The more modern commentators tend to reject the idea that Paul is promoting subordination in marriage, arguing instead for mutual submission. Interestingly, O'Brien argues for submission against subordination, but holds that it is not mutual / reciprocal. It seems likely that Paul is arguing within the context of societal authority structures which should be recognized and submitted to. The issue for us, of course, is to what degree these instructions are cultural. The Christian faith sits within its cultural environ and neither Jesus nor the apostles sought to disrupt the established order (eg., slavery), and this because "my kingdom is not of this world" - for gospel impact *when in Rome do what the Romans do*. That's not to say that it is improper to shape society in line with kingdom principles when the opportunity presents itself.

The overriding theological principle governing a Christian community is the fact that "there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus", Gal.3:28. Yet, a Christian community exists within its cultural environ, and as Paul said of his ministry, "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some", 1.Cor.9:22. Paul, and his Gentile congregations, live as Roman citizens and so his *House Rules* reflect this reality. Yet to the reality of male hegemony Paul brings to bear the principle of brotherly love.

The problem we face today is that kingdom principles of brotherly love / compassion, equity, mercy, ... have long humanized Western democratic societies, but some parts of the church have continued to cling to orders of authority that appear to reflect 1st. century culture more than the teachings of Jesus. Some elements of domestic violence appear to be linked with an improper application of male headship, so this issue is not one to be lightly dismissed.

Paul's argument for mutual submission involves "showing more concern for the needs and rights of others than for ourselves", Caird. The model is Christ himself, "who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross", Phil.2:6-8. By this act of love, Jesus gathered a people bound in love to himself and to one another, which union is reflected in marriage (the two become one), and is best applied in

marriage through mutual submission. "Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ" is all about self-giving love. In the institution of marriage, male hegemony is humanized by mutual submission where a wife respects her husband, and the husband loves his wife.

Gender roles in marriage: With the principle of equality now overriding the principle of freedom (eg., freedom of speech) in Western societies (ie., they are treated as linear truths, rather than lateral where both are held in tension), the Christian premise that marriage is the union of a man and woman under God, a union with suggested / defined gender roles, is increasingly coming under attack by secularists. In fact, few Western societies now legally accept the view that marriage is the union between a man and a woman.

Genesis, chapters 1-3, establishes the basic family pattern. In simple terms "it is not good for man to be alone." Marriage, rather than the single life, is God's plan for humanity. Family entails the formation of a union between a man and a woman. It may take varying forms, but the relationship of husband and wife (mom, dad and the kids) takes precedence over all other human relationships. "A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh." Their relationship will be formed by separating from parental control, being physically joined in a permanent sexual union, and being bound together in an intimate psychological bond of love.

As for the separate male and female roles, these are not detailed until after the fall. One line of thinking is that these roles were a product of the fall and therefore can be abandoned in these more enlightened times, especially in the Christian community. Yet, it is probably better to see them as revised creation ordinances given as a guide to sinful humanity. The separate male and female roles revealed in scripture are not necessarily binding, but they are good advice from a loving God, set down in the manual for life (the Bible), to serve as a guide to life in a world falling apart.

The functions that differentiate males and females are described in the first chapters of Genesis:

> For the woman - "with pain you will give birth to children" and " your desire will be for your husband and he will rule over you." The curse is not children, since prior to the fall they were told to "be fruitful and increase in number." Nor is it male authority, as if such is a product of the fall. The curse has to do with the "pain" of

childbirth (the frustration associated with raising children) and the way overall authority is exercised.

For men - "cursed is the ground because of you." "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground." The curse is not work, as prior to the fall "the Lord God took man and put him in the garden of Eden to work and take care of it." ("Subdue", 1:28, is the responsibility of both male and female). The curse is not the business of feeding the family, rather it is the frustration produced in trying to do this in an imperfect world.

With this fundamental understanding of marriage in mind, Paul identifies the crucial ingredients for practical success.

v] Homiletics: *Being a SNAG*

Husbands are to love their wives:
Unconditionally;
Sacrificially;
Purposefully:
Affectionately.

Merkle.

Text - 5:21

The principle of reciprocal / mutual submission, v21. See 5:21 for the syntax. When filled with the fullness of Christ by the Spirit, we cannot be self-assertive, demanding our own way, insisting on our own rights, without reference to Christ's other-person-centred nature. Christ "emptied himself", placing the needs of others before his own, and in so doing, he sets before us the road we must travel, cf., Phil.2:3-8.

v22

The practice of reciprocal submission, 5:22-6:9: i] Husbands and wives, v22-33; a) The responsibilities of wives, v22-24. First, Paul looks at the role of wives and encourages a loving respect for their husbands. This is a highly contentious issue, clouded by a lingering cultural disrespect of women which can often lead to sexual harassment. The issue of "submission" is further clouded by the absorption of Marxian ideology in Western thought, also by the long-held view that a woman is subordinate to her husband in marriage, and by the difficulty of determining the degree to which Paul's words are cultural, rather than theological. Paul's words are set within the culture of the age, a culture of subjection. Following Jesus' lead, Paul does not seek to overturn societal norms, but he certainly humanizes them. A wife's submission to her husband is in like

manner to the way the fellowship of believers submits to Jesus, their saviour. For Paul, it's all about respect, v33.

αἱ γυναικες [η αικος] "**Wives**" - [BEING SUBMISSIVE TO ONE ANOTHER IN *the* FEAR OF CHRIST.] WIVES. Nominative used for a vocative, indicating a step in the argument / new paragraph. The presence of "one's own man / husband" indicates "wives" rather than "women".

"***submit***" - The verb must be supplied and is usually taken from the participle ὑποτασσομενοι, "submitting", v21, the fourth characteristic resulting from the Spirit's filling. Many translations use v21 to start a new paragraph and relate it to Paul's instructions to a wife. This may make sense, but it does not do justice to the Gk. In Paul's mind, "submitting" is tightly linked to his instruction "be filled by the Spirit", v18. In v24, and in the parallel passage in Colossians 3:18, Paul uses the verb "to submit", indicating that this is the likely assumed verb here. The middle form υποτασσεσθε, used in Colossians, indicates a voluntary submitting / submission. If we give weight to the context of verse 21, the participle describes mutual submission as a consequence of being "filled by the Spirit", v18. The word clearly carries the sense of submitting to the proper authority, those over us, eg., in the military. The same word is used of submitting to governmental authority in Paul's letter to the Romans. Of course, it is possible that Paul is simply raising an issue of form, rather than substance, such that "submitting" evidences good citizenship, and thus is ultimately relative. On the other hand, Paul could just as easily be promoting mutual submission; "mutual consideration", Allen. However we understand Paul's instruction, it must be "as to the Lord" = "out of reverence to Christ", v21. Softening the sense may help, but is at best, condescending; "you wives must learn to adapt yourselves to your husbands", Phillips (before lynching JB, remember his translation was published in 1960).

τοις ιδιοις dat. "**to your own**" - TO ONE'S OWN [HUSBANDS]. Dative of direct object after the assumed ὑποτασσεσθε, "submit". The adjective usually takes a reflective, or possessive sense, here possessive "their husbands."

ὡς "**as you do**" - AS, LIKE. Either: a) Comparative, "submit to your husband with the same devotion as you submit to the Lord" / "as required by the Lord" / "as if you were doing it for the Lord"; b) Causal; "because it is right before the Lord"; c) Purpose, "in order to honour Christ." We are probably on safer ground if we opt for a causal sense providing the motivation for service; "for that is their (your) Christian duty", Barclay.

τῳ κυριῳ "**to the Lord**" - TO THE LORD. Dative of direct object. "Lord" here may refer to "lord", in the sense of her husband, but this is very unlikely. Most likely Jesus is intended.

v23

Paul explains the nature of "submission". It seems best to take the headship of Christ over the church as the model for a husband's headship over his wife and not visa-versa. Mitton suggests both interpret each other, but this seems unlikely.

ὁτι "**because**" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why a wife should relate to her husband is if relating to the Lord.

κεφαλη [η] "**head**" - [A HUSBAND IS] HEAD. This is a much-debated term. In the end, our choice of meaning seems to depend on our own view of the male / female roles in marriage. Some argue that it refers to authority, therefore "master", or "lord", while others argue that it refers to origin, "source". The word "head", when used figuratively, usually means pre-eminence, or superiority, but positional authority seems more likely. In Roman society a woman's father maintains his authority over his daughter, even when married. Paul follows Biblical principles arguing that in marriage a man and a woman form a new family structure with its own prior responsibilities. Whatever Paul may mean by "head", the headship of the husband is "as to the Lord", "as Christ is the head of his people", head as saviour.

της γυναικος [η αικος] gen. "**of the wife**" - The genitive is adjectival, of submission, limiting "head"; "head over the wife."

ὡς και "**as**" - AS ALSO. The adjunctive και, "also", strengthens the comparative ὡς, "as, like". Although the idea is disputed, the grammar establishes a comparison between the headship of a husband over his wife with the headship of Christ over the church. It seems likely that the comparison is to Christ's exercise of authority over us (in self-giving), with a husband's authority over his wife. Some commentators argue that the comparison is that of submission, ie. how we submit to Christ compares with how a wife should submit to her husband. This is very unlikely. "As also."

της εκκλησιας [α] gen. "**of the church**" - [CHRIST HEAD] OF THE ASSEMBLY, CHURCH. The genitive is adjectival, of subordination; "head over the church." "The assembly of believers."

αυτος "**his**" - HIMSELF [SAVIOUR]. Emphatic and clearly referring to Christ, so standing in apposition to "Christ".

του σωματος [α ατος] gen. "**body, of which**" - OF THE BODY. The genitive is usually taken to be objective, although it does, in a sense, function adjectivally by limiting / specifying "saviour". Clearly referring to the church, which is Christ's "body". "Saviour of the Body", Moffatt.

σωτηρ "***the* Saviour**" - SAVIOUR. It is best to translate "Saviour" here with a small "s". It is not so much a title as a function. Self-giving headship cares for and protects the "body". This is the type of headship exercised by Christ and is

therefore the type of headship that should be exercised by a husband. "Christ is the head of the church and saviour of his body", Phillips.

v24

The submission of the church to Christ serves as the example for a wife's submission to her husband. As Bruce notes, the illustration places the duties of a wife on "a lofty plane." Bruce speaks of "submission" in the terms of "deference", but such a term for high theology is rather condescending.

αλλα "**now**" - BUT. Given that most commentators don't like the idea of a husband being the "saviour" of his wife, the tendency has been to translate this conjunction as an adversative, "but", so most modern translations. It is possibly resumptive, "and", eg. NJB. The NIV forms a new resumptive sentence with "now". As noted above, "saviour" is being used as a descriptive function, not a title; a description of self-giving. So, there is much to be said for it being consecutive, "so therefore"; "therefore", AV. In the end, a strong contrastive sense seems best; "nevertheless, as the church .....", Hoehner.

ὡς "**as**" - AS [THE CHURCH]. With οὕτως, forming a coordinate comparative construction. The construction compares the way a wife is to submit to her husband with the way the church submits to the Lord.

ὑπατασσεται [ὑπατασσω] pres. mid./pas. "**submits**" - IS SUBMISSIVE. The present tense indicating ongoing action. Although the verb expresses the idea of being subject to another's authority, a wife's submission to her husband is compared with the church's submission to Christ, and it is this comparison which shapes the idea of submission. Our submission to Christ involves submission, not to law and slavish obedience, but to grace and freedom. "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free." For the sake of meaning, we could paraphrase; "as believers accept Christ, in the same way wives should accept their husbands."

τῳ Χριστῳ [ος] dat. "**to Christ**" - Dative of direct object after the verb "submits".

οὕτως "**so**" - AS, LIKE .... THUS, SO, IN THIS WAY [AND = ALSO]. Establishing a comparison of manner. "Given that the authority of a husband over his wife is exercised in self-giving sacrificial love, therefore, in just the same way as believers accept Christ's self-giving, so in like manner should a wife accept her husband's self-giving."

εν + dat. "**in [everything]**" - [THE WIVES TO THE HUSBANDS] IN [ALL *things*]. Here the preposition is adverbial, expressing reference / respect, "with reference to everything", or space /sphere, "in every area of life", O'Brien.

v25

b) The responsibilities of husbands, v25-33. Paul now turns to the responsibility of husbands - they should engage in self-sacrificial loving-service to their wives, v25a. Again, Paul's words reflect the cultural norms of the first century. He doesn't seek to overturn authoritarianism in gender roles, but he certainly humanizes male hegemony. Paul again draws an analogy from Christ, this time his love, to explain the nature of the loving service he asks of husbands, and does so in a more detailed way than with his instructions to wives - the measure of his words indicates the measure of their importance and should serve to check those husbands who focus on their authority rather than their love, v25a-27. "Fulfilling this responsibility will not only enrich their wives, but will also bring harmony to the marriages, and thus to the believing community", Hoehner.

οἱ ανδρες [ηρ ρος] "**Husbands**" - Again, the nominative is used for the vocative, indicating a step in the argument.

αγαπατε [αγαπαω] pres. imp. "**love**" - LOVE [THE = YOUR WIFE]. The present tense indicates ongoing action. That which the wife is to "submit" to is now laid on the husband; not his rule, but his love. "Husbands, practise self-giving sacrificial compassion toward your wives."

καθως και "**just as**" - AS, JUST AS ALSO. Establishing a strengthened comparison, expressing the manner of a husband's loving. Possibly expressing cause here, "because Christ loved the church ...."

ηγαπησεν aor. "**loved**" - [CHRIST] LOVED [THE CHURCH]. The aorist indicating punctiliar action, namely Christ's act of self-giving compassion on the cross.

και "**and**" - Possibly epexegetic, "explaining how, why, and to what extent Christ loved the church", Merkle.

ὑπερ + gen. "**up for [her]**" - [GAVE UP HIMSELF] ON BEHALF OF [HER]. Expressing representation, or advantage / benefaction, or both.

v26

The purpose (goal / end-view) of Christ's act of sacrificial love for the church (assembly of believers / God's holy people) is indicated in two *hina* clauses: the sanctification of the church, v26; and the glorification of the church, v27. In v27b we have a third *hina* clause, possibly result, but better as purpose subordinate to v27a, as NIV

ἱνα + subj. "**to**" - THAT. Introducing a purpose clause, "in order to make her holy."

ἁγιασῃ [ἁγιαζω] aor. subj. "**holy**" - HE MIGHT MAKE HOLY, SANCTIFY [HER]. Possibly in the sense of "sanctify", referring to the process of making Christ-like

/ holy, the progressive realization of what we are in Christ, but more likely in the sense of "set apart for God."

καθαρισας [καθαριζω] aor. part. "**cleansing *her***" - HAVING CLEANSED *her*. Attendant circumstance participle expressing action accompanying the verb "may make holy", or possibly adverbial, expressing "the means (instrumental), so O'Brien, manner (modal), or cause (causal) of the sanctification, cf., Hoehner. Means seems best; "In order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by (through) the word", NRSV.

τῳ λουτρῳ [ον] dat. "**by the washing**" - IN, BY, WITH THE WASHING. Instrumental dative expressing agent / means. The water imagery may come from the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, cf., Titus 3:5, but more likely the custom of bathing prior to marriage - the removal of something unseemly. Here, the washing away of sin. Baptismal imagery is most unlikely.

του ὕδατος [ωρ ατος] gen. "**with water**" - OF WATER. The genitive is adjectival, attributive; "water washing", Larkin. Often seen in terms of water baptism, but the image of washing clean simply illustrates the action of God's Word in the process of sanctification.

εν ῥηματι [α ατος] "**through the word**" - IN WORD. This instrumental prepositional phrase probably qualifies "cleansing", but possibly "sanctifies", identifying the means / agent of the action, namely, "through the word of the gospel", O'Brien.

v27

The purpose of Christ's love is to sanctify the church, in order that he may present it to himself holy and blameless.

ἱνα + subj. "**and to**" - THAT [HE MIGHT PRESENT]. Introducing a purpose clause, "in order to present."

ἑαυτῳ dat. ref. pro. "**to himself**" - Dative of indirect object, expressing the ultimate object of the action.

ενδοξον adj. "**radiant**" - A GLORIOUS, SPLENDID, WONDERFUL / SPOTLESS [ASSEMBLY, CHURCH]. Possibly the parousia is in Paul's mind, although there is a sense where the eternal universal gathering of believers has already been presented to Christ and we are even now seated with him in his heavenly kingdom, 2:6 - time is an earthly constraint of which eternity is in no way dependent. The image possible reflects Ezekiel 16:10-14. "So that he might present the church to himself all glorious", REB.

μη εχουσαν [εχω] pres. part. "**without**" - NOT HAVING [STAIN OR WRINKLE]. The participle is adjectival, attributive, "that he might present a church to himself which does not have spot or wrinkle." Describing pure, youthful, skin. "In all its beauty", TEV.

των τοιουτων gen. pro. "**[or any other] blemish**" - [OR ANY] OF SUCH THINGS. The articular pronoun serves as a substantive, with the genitive being adjectival, partitive.

αλλα "**but**"- BUT. Strong adversative standing in a counterpoint construction; "not ....., but ...."; "without stain or wrinkle, but rather ..."

ἱνα + subj. "-" - THAT [SHE MAY BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLEMISH]. Introducing a purpose / result clause, subordinate to ἱνα παραστηση, "in order to present ...."; "but in order that the church be consecrated and blameless." That believers might be spiritually and morally perfect; "pure and faultless", TEV.

v28

Paul now uses Christ's love of the church to illustrate the depth of love that a husband should show for his wife, v28-30. Just as Christ loved the church, so husbands should love their wives.

οὑτως adv. "**in this same way**" - THUS, SO, IN THIS WAY. It seems likely that the adverb is backward looking such that a husband's love toward his wife is being compared with Christ's love toward the church, so O'Brien. Yet, Paul has already made this comparison, so it is possible that the adverb is forward looking. If this is the case, then Paul is establishing a comparison between a husband's love for his wife and his love for his own body, so Schnackenburg, Bruce; "men ought to give their wives the love they naturally have for their own bodies", Phillips.

και "-" - AND. Variant, adjunctive; "also".

οφειλουσιν [οφειλω] pres. "**ought**" - The sense is to be under an obligation to act in a particular way. "A husband should love his wife", CEV.

αγαπαν [αγαπαω] pres. inf. "**to love**" - [THE HUSBANDS] TO LOVE [THEIR OWN WIVES]. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the verb "ought".

ὡς "**as [their own bodies]**" - AS [THEIR OWN BODIES]. Usually taken as a comparative, although the NIV's literal translation fails to convey the comparison in English, so "as much as he loves himself", CEV. A causal sense is possible; "husbands should love their wives since they are their own bodies", Barth.

ὁ αγαπων [αγαπαω] pres. part. "**he who loves**" - THE ONE LOVING [HIS OWN WIFE]. The participle serves as a substantive, nominative subject of the verb "to love". Introducing a statement serving as a parenthesis.

αγαπᾳ [αγαπαω] pres. "**loves**" - LOVES [HIMSELF]. The statement "loves himself" images the creation; she is "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." Humanity is complete in marriage, in the sense of fulfilled, although this does not mean that a single person is less than human. God created man in his image, both "male and female he created them", Gen.1:27. The picture is of the male not

resting until he finds his missing rib, Gen.2:23, and so "a man who loves his wife loves himself", TEV.

v29

Paul expands on his observation that the man who loves his wife loves his own body. Given the one-flesh union of marriage, loving one's wife is of itself a very natural act. Marriage produces a psychological bond whereby a person experiences the wellbeing of their partner, and vice versa. To love one's wife is to love oneself.

γαρ "**after all**" - FOR. The conjunction here is possibly emphatic, as NIV; "indeed / to be sure." Hoehner takes it as explanatory, so also Best who sees it introducing an explanation of v28a, although Barth opts for 28b.

εμισησεν [μισεω] aor. "**hated**" - [NO ONE EVER] HATED. The aorist here is usually regarded as gnomic, expressing a timeless truth; "none of us hates our own bodies", CEV.

σαρκα [σαρξ σαρκος] "**body**" - [HIS OWN] FLESH. Here used interchangeably with "himself", v28, and "body".

αλλα "**but**" - Strong adversative; "but rather."

εκτρεθει [εκτρεθω] pres. "**feeds / the feed**" - NOURISHES, RAISES [AND CHERISHES IT]. An uncommon verb, as is also "cares for." "Nourishes and cherishes it", Barclay.

καθως "**just as**" - AS [AND = ALSO CHRIST]. Again, establishing a comparison, "just as also."

την εκκλησιαν [α] "***does* the church**" - [*nourishes and cherishes*] THE CHURCH. Accusative direct object of the assumed verbs "to nourish" and "to cherish." Gk. "as also Christ (var. "the Lord") the church." Note the variant in Textus Receptus which adds "from his flesh and from his bones", cf., Gen.2:23.

v30

The church is the body of Christ, in Christ, part of his being, and for this reason he nourishes it. The same natural motivation should drive a husband to care for his wife.

ὁτι "**for**" - THAT, SINCE. More reason / explanatory than causal; a causal sense here is a little misleading. Christ doesn't love the church because we are members of his body, rather "we" (Paul includes himself) are nourished and cherished because we are in union with Christ, in solidarity with him. Rather than "because", we are best to translate the conjunction "after all", Arnold.

αυτου gen. pro. "**his**" - [WE ARE MEMBERS OF THE BODY] OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive.

του σωματος [α ατος] gen. "**body**" - OF THE BODY. The genitive is adjectival, partitive.

v31

Paul now uses scripture to support his contention that it is natural for a man to love his wife. The one flesh union of marriage completes him as a person - together they are one flesh.

αντι τουτου "**for this reason**" - BECAUSE OF THIS, INSTEAD OF THIS, IN PLACE OF THIS [THE MAN WILL LEAVE THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER]. Literally "because of this", although the LXX has "for this reason." Barth suggests that the phrase is aetiological (providing a reason, or cause) and so probably it serves to introduce a reason from scripture for Paul's argument as to why a man who loves his wife, loves himself. As such, we may do better if we begin the quotation after this phrase. "To be sure, none of us hates his own body, but nourishes and cherishes it ..... and the scriptures explain why in the statement: 'a man will leave his father and mother .....'" "As the scriptures say ...", CEV, cf. Gen.2:24, 1Cor.6:16.

προσκολληθησεται [προσκολλαω] fut. pas. "**be united to**" - [AND] WILL BE JOINED [TO THE WIFE]. Physical union is intended, but this may be gently expressed in "a man leaves his father and mother to get married", CEV. The verb, in typical fashion, is followed by the verb's prepositional prefix, προς, "toward", expressing direction.

και "**and**" - Expressing result; "and *as a result*, the two become one flesh."

σαρκα μιαν "**one flesh**" - [THE TWO WILL BE] FLESH ONE. Emotional and psychological union is the product of the "leaving and cleaving." "And he becomes like one person with his wife", CEV.

v32

The union between a man and a woman is one of life's mysteries, but we can understand something of its meaning when we view it in the light of Christ's union with the church. This interpretation, of what is an extremely difficult verse, is not widely accepted. First, μυστηριον, "mystery", is most often taken in its usual Pauline sense of a secret now revealed in Christ, rather than just a truth that is somewhat hidden and difficult to understand. Second, τουτο, "this", is taken to refer to either the union of Christ and the church, so Hoehner, Best, Kostenberger, ..., or Christ and the church as a typology of marriage, so O'Brien, Arnold, Barth, Lincoln, Bruce, ...

τουτο pro. "**this**" - THIS [IS A GREAT = PROFOUND MYSTERY]. The antecedent / referent of "this" is surely the Genesis quote, v31. Given that Paul is speaking about marriage, it is more than likely that the one flesh union of

marriage is the great mystery, ie., the reuniting of the missing rib to form a one flesh union is hard to fathom; "The marriage relationship is doubtless a great mystery", Phillips.

μεγα [μεγας] adj. "**profound**" - GREAT. This adjective is in the predicate position so "this mystery is great", RV; "this mystery is a profound one", RSV rev.

δε "**but [I am talking about]**" - BUT, AND [I SPEAK TO CHRIST AND TO THE CHURCH]. Possibly here with an adversative adjunctive sense; "but I also say this εις, "with reference to / concerning", Christ and the church." If we are right to argue that the "mystery" primarily concerns marriage, not the union of Christ and his church, then v32b is probably an aside serving to make the point that the mystery of marriage is illustrated, and thus exegeted, in our union with Christ. Paul has made this comparison a number of times already in our passage for study. "And as I have already shown, the mystery of marriage is well illustrated in the union between Christ and his people."

v33

Paul now sums up his teaching on the proper relationship between a husband and a wife. A husband should love his wife ὡς, "in the same manner as / in like manner to", the way he loves himself. Lincoln. O'Brien, makes the point that the exhortation to love "as he loves himself" rests on the fact that Christ loves the church as himself because it is his body. This is somewhat of a stretch, resting on a Christ-centric interpretation of v32 and the dubious notion that Christ is self-focused. The Christ-and-church illustration is not abandoned at this point, but Paul's exhortation at this point rests on the creation ordinance of marriage. As to the summary statement for the wife, it is rather interesting. The construction ἱνα + subj. is unexpected, probably imperatival / hortatory (see below), although Barth argues that it serves to express a wish. Margaret Gibson in *Let the Woman Learn in Silence*, Exp. Tim 15, argues that it serves to express purpose / result; "so that the wife might respect her husband." The shift from submission / submission to "fear" is also unexpected. Barth and Best argue that the sense is "respect", although O'Brien opts for "fear", fear in the sense of reverence, so also Lincoln, Hoehner. As with "love", "fear" is often used of a person's relationship with God. The best English equivalent for φοβεω is "respect", rather than a word expressing the terror of judgment. A loving wife respect her husband, as a child of God in Christ respects and loves God.

πλην "**however**" - NEVERTHELESS, IN ANY CASE, HOWEVER. The word may serve as an adversative, "but", although here it likely serves to end the argument with a summation. "Leaving aside how marriage compares with our oneness in Christ, each one of you ....."; "I say no more, except, ...", Barclay.

οἱ καθ ἑνα "**each one of**" - THE ONE BY ONE. Individualizing, each husband individually; "every one of you who is a husband", Phillips.

και ὑμεις "**you also**" - AND = ALSO YOU. Adjunctive και with the emphatic pronoun "you"; "nevertheless also you, each one of you", Hoehner.

οὕτως "-" - SO, THEREFORE, THUS / IN THIS WAY, AS [LOVE EACH HIS OWN WIFE AS HIMSELF]. Possibly inferential, "each one of you, therefore, should love his wife", or comparative, "each one of you should so love his wife." Comparative seems best, cf., v28, particularly with ὡς; "so love his wife as himself."

δε "**and [the wife]**" - BUT/AND. Here coordinative.

ἱνα + subj. "**must**" - [THE WIFE] THAT. Usually introducing a final / consecutive clause expressing purpose / result clause, but here possibly a rare imperatival construction (forming a command), as NIV. It seems likely that an instruction is intended, and so technically the *hina* clause is best viewed as forming a noun clause, object of an assumed imperative verb / dependent statement of indirect speech, command, expressing the content of Paul's instruction to the wives; "*let* the wife *see* that she respects her husband", ESV.

φοβηται [φοβεω] subj. "**respect**" - SHE RESPECTS, FEARS, REVERENCES [THE = HER HUSBAND]. "See to it that a married woman treats her husband with respect", Weymouth.

6:1-4

4. The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9

vii] Family obligations

Argument

In the passage before us, Paul addresses the issue of the reciprocal duties of parents and children. Children are to obey their parents, and parents are not to "exasperate them by teasing, or ridicule, or persistent scolding", Hunter.

Issues

i] Context: See 5:22-33.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *Family obligations*:

A child's responsibility, v1-3:
Exhortation: Children must obey their parents, v1a;
Reason: It is proper to do so, v1b;
Scriptural support: the commandment, v2-3.
A parent's responsibility, v4:
Exhortation: Nurture rather than provoke, v4

iv] Interpretation:

The exhortations in 5:21-6:9 rest on the principle of brotherly love. Those who exercise authority must, like Christ, take "the form of a servant" and not engage in self-assertive behaviour which places another at a disadvantage. This also applies to parental authority, although today, secular educationalists tend to promote the freedom of a child, often at the expense of parental authority. In fact, the modern version of child-rearing is close to narcissistic, such that the child learns that it is the centre of the world. A child's submission to their parents' authority is a moral duty delineated in the fifth commandment.

Walking wisely under the guidance of the scriptures and so, by the Spirit, being filled with the fullness of God / Christ, results in subordination to the needs of others rather than self. The subordination of children to their authority figure, and of the authority figure to their children, is as to the Lord - the child's obedience is according to the Lord, and the parent's instruction is according to the Lord.

Note the repeated order Paul follows in these *House Rules*: The authority figure follows the subordinate member of the relationship; The relationship is framed within the more substantial relationship that the

parties have under God; The instruction follows a set pattern - "the party is addressed, the imperative stated, amplification is given, and the motivation is presented", Hoehner.

v] Homiletics: *Parenting*

Our new age has brought with it tremendous benefits for young people, yet children today are faced with problems which parents find difficult to control - dissolution of families, a myriad of external influences, "free expression", early puberty, promiscuity..... Our reading today gives us some helpful pointers for the business of parenting.

The responsibilities of parents

Paul reminds parents not to provoke their children, but rather to nurture them. There are three elements to this nurture.

Love. Titus.2:4.
Discipline. Prov.13:24, 19:18, 22:6, 15, 23:13.
Instruction. Deut.4:9, 6:7, 20, 21:19, 31:13, Prov.22:6, Isa.28:9.

The responsibilities of children

Paul reminds children to obey their parents. Sadly, today, the opposite is often the rule. As one secular writer put it "to be authentically ourselves we must not only declare our independence from whatever is past: we must positively disavow it." There are three elements to the business of respecting our parents.

Obey, Prov.1:8, 6:20, Col.3:20, 1Tim.5:4.
Honour, Ex.20:12, Lev.19:3, Deut.27:16, Prov.30:17, Matt.15:4, 1Tim.5:4.
That it may go well for you, Deut.5:16, Prov.8:17, 32.

Text - 6:1

Family obligations, v1-4: i] Paul first addresses the issue of the respect that children should show toward their parents, both mother and father, v1-3. Paul's exhortation is simple and straightforward, children must obey their parents. It is a child's duty to see themselves subordinate to their parent's authority while in the family home.

τα τεκνα [ον] "**Children**" - Nominative absolute used for a vocative. Plural, therefore addressed to the children of the Ephesian congregation. Presumably children old enough to understand Paul's directive.

ὑπακουετε [ὑακουω] pres. imp. "**obey**" - OBEY, BE SUBJECT TO. "Do what your parents want you to do." The interesting ethical question that emerges from this command is whether it applies in a situation when a parent instructs a child to do something that is immoral / illegal. Those who argue that it always applies

(a command of absolute obedience) hold the view that the parent bears full responsibility for their instruction. The argument for diminished responsibility carries little weight where the subordinate is an adult.

τοις γενευσιν [ευς εως] "**parents**" - THE PARENTS [OF YOU]. Dative of direct object after the verb "be subject to."

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE LORD]. Local, expressing sphere; "sphere of reference", Larkin. The phrase has a wide range of meanings, all of which are dictated by the context. It is often argued that believing children need only obey believing parents, ie., those who are "in the Lord" = "believers / Christians" The context of the exhortation is a believing home, but whether believing or not, parental authority always exists and children should obey. The phrase "in the Lord" is not found in many older manuscripts, see Metzger.

γαρ "**for**" - Introducing a causal clause explaining why a child should obey their parents.

δικαιον adj. "**[this is] right**" - [THIS IS] RIGHT, ACCEPTABLE, FITTING. The obedience of a child to their parents is right and proper, fitting. Possibly, but unlikely, Paul is saying that the command is right because it is God's command; "this is what the master requires", Junkins. "This is your Christian duty and it is right that you should do so", Barclay.

v2

Paul supports his exhortation by quoting the scriptures, Deut.5:16. As Paul states, this is "the first commandment with a promise". A literal application of this promise is not warranted, but it is true that life generally works out best for us when we respect our parents.

τιμω [τιμαω] imp. "**honour**" - HONOUR [THE FATHER OF YOU AND THE MOTHER]. The word "honour" probably expresses something like "respect", and to respect one's parents is to recognize their authority. Of course, this sits well with the Christian principle of mutual submission - the giving of self to others.

ἥτις pro. "**which**" - WHICH [IS]. Properly an indefinite relative pronoun, but it can be taken as a relative pronoun with explanatory force, so Robinson; "the importance of this is made plain when He, in the very first commandment to which He attached a promise, stated ...", Junkins.

εν + dat. "**with**" - [FIRST COMMANDMENT] IN = WITH. Expressing association / accompaniment, although reference/respect is possible. This commandment is "the first commandment with a promise attached to it", Hoehner.

επαγγελια [α] "**a promise**" - A PROMISE. The instruction to children is the first commandment in the decalogue which contains a promise, although this promise probably applies to all the commandments. The promise, in its original form, is a promise of enjoying the fruits of the promised land. These blessings

are expressed in physical terms - long life, many children, ..., and flow to a people who are faithful to the Lord's will. So, Paul's exhortation to children to obey their parents is supported by the simple pragmatic truth that such action is for their best. It may not seem that way, but in the long run it is to a child's advantage that they recognize the authority of their parents.

v3

ἱνα + subj. "**that**" - Introducing a final clause expressing purpose; "in order that ..."

εὖ adv. "**[it may go] well**" - [IT MAY BE] WELL, GOOD. Adverb of manner. The "well / good" expresses the idea of prosperity; 'so that you might have a long life and prosper in the land'", NJB.

σοι dat. "**with you**" - TO YOU. Dative of interest, advantage.

εσῃ [ειμι] fut. "**you may enjoy**" - [AND THAT] YOU WILL BE [LONG-LIVED UPON THE LAND]. Since the purpose clause continues a subjunctive verb to-be would be expected, but possibly Paul may want to emphasize the future certainty of the promise, although it is not unusual for a future to replace subjunctive.

v4

ii] Paul now addresses the issue of fatherly care, v4. The exhortation to parents, particularly fathers, is that they apply authority to their children in a way which will not promote resentment - not harsh, overbearing, soul-destroying, or dehumanizing. Paul's words are a further example of how he uses Christian principles to address the practical business of a life lived within the cultural confines of a given age. First century Male hegemony could be quite brutal when it came to the rearing of children. To this reality Paul applies the principle of mutual submission - other person-centred love, ie., "showing more concern for the needs and rights of others than for ourselves", Caird..

και "-" - AND. Here coordinating v4 to the previous three verses.

οἱ πατερες [ηρ ρος] "**Fathers**" - THE FATHERS. Nominative absolute used as a vocative. "Fathers" may be used for "parents", although at this time fathers were viewed as the authority figure. Child rearing in Western societies is now viewed as a partnership between both parents, with the stress here on "fathers" being more cultural than propositional. Although it is likely that its cultural framework guides this instruction, the Biblical pattern of the fatherhood of God should not be lost in our desire for societal acceptance. That is not suggesting, of course, that God is male, cf., Gen.1:27.

μη παροργιζετε [παροργιζω] pres. imp. "**do not exasperate**" - DO NOT MAKE ANGRY, PROVOKE, IRRITATE, DEMEAN [THE CHILDREN OF YOU]. "You

must not make your children resentful by your treatment of them", Barclay; "do not provoke your children to anger", ESV.

αλλα "**instead**" - BUT. Adversative in a counterpoint construction; μη ..... αλλα, "not ..... but ....."

εκτρεφετε [εκτρεφω] pres. imp. "**bring [them] up**" - NOURISH, NURTURE, RAISE [THEM]. As of establishing a sphere of influence. "Raise them properly", CEV.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN. Probably local, sphere, "in the sphere of", but possibly instrumental, "by means of".

παιδειᾳ [α] "**training**" - The word "training" can take the meaning "punishment/discipline". It is certainly used this way some times in the Bible, but it is difficult to understand what a term like "discipline of the Lord" might mean. It surely doesn't men "the Lord's punishment schedule for disobedient children." The more likely sense of the word "training" is of parental guidance through example, "education / training". The prime life-style example is Jesus himself. He is the one we must "follow", both as parents and children.

νουθεσιᾳ [α] "**instruction**" - [AND] ADMONITION. The word "instruction" is most likely being used in an Old Testament sense, as was "training", and if this is so, it would tend toward "warning", or "strong exhortation", rather than instruction in the sense of academic teaching. A word like "admonition" might apply, cf., Titus 3:10. So, parents must warn their children of life's dangers and admonish them when they wonder from the way. "Admonish them", Cassirer.

κυριου [ος] gen. "**of the Lord**" - OF LORD. The genitive, as usual, is handled differently by translators. It seems unlikely that it is an objective genitive, a training and admonition that is "about the Lord", but it could be either a subjective / possessive genitive, a training and admonition that comes from the Lord / is the Lord's, "prescribed by the Lord", Abbott, or an adjectival, attributive, limiting "training and instruction", "you must bring them up in Christian discipline and training", Barclay.

6:5-9

4. The practical application of oneness, 4:1-6:9

viii] Business obligations

Argument

Paul continues with his *House Rules*, of a life guided by an understanding of God's Word, 5:15-18. Having dealt with application of mutual subordination between husbands and wives, children and parents, Paul now examines how the Christian principle of mutual subordination (other person-centred love) applies to slaves and masters. He sets out the responsibilities of Christian slaves and masters, reminding his readers that instead of insisting on their own way, they should consider the interests of others, Christ being the pattern for such self-giving, cf., Phil.2:3-8.

Issues

i] Context: See 5:22-33.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *Business obligations*:

The responsibilities of servants, v5-8:
Exhortation: obey, v5a;
Description: the shape of obedience, v5b-7;
Reasoning: eternal reward, v8.
The responsibilities of masters, v9:
Exhortation: obey, v9a;
Reasoning: God will judge, v9b

iv] Interpretation:

The passage makes a simple point: Christian employees need to serve their employers with diligence, integrity and goodwill, and Christian employers need to deal with their employees in like manner, rather than using bully-boy tactics.

Slavery: Viewed from our perspective, Paul's instructions to slaves / workers and masters / bosses, fails to address a repugnant social institution. Jesus also has little to say on the morality, or otherwise, of the societal structures of the day (eg. "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's", "The poor you will always have with you", ..). The Bible certainly promotes the release of slaves, particularly within the family of God, Jer.34:9, and Paul happily encourages believers not to become slaves, 1Cor.7:23, and to seek their

freedom when the opportunity presents itself, 1Cor.7:21. Still, this is not an aggressive attack upon what is a repugnant social evil.

Clearly, the knowledge that Christ's kingdom is not of this world promotes a radical disengagement with the aspirations of the secular world, and this disengagement is evident here. It is also likely that Paul's willingness to go along with societal norms is driven by his desire to promote free access for the gospel (an attack upon an institution sanctioned by law, and integral to Roman society, would not bode well for harmonious relations with the Roman State). Paul's *House Rules* sit within existing societal norms, so he doesn't address the issue of slavery as such, but rather gives advice on how Christian masters and slaves should function harmoniously within the Ephesian church, given that they have equal standing before Christ, Gal.3:28, 1Tim.6:2.

The eschatological perspective of Jesus and his apostles clearly influences their approach to social issues - as Jesus put it, "my kingdom is not of this world." So, rather than social revolution, Jesus promotes a revolution of the soul, of a new heart within that prepares his followers for a new age to come. Ultimately, the new heart within, well illustrated in Paul's advice on the treatment of slaves, becomes a driving power for social reform, ultimately ending the blight of slavery in our world. So it was that slavery (inc. debt bondage, serfdom), the common form of indentured labour used in the ancient world through to the modern era, is ultimately abolished through the action of committed believers, eg., The Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, founded 1787.

The first act of abolition came from the Holy Roman Emperor, Joseph II, who abolished serfdom in the Austrian Habsburg dominions, in 1781. Britain passed the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, 1807, so outlawing the slave trade. Technically, the first country in the history of the world to ban slavery is Denmark, 1792, although the law doesn't take effect until 1807. The constitution of the French Republic, 1793/5 declared all men free, although it wasn't acted upon, and later amended by Napoleon. Probably the honour goes to Haiti which, following its declaration of independence from France, banned slavery in 1804.

Eternal reward for good done on earth, cf., v8: The proposition that good deeds done on earth will be rewarded in heaven, is problematic, to say the least. Barclay's translation of v8 well illustrates the problem: "each man ..... will receive from the Lord the equivalent of anything good that he has done." The idea of reward seems to strike at the heart of the doctrine of justification where salvation is dependent on grace appropriated through

faith apart from works of the law. Is there any other eternal reward, apart from judgment for sin and salvation as a gift grace / mercy through faith in the faithfulness of Christ?

The answer to this question is substantially, *No*, but with a qualification. God says of his creation that "All of it is very good." Although affected by sin, the design parameters remain, such that Wisdom rightly declares that good follows good, and evil follows evil; "Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind" (generally speaking, so says Qohelet). God's sovereign justice, evident in Job, demands that good must inevitably follow good. If the account is not settled in this age, then it must be settled in an age to come - justice demands it.

The idea of heavenly reward is a common one in later Judaism and is evident in the NT, but how it applies remains somewhat of a mystery, 2Cor.5:10, Col.3:25. Reward, as an eternal "inheritance" for deeds done, Col.3:24, is problematic in that it implies that "the good thing" the slave does has achieved this end, rather than grace through faith. Of course, the reward may be "a spiritual reward for spiritual faithfulness / eschatological recompense", Best, cf., Gal.6:8, since a "spiritual good is rewarded by spiritual gains", Mitton. Yet, in the end, the best that we can say is that "the reward will be appropriate. The slave must not expect that the exact deed will be done to him as he has done to someone else, but he can rely on God to act justly", Morris.

v] Homiletics: *A Christ-like workplace*

Economic rationalism, or "the bottom line", abandons Biblical ethics and moves away from the "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" ethic that was once accepted practice in Western countries. Sadly, the West has adopted the economic god of rationalism.

Paul reminds his readers that employees should give their boss "wholehearted" service. They are not to work "to win their favour". The worker should be "sincere", showing genuine "respect" toward the boss, not servile pretence. In fact, a believer should see their effort, not so much as service to their employer, but rather as service to Christ. Very few people find fulfillment in their employment, yet a believer can find value in any form of honest work, for their work is offered to Christ. Jesus is well able to appreciate the true value of their effort, even if others don't.

Employers should apply the same principles toward their workers. Dehumanizing work, practices which degrade the employee, which are demeaning, should be out the door. There should be no favouritism. The "master" needs always to remember that he has a heavenly "Master".

This new century cries out for a new compact between employer and employee, a new compact based on very old principles.

Text - 6:5

The reciprocal duties of slaves and their masters, v5-9. i] Paul encourages servants to obey their masters with "fear and trembling". The phrase is often used in the scriptures of respect toward God. So, Paul is simply saying that Christian servants should respect their masters. This respect is given "as to Christ", that is, it is given to the master as if it were being given to Christ.

οἱ δουλοι [ος] "**slaves**" - THE SLAVES. Independent nominative serving as a vocative. The masculine covers male and female slaves.

ὑπακουετε [ὑπακουω] pres. imp. + dat. "**obey**" - OBEY, FOLLOW, BE SUBJECT TO.

κατα + acc. "**[your] earthly [masters]**" - [THE LORDS, MASTERS] ACCORDING TO [FLESH]. Expressing a standard, or better, adverbial, turning the noun "flesh" into a modal adverb expressing manner; "according to flesh" = "fleshly". The phrase may modify "obey", so "obey in a fleshly way", but more likely modifying "lord's, masters", ie., flesh and blood lords = earthly masters. "Be obedient to your earthly masters", Cassirer.

τοις ... κυριοις [ος] dat. "**masters**" - LORDS, MASTERS. Dative of direct object of the verb "to obey", dative of the person who is to be obeyed = "give obedience to the lords" (the verb "obey" may also take a genitive).

μετα + gen. "**with**" - Here functioning adverbially, modal, expressing the manner in which the obedience is exercised, namely, with reverence and quivering.

φοβου [ος] "**respect**" - FEAR, REVERENCE, AWE. The word "fear" certainly carries the sense of awe, but also carries a sense of intimidation which is not implied in the original meaning, but is carried in the English word "fear". Paul probably has in mind the Old Testament notion of "the fear of the Lord" which, as an expression of piety, takes the sense of "respect / reverence / awe.

τρομου [ος] "**trembling**" - [AND] TREMBLING, ANXIETY, QUIVERING. The word is used to describe the outward manifestation of fear. "You must obey those who are your masters in this world with such respect that you tremble at the thought of displeasing them", Junkins.

εν + dat. "**with [sincerity of heart]**" - IN, ON. The preposition here is also functioning adverbially, modal, expressing manner; "with sincerity of heart" = "sincerely".

απλοτητι [ης ητος] "**sincerity**" - SINCERITY, UPRIGHTNESS, SINGLENESS. Here the noun may express genuineness, sincerity, "uprightness, integrity", Lincoln, "purity of heart", O'Brien, or it may express singleness, simplicity,

completeness, conveying "the idea that a slave should obey wholeheartedly or completely", Hoehner.

της καρδιας [α] "**of heart**" - The genitive is probably adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "from", cf., Larkin. The centre of a person's psyche, "the inner centre which determines attitudes and actions", O'Brien.

ὡς "**just as [you would obey Christ]**" - AS [TO CHRIST]. Comparative. The intended sense of this adverbial phrase is unclear. Possibly final, "in order to honour Christ", or causal, "because this honours Christ", "as required by Christ", but it is usually understood to serve as a comparative, "as you would obey Christ", Barclay, ie., "with the same devotion they serve Christ", Best, or "as if they were doing it for Christ", Lincoln, O'Brien, Hoehner, .. ie. the slaves "single purpose is to please Christ", Mitton. If the final option is what Paul intends, Schnackenburg rightly comments that "the earthly masters do not stand in Christ's place, but to serve them is understood as a service for Christ." Of course, Paul may mean nothing more than "for that is their Christian duty", Barclay, 5:22.

v6

The servant is not to serve their master as a "man-pleaser". A man-pleaser works hard in the master's gaze, but slacks when out of sight. In contrast, the servant should work "heartily" - from the heart.

μη κατα + acc. "**not only**" - *obey them* NOT ACCORDING TO. Expressing a standard, "not according to the standard of mere outward performance", Hoehner, or adverbial, manner, "in the manner of ....".

ανθρωπαρεσκοι adj. "**[not only] to win their favour**" - [EYE-SERVICE AS] MEN / PEOPLE-PLEASERS, TIME SERVER, FAWNER. "Not with the idea of currying favour with men", Phillips.

οφθαλμοδουλιαν [α] "**when their eye is on you**" - EYE-SERVICE. Nominative subject of an assumed verb "to obey." "You must not work only when someone is watching you", Barclay.

ὡς "**like**" - AS. Comparative, indicating the manner in which a slave should function toward their master.

αλλ "**but**" - Strong adversative in a counterpoint construction; "not ....., but ....."

Χριστου [ος] "**[slaves] of Christ**" - [*obey them* AS SLAVES, SERVANTS] OF CHRIST. The genitive is adjectival, possessive or relational. A believer's primary allegiance is to Christ such that their aim must be to please Christ and not men. Included in a believer's service to Christ is their dutiful service to those who have a right to receive service, eg. in our case, *a fair day's work for a fair day's pay*.

ποιουντες [ποιεω] pres. part. "**doing**" - DOING [THE WILL]. The participle is possibly adverbial, manner, with the verb "obey" supplied, but although

anarthrous (without an article) probably better treated as adjectival, attributive, limiting by describing the nature of "a servant of Christ"; "as slaves of Christ who do the will of God from the soul". "But as slaves of Christ who wholeheartedly do the will of God", NJB.

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - OF GOD. The genitive is best classified as adjectival, verbal, subjective; God is doing the willing.

εκ + gen. "**from [your heart]**" - OUT OF, FROM [SOUL, INNER LIFE, BEING]. Expressing source / origin. Possibly attached to the following verse, "from your soul serve with goodwill ....", but probably best treated as identifying the inward motivating force of "a slave / servant of Christ". "Work heartily", Peterson.

v7

The servant should develop a "ready good will, which does not wait to be compelled", Robinson." *Work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God*", Peterson.

δουλευοντες [δουλευω] pres. part. "**serve**" - DOING SERVICE. The participle is adverbial, probably modal, expressing the manner of a servant's obedience to their master, v5, ie. it is wholehearted service; "obey your earthly masters ..... rendering service with a good will", ESV. The present tense expresses durative (ongoing) action.

μετ [μετα] + acc. "**wholeheartedly**" - WITH [GOODWILL, LOYALTY, GOOD INTENTIONS]. Here being used adverbially, turning the noun into a modal adverb. The noun is a hapax legomenon, once only use in NT. Possibly expressing zeal / wholeheartedness, enthusiasm, so O'Brien, Lincoln, or cheerfully / willingly / sincerely, so Best, but goodwill / loyalty / affection is more likely, so Hoehner.

ως "**as if**" - Comparative, expressing the manner of the service, "as if *you were serving* the Lord."

τῳ κυριῳ [ος] dat. " **the Lord**" - TO THE LORD. "You were serving" is assumed and prompts a dative of direct object. See v5.

v8

Paul goes on to remind his readers, whether "slave or free", of something they know well. Good deeds done are rewarded, just as unfaithfulness is punished. Even Jesus makes this point when referring to the coming Son of Man: "he will render to everyone according to what he has done", Matt.16:27. This principle applies even to our work-ethic. The concept of heavenly reward for good or evil is somewhat problematic; See above.

ειδοντες [ειδον] perf. part. "**because you know**" - HAVING KNOWN. The participle is adverbial, causal, as NIV. Providing the motivation / reason why a

slave / servant should approach their service with a good attitude. The servant is motivated to obey because they know ....

ὁτι "**that**" - THAT. Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what the servant knows.

εαν τι + subj. "-" - [EACH *person* (distributive)] IF A CERTAIN *thing* = WHATEVER, *as the case may be*, [GOOD HE DOES] *then*. Introducing a conditional clause third class, where the proposed condition has the possibility of becoming true; "Whatever good a man does (protasis) ..... he will have his recompense from the Lord (apodosis)", Cassirer. "The good" = "the good *thing*", is defined by its context, here a "willing and faithful service at set tasks", Best.

παρα + gen. "**[the Lord]**" - [THIS HE WILL RECEIVE] FROM BESIDE [THE LORD]. Expressing source. Probably not the earthly master, although a case can be made to support this interpretation, possibly "the Lord God", but most likely "the Lord Jesus Christ." The future tense "he will receive" indicates future recompense.

ειτε .... ειτε "**whether [he is slave] or [free]**" - EITHER [A SLAVE / SERVANT / BONDMAN] OR [A FREEMAN]. A disjunctive correlative construction.

v9

ii] Paul now balances his instruction to slaves / servants with instruction for masters, v9. As for masters, they are to respond toward their servants "in the same way", ie., they are to apply the same principles of Christian concern toward their servants, a "spirit of integrity, dedication and goodwill", Hoehner. This will involve not "threatening" them, not bullying them. It will also involve not showing "favouritism". Masters are reminded that they have a Master in heaven and He doesn't show favouritism between "slave or free."

και "**and**" - Connective; servants and masters.

οἱ κυριοι "**masters**" - THE MASTERS, LORDS. Independent nominative used for a vocative, indicating a new target group in mind.

τα αυτα "**[treat your slaves] in the same way**" - [DO TOWARD THEM] THE SAME THINGS. Accusative direct object of the verb "to do"; emphatic by position. What are the "same things"? Probably best understood in general terms, "what was recommended for the slaves also holds true for the masters", Schnackenburg, ie., "the spirit of integrity, dedication and goodwill", Hoehner.

ανιεντες [ανιημι] pres. part. "**do not**" - LOOSEN, RELAX, LET UP ON = FORBEARING. The participle is probably adverbial, modal, expressing the manner in which the master does the same as the slave, namely, in "forbearing threatening" = "without bullying", but possibly instrumental, expressing means, or even consecutive, expressing result. Certainly, the point is made with the use of an imperative, as NIV; "stop threatening them", Moffatt.

την απειλην [η] "**threaten**" - BOASTING / THREATENING. Here obviously "threatening", being a tyrant, abusive, "bullying", NAB.

ειδοτες [ειδον] perf. part. "**since you know**" - KNOWING. The participle is adverbial, probably causal; "because you know ..", as NIV.

ὁτι "**that**" - Introducing a dependent statement of perception expressing what they know.

αυτων gen. pro. "**their [Master] and yours**" - [AND = BOTH THE LORD] OF THEM [AND OF YOU]. The genitive is adjectival, idiomatic / subordination; "Lord over them and you." Given the context, "Lord" refers to Jesus.

εν + dat. "**in [heaven]**" - [IS] IN [*the* HEAVENS]. Local, expressing space / sphere. The plural "heavens" is commonly used for the dwelling place of God.

προσωπολημψια [α] "**favouritism**" - [AND THERE IS NOT] RESPECT OF PERSONS, FAVOURITISM, PARTIALITY. With God there is no partiality as he judges, not on face value, externals.

παρα + dat. "**with [him]**" - BESIDE [HIM]. Expressing association, "with", as NIV.

6:10-20

5. Concluding exhortation to right action, 6:10-23

i] The whole armour of God

Argument

Paul concludes his letter to the Ephesians with a strong exhortation for faithful service - "be strong in the Lord". A believer faces constant warfare, not so much against human adversaries, but against evil spiritual forces. In the face of this enemy, a believer needs spiritual armour to defeat what is a spiritual foe. This armour, reflecting God's character, must put it on.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-2. This passage serves to conclude Paul's ethical application of his *all one in Christ* thesis expounded in chapters 1-3. The practical application of this oneness theme covers chapters 4:1-6:9, with the passage before us serving as a concluding exhortation to put on Christ-like characteristics.

"This paragraph not only ends the paraenetic (exhortatory) material begun in 4:1, but it also serves as the climax of the letter as a whole, bringing it to a conclusion. The paragraph is neither an irrelevant appendix to Ephesians nor a parenthetical aside within it, but a crucial element to which the rest of the epistle has been pointing", O'Brien.

ii] Background: See 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *The whole armour of God*:

The exhortation: put on the full armour that is characteristic of God's person, v10-11.

Reason: the armour enables us to stand against the wiles of the devil, v12-13.

Description: The armour described piece by piece, v14-18:

The belt - put on truthfulness, v14a;

The breastplate - put on righteousness / right behaviour, v14b;

The shoes - put on peacefulness, v15;

The shield - put on trustworthiness, v16;

The helmet and sword - put on prayerfulness, v17-18.

Conclusion: A prayer for bold speech, v19-20.

iv] Interpretation:

The armour of the Lord, v13-18: The imagery reflects Isaiah 59:17 and is an image already used by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:8. There is some debate about the meaning of the armour analogy. For example, is the belt

of truth theology / wisdom, or is it truthfulness? This type of question applies to each individual piece. Although not widely accepted, it well may be that Paul uses the armour to illustrate ethical qualities which derive from the character of Christ and which are developed through the renewing work of the Spirit. If this is the case, then we are being encouraged to put on Christ / Christ-likeness, put him on pieces of armour which he provides, ie., be what we are in Christ.

The armour described piece by piece, v14-18:

- The belt. As Christian soldiers, preparing for battle, we are to put on the belt of truth by being truthful. In simple terms, tell the truth. If objective "truth" is in mind, then we have an instruction to put on the theology / wisdom / truth of the Bible.
- The breastplate. The genitive της δικαιοσυνης, "of righteousness", is drawn from Isaiah 59:17. It is probably adjectival, attributive, "the righteous breastplate." In preparing for battle, we put on the breastplate of righteousness by acting rightly. We are to put on righteousness in an ethical sense, put on Christ-like right behaviour. Again, the instruction is often taken as putting on justification, ie., taking the genitive as verbal, objective.
- Shoes. In preparation for battle, we are to put on the shoes of peace by being peaceful. When not taken as an ethical instruction, commentators see it in terms of witnessing, evangelism; "the gospel of peace". Yet, an ethical sense seems more likely. Paul probably means something like speaking peace - being peaceful rather than argumentative.
- The shield. The genitive της πιστεως, "of faith", reflecting "of righteousness", is again attributive, "the faith / faithful / faithfulness shield. In preparation for battle, we are to take up the shield of faithfulness by being trustworthy. Again, this image is often interpreted in the terms of faith in Christ - saving faith. Yet, when treated as an ethical quality, the shield represents faithfulness, rather than faith in God.
- The helmet. The helmet is most often understood in the terms of putting on salvation as a soldier puts on his helmet. Possibly in the terms of assurance - "be sure of your salvation." The term "helmet of salvation" is drawn from Isaiah 59:17. This "is a crown which belongs, together with other garments of glory, to the messiah's adornment when he will stand on a mountain and announces to Israel that salvation is nigh", Barth, re. Jewish midrash. In Hebrew, "salvation" can mean "victory", this with "the hope of salvation",

1Thes.5:8, gives us an attributive "victorious helmet" / "the victory helmet", the highly adorned helmet of victory. Along with the sword, in preparation for battle, we are to put on the helmet of victory and / along with the sword of the spirit "by praying at all times in the Spirit", v18a.

- The sword. It seems likely that the connective και links together both the "helmet" and the "sword". The genitive του πνευματος, "of the spirit", as with του σωτηριου, "of salvation", is likely again to be attributive, so "take up the victory helmet and the spiritual sword." The relative pronoun ὅ, "which / that is", being neuter, may be attracted to the gender of "spirit", but is more likely referencing the previous nouns, namely both the helmet and sword. But what is the intended sense of this double image? The relative clause provides the explanation. The representative meaning of the victory helmet and spiritual sword is explained as "the word of God." Commentators tend to the view that the sword refers to the word of God, the Bible. So, the exhortation is that we read the Bible and believe in it. Yet, there is a strong possibility that the exhortation is to prayer. This is evident when, following the Gk., we read v17-18a together. The victory helmet and spiritual sword represents prayers of faith through the Spirit which are according to the will of God (prayer that is based on God's promises). "Take up prayer as a soldier takes up his helmet and sword ready for battle." See further in the notes below.

v] Homiletics: *Fight the Good Fight*

The great puritan writers loved this passage in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. The first to take up the image was William Gurnall, minister of Lavenham, Suffolk. He produced a massive exposition called "The Christian in Complete Armour", 1655-62. The book was some 1200 pages long.

The greatest of the puritan writers was John Bunyan. He used Paul's imagery in "The Holy War", and in particular, in "The Pilgrim's Progress". In Pilgrim's Progress, Christian receives the armour in the armoury of the House Beautiful. He is to use it against Apollyon in the next stage of his

journey. Bunyan made a point of noting that there was no armour for the back. Christian would not be able to run. His only option was "to venture and stand his ground".

This famous passage still speaks to us today as it spoke all those years ago.

The first great truth in the passage is that "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against..... spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms", v12. Powers of darkness seek to devour us, and it is here where our battle lies. Paul describes these powers in different ways. The passage even reads as if they might be human powers, but they are spiritual "authorities". They are powers from beyond us, evil powers intruding and invading our world. Our enemy is the evil one, the devil, whispering his lies and playing to our self-interest.

The second great truth in our reading today is that for us to "take our stand against the devil's schemes", to be "strong in the Lord and in his mighty power", we must "put on the full armour of God", v10. Victory against the tempter is ours if we wear the armour that God supplies. As Luther put it:

> And let the prince of ill
> Look grim as e'er he will,
> He harms us not a whit,
> For why his doom is writ;
> A word shall quickly slay him.

What then are the individual pieces of armour which the good Christian soldier needs in their battle with the tempter, v14-18?

- The belt;
- The breastplate;
- The boots;
- The shield;
- The helmet and sword.

These then are the pieces of a Christian's armour against the Tempters power. Let us put them on and so stand in the battle.

Text - 6:10

The whole armour of God, 10-20: i] The exhortation: be strong and put on the armour of God - put on Christ-likeness as a soldier puts on his armour so that you can stand against the attack of evil powers, v10-11. The source of this strength / courage is found "in the Lord." He is the one who will strengthen the believer in the trials of life. This strengthening Paul calls God's "mighty power",

the power that raised Christ to life, 1:19-20. It is the power that comes from the operation of the Holy Spirit in the inner self, 3:16.

του λοιπου gen. "**finally**" - OF THE REST, REMAINING. The genitive is adverbial, reference, "with respect to what remains" = "finally". Often with a temporal sense, "in the future", but obviously not so here.

ενδυναμουσθε [ενδυναμοω] pres. pl. pas/mid. imp. "**be strong**" - BE CONTINUALLY EMPOWERED. The present tense indicating ongoing strengthening. This strengthening is explained in a series of two aorist imperatives and four aorist participles in verses 11-17. The plural number may imply that the imperative is directed to the Christian fellowship as a whole, although it is more likely a call to common action. Bruce argues for a middle voice, but most commentators opt for passive. So, instead of "be strong", the sense is probably "be strengthened." "Find your strength in the Lord", NEB.

εν + dat. "**in [the Lord]**" - IN / WITH / BY [LORD]. Local, expressing sphere / incorporative union. A common phrase in Ephesians most probably meaning "in union with the Lord", but always possibly with the simple idiomatic sense of "as a believer / Christian."

και "**and**" - This conjunction here serves to introduce an epexegetic clause explaining the nature of the strengthening. The power is the power which raised Christ to life and this power we are to appropriate, cf., 1:19. "Let the mighty strength of the Lord make you strong", CEV.

εν + dat. "**in**" - Local, expressing sphere, "in", rather than reference; "with respect to his mighty power."

αυτου gen. pro. "**his**" - [THE POWER OF THE MIGHT] OF HIM. The genitive is adjectival, possessive, "his", or verbal subjective, "the mighty power *operative through* him."

της ισχυος [υς υος] gen. "**mighty [power]**" - [THE POWER] OF THE MIGHT. The genitive is adjectival, attributive, limiting "power", as NIV.

v11

A believer is strengthened by putting on armour that is good for attack and defence. This Christ-like armour enables the wearer to stand against the deceitful attack of the devil. Paul has already described the devil's schemes earlier in his letter, 4:26-27, and now he again reminds his readers of the attack of the powers of darkness.

ενδυσασθε [ενδυω] aor. imp. "**put on**" - BE CLOTHED, PUT ON. As noted above, the aorist tense probably serves to express a single item in the strengthening process, rather than identifying a single action such as conversion or baptism. Probably paralleling "be strong."

την πανοπλιαν [α] "**the full armour**" - THE COMPLETE, WHOLE ARMOUR. "The full weaponry of a soldier about to go into battle" probably serves to parallel "God's mighty power."

του θεου [ος] gen. "**of God**" - OF GOD. The genitive is adjectival, descriptive, idiomatic / source, "*which is from*", God is the supplier of the armour, Best, Hoehner, ..., but possessive seems more likely, O'Brien, Lincoln, ...; it's God's own armour. So, the exhortation is all about putting on Christ-likeness as soldier puts on armour.

προς το δυνασθαι [δυναμαι] pres. pas. inf. "**so that [you] can**" - TO BE ABLE [YOU]. This construction, the preposition προς + the neuter articular infinitive, is used to introduce a purpose clause, as NIV, or sometimes a result clause, eg. "and then you will be able to resist the stratagems of the devil", Barclay. The subject of the infinitive, ὑμας, "you", takes the accusative case, as usual.

στηναι [ἱστημι] aor. inf. "**take your stand**" - TO STAND. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of the infinitive "to be able". Here meaning "stand your ground / hold the enemy at bay / repel." "Hold your ground in the battle" is probably the sense, so Hoehner.

προς + acc. "**against**" - TOWARD. Here expressing opposition; "against".

διαβολου [ος] gen. "**devil's**" - [THE WILES, TRICKERY, DECEIT] OF THE DEVIL. The genitive is usually treated as subjective, "the cunning deceitfulness *enacted by* the devil", or possessive, as NIV.

v12

ii] The reason for putting on Godly armour - to stand against the wiles of the Devil, the tests and trials that daily confront us, v12-13. Paul reminds his readers that the real battle is not against the circumstances of life, or even against evil people; the real battle is spiritual, and to stand in this battle it is necessary to possess spiritual armour - "the full armour of God." Paul gives a number of titles to these evil powers and sums them up in the phrase, "spiritual forces of evil." It is fascinating to realize that not only do they inhabit the earth, but they also reside in the "heavenly realms", ie., their headquarters is in the spiritual domain. Obviously, they don't reside in heaven as such - God's dwelling place.

ὁτι "**for**" - BECAUSE. Here causal; "because".

ἡμιν dat. pro. "**our**" - [THE STRUGGLE IS NOT] TO US. The dative either expresses reference / respect, "the struggle, with respect to us, is not ....", or possession, as NIV.

ἡ παλη [η] "**struggle**" - Hapax legomenon, once only use in the NT. The word is used of wrestling, conflict, a struggle at close-quarters.

προς + acc. "**against**" - TOWARD = AGAINST [BLOOD AND FLESH]. Here expressing opposition. Introducing a series of prepositional phrases which describe the enemy. The enemy we wrestle with is not a fleshly enemy such as our own human nature, people or governmental authorities, but is a spiritual enemy.

αλλα "**but**" - BUT. Strong adversative in a counterpoint construction; "not ....., but ...." "Our fight is not against any physical enemy (but rather) we are up against the unseen powers which control this world", Phillips.

τους κοσμοκρατορας [ωρ ορος] "**powers**" - [TOWARD = AGAINST RULERS AGAINST THE AUTHORITIES AGAINST] THE WORLD RULERS, POWERS. The word is used to describe cosmic spiritual powers, not governmental authorities. None-the-less, these spiritual powers exercise authority in the world, ie. this world is under alien occupation, Lk.4:5-7, Jn.12:31, 16:11. The four descriptives of the dark powers have been viewed in hierarchical terms, but the text does not imply this.

του σκοτους [ος] gen. "**dark**" - OF THIS DARKNESS. The genitive is adjectival, attributive / describing the state of the world under satanic rule, "this era of darkness", Bruce, but possibly idiomatic / subordination, "world-rulers over this darkness."

τα πνευματικα adj. "**the spiritual forces**" - [TOWARD = AGAINST THE SPIRITUAL *powers*. The articular adjective serves as a substantive, probably describing Satan's evil heavenly army; "the spiritual army of evil in the heavens", JB.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [THE HEAVENLIES]. Local, expressing space; identifying the location of the spiritual forces. Used to describe the supernatural realm beyond our physical realm. This is the base of operations for these evil spiritual powers. The image of Satan cast from heaven implies that the spiritual realm is hierarchical, but such is speculative. "The spiritual world", CEV; "the headquarters of evil", Phillips.

v13

These powers of darkness will confront God's people in the "day of evil", and it is then that each must be found wearing God's armour. The evil day is the time of the great tribulation at the return of Christ, but it is also represented in our daily troubles. The armour will enable the believer to stand as a good soldier, fully doing their duty - to stand and not retreat.

δια τουτο + acc. "**therefore**" - BECAUSE OF THIS. This causal construction is usually inferential, "therefore, for this reason"; "that is why you must take up all God's armour", NJB.

αναλαβετε [αναλαμβανω] aor. imp. "**put on**" - TAKE UP, RAISE UP [THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD]. Imaging a soldier taking up his armour and weapons ready for the fight. As noted in v11, the armour is "of God", adjectival, idiomatic / source, "*which is from*", or possessive, "*belonging to* God."

ἱνα + subj. "**that ..... [you may be able]**" - THAT [YOU MAY BE ABLE]. Introducing a purpose clause, "in order that."

αντιστηναι [ανθιστημι] aor. inf. "**to stand your ground**" - TO WITHSTAND, RESIST. The infinitive is complementary, completing the sense of "you may be able". "You will be able to see things through to the end", Barclay.

εν τῃ ἡμερᾳ τῃ πονηριᾳ "**in the day of evil**" - IN THE DAY THE EVIL. The preposition εν, "in", serves to introduce a temporal phrase. The presence of two definite articles serves to underline that this is a particular day. This "evil day" is the day of tribulation rather than just a general time of difficulty; "when things are at their worst", NEB. The language is apocalyptic, although "the coming" of these days are many in that shadows of the coming day intrude into the present. All such days, for example, the destruction of Jerusalem, image the final day of tribulation, Dan.12:1. The believer must be ready and prepared to meet such days, but above all, meet the day.

κατεργασαμενοι [κατεργαζομαι] aor. part. "**after you have done [everything]**" - [AND ALL] HAVING DONE. The participle is adverbial, probably temporal, as NIV. An image of resisting, not winning; "that even when you have fought to a standstill you may still stand your ground", Phillips.

στηναι [ἱστημι] aor. inf. "**to stand**" - The infinitive may form a result clause with the emphasis on victory, although continual struggle is more likely, and so it is best translated as introducing a purpose clause, "having done everything possible in order to resist (stand) the enemy." Merkle suggests that it is complementary, completing the sense of the assumed verb δυνηθητε, "you are able [to stand]."

v14

iii] The armour is described piece by piece, v14-18. First, put on truthfulness as a soldier puts on his belt, and put on right behaviour as a soldier puts on his breastplate.

The armour is that which the messiah wears when he enters into battle with the forces of evil, an armament that we also need to put on. The pieces of armour are usually viewed as God-supplied armour enabling the believer to stand firm in the spiritual battles of life. There is much debate over what the armour represents, as already noted in the Interpretation above. Caird presents a classic view when he argues that each piece represents a variation of the gospel: the truth of the gospel; right standing in the sight of God; the good news; the faith that

appropriates God's grace; salvation; and the Word of God. D.W.B. Robinson, former Archbishop of the Anglican diocese of Sydney, held the view that the armament is primarily ethical. The context certainly supports this view, ie., Paul concludes his ethical instructions by telling his readers to put on Christ-likeness as if putting on pieces of armour ready for battle. The first four pieces being: truthfulness; righteousness, in the sense of right behaviour; peacefulness; and faithfulness / reliability.

ουν "**then**" - THEREFORE. Inferential / drawing a logical conclusion. The believer is to put on the whole armour of God in order to resist the onslaught of the evil one, "therefore resist his onslaught with the belt of truth", etc.

στητε [ιστημι] aor. imp. "**stand firm**" - STAND. This fourth use of the verb covers all the following participles.

περιζωσαμενοι [περιζωννυμι] aor. part. "**with the belt [of truth] buckled around**" - HAVING GIRDED, FASTENED [THE WAIST OF YOU]. This participle, along with the three following, may be a participle of means (instrumental), describing how we are to stand firm, "by means of." O'Brien suggests attendant circumstance expressing action accompanying the imperative "stand", in which case imperatival; "tighten the belt of truth around your loins", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "**of [truth]**" - IN [TRUTH, TRUTHFULNESS]. Here probably instrumental; "by truthfulness" = "by speaking the truth" - αληθεια being a subjective idea, "truthfulness, integrity, ...", rather than objective "truth", so Abbot, Bruce, ..., contra Best, ... Some commentators think both ideas are present, so Hoehner, although he thinks the subjective sense is primary. As noted above, it seems likely that most of the pieces of armour represent an aspect of ethical behaviour. So, although "truth" is often aligned with the Bible / gospel, as an essential piece of armour in the struggle against evil powers, which indeed it is, the belt (a solid leather strap protecting the loins as well as serving to support a sward) is possibly "truthfulness / sincerity / integrity / telling the truth / being honest". "Put on truthfulness ("integrity", Bruce) as a soldier puts on his belt ready for battle."

ενδυσαμενοι [ενδυω] aor. part. "**with ..... in place**" - [AND] HAVING PUT ON. On this participle see περιζωσαμενοι above.

της δικαιοσυνης [η] gen. "**of righteousness**" - [THE BREASTPLATE] OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, JUSTICE. The genitive is adjectival, probably epexegetic / appositional, limiting the breastplate by specifying / defining it; a breastplate *which consists of / which is* righteousness = doing what is right. As with "truth", "righteousness" has numerous possibilities, eg., "justification", so Best, but again an ethical sense is probably intended - "righteousness" in the sense of doing what

is right, even obedience to the will of God, so Bruce, O'Brien, ... "Put on right behaviour / obedience, as a soldier puts on his breastplate ready for battle."

v15

Put on peacefulness as a soldier puts on his boots.

ὑποδησαμενοι [ὑποδεω] aor. part. "**with your feet fitted**" - [AND] HAVING PUT ON, FITTED [THE FEET]. The participle as with περιζωσαμενοι v14. The "fitting" of military footwear is probably in mind - the studded sandals of a Roman soldier. "Have your feet shod", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "**with**" - IN, ON, BY, WITH. As in v14, it seems likely that an instrumental sense is intended; "have your feet shod by / with."

ἑτοιμασια [α] "**the readiness**" - FIRM FOOTING, SURE FOOTING, FIRMNESS, SOLID FOUNDATION = FOOTWEAR. A hapax legomenon, once only use in the NT. The sense of the word is unclear, either "steadfastness", "with the stability of the gospel", Moffatt, cf., NEB, or "readiness", as NIV, TEV, JB, "put preparedness to preach the gospel on your feet", Barclay. Although not widely accepted, the sense, "solid foundation", may well refer to the actual footwear, so "be fitted with the shoes of the gospel of peace"; "having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace", RSV.

του ευαγγελιου [ον] gen. "**that comes from the gospel**" - OF THE GOSPEL. Usually classified as a verbal genitive, objective, O'Brien, Bruce, possibly a genitive of source / origin, Hoehner. Possibly attributive, limiting the noun "equipment", see RSV, or more likely epexegetic, defining / explaining / specifying the "equipment", "the footwear consisting of / which is the gospel." This pattern seems to repeat through all the pieces of armour. As a Christian soldier, ready to resist the enemy, we must put on protective footwear consisting of / which is the ευαγγελιον. The word is usually understood as "the good news", God's important message to humanity - this we must put it on and stand ready to proclaim. Yet, if Paul still has in mind an ethical imperative then "the act of speaking / proclaiming peacefully" may be intended here, rather than preaching the gospel message.

της ειρηνης gen. "**of peace**" - OF PEACE, TRANQUILITY. The genitive is most likely adjectival, attributive, limiting "the act of speaking." It is tranquil speaking, rather than argumentative speaking. "Put on peacefulness as a soldier puts on his footwear ready for battle."

v16

Take up trustworthiness as a soldier takes up his shield.

εν + dat. "**in [addition to all this]**" - IN [ALL *things*]. Reference; "with respect to [all *this*] *add* ..."Above all", AV, RSV, Moffatt, is probably not intended.

Possibly "in all circumstances"; "through thick and thin", Barclay. "And besides all these", Weymouth, is close, but better, "with all these", REB.

αναλαβοντες [αναλαμβανω] aor. part. "**take up**" - HAVING TAKEN UP. The participle, as περιζωσαμενοι above, possibly instrumental, but better attendant circumstance / imperatival. Having attached the pieces of armour the soldier is now to take up his shield.

της πιστεως [ις εως] "**of faith**" - OF FAITH. Again, the genitive is probably adjectival, epexegetic / appositional' "the shield which consists of / which is faith." Usually taken to mean faith in the sense of "reliance on the revealed will of God", "trusting Christ." Again, if the quality being called for is ethical then the Christian is being commanded to take up "trustworthiness / reliability / faithfulness" (a "flint-like resolution", Selwyn), as a soldier would take up his shield, ie., "faith" in a subjective sense, "faithfulness". "Take up trustworthiness as a soldier takes up his shield ready for battle."

εν + dat. "**with**" - IN, BY [WHICH]. Instrumental, expressing means, "by which."

σβεσαι [σβεννυμι] aor. inf. "**extinguish**" - [YOU WILL BE ABLE] TO QUENCH, EXTINGUISH, PUT OUT. A complementary infinitive completing the sense of the verb "you will be able." Probably imaging "every kind of temptation to ungodly behaviour", O'Brien. "It can quench every burning missile the enemy hurls at you", Phillips.

του πονηρου gen. "**of the evil one**" - [ALL THE FLAMING DARTS] OF THE EVIL ONE. Either a genitive of source, the arrows come from the evil one, or a possessive genitive, the arrows belong to the evil one.

v17

Take up prayer as a soldier takes up his helmet and sword ready for battle.

Up to this point, it seems likely that the pieces of armour represent ethical behaviour; a Christian soldier must stand his ground in the face of the powers of darkness; he must gird himself with truthfulness as a soldier would buckle up his belt, he must put on right-behaviour as a soldier would fit his breastplate, he must put on peacefulness as a soldier pulls on his boots, and he must take up faithfulness as a soldier takes up his shield. Now with the imperative δεξασθε, we are told to "take up" two more pieces of armour, "the helmet", qualified by "salvation", and the "sword", qualified by "S/spirit". Neither of the qualifiers imply an ethical instruction, in fact, they don't imply much at all because both pieces of armour together are explained as "the word of God through prayer and petition", v17b-18a. Paul seems to identify the final pieces of a Christian's armour as Word directed prayer, ie., prayer according to the will of God - in the

face of battle a Christian must take up prayer as a soldier takes up his salvation / victory helmet and his spiritual sword. See notes below.

δεξασθε [δεχομαι] aor. imp. "**take**" - [AND] TAKE, RECEIVE. Here a simple imperative does the work of the previous participles, evidencing that they are imperatival.

την περικεφαλαιαν "**helmet**" - THE HELMET. Accusative direct object of the verb "to take." The Roman bronze helmet is possibly in mind.

του σωτηριου [ον] gen. "**of salvation**" - OF SALVATION. It is unusual for Paul to use the neuter "salvation", indicating that he is alluding to Isaiah 59:17. The adjectival genitive is usually taken as adjectival, epexegetic, limiting by specifying the "helmet"; "the helmet which is salvation." Here, not "the hope of salvation", a future gift, but rather a present reality. Most commentators see this in the terms of assurance rather than conversion; "it is a glad awareness of having been put right with God, and the inward sense of wholeness, peace and vitality which this brings", Mitton. So, "take up assurance as a soldier takes up his helmet ready for battle." Yet, it seems likely that Paul has not got salvation / assurance in mind. The genitive is probably attributive, limiting "helmet", so "the salvation helmet", or better, following OT usage, "the victory helmet"; see "Interpretation" above. The important point to note is that Paul links both the "saving / victory helmet" and the "spiritual sword" together, ie., και is coordinative linking both "helmet" and "sword" to the imperative δεξασθε, "take up." Together they will be defined by the relative clause introduced by ὅ, "which is ....." and this with the adverbial clause introduced by δια, "by means of .....", v18, gives the sense "prayer according to God's will."

του πνευματος [α ατος] "**of the spirit**" - [AND THE SWORD] OF THE SPIRIT. Possibly a genitive of source, indicating that the Spirit supplies the sword which is the word of God, "the sword ..... that comes from the Spirit", CEV, although better "spirit / spiritual" may be intended and the genitive adjectival, attributive; "spiritual sword."

ὅ neut. pro. "**which is**" - The antecedent is likely to be both the feminine "helmet" and "sword", so explaining a collective neuter = "both of which ...." See "Interpretation" above.

ῥημα θεου "**the word of God**" - WORD OF GOD. Usually understood to mean the Bible; we "take" it by reading and studying it and so we are prepared for battle. The trouble is it seems likely that the sentence continues into v18, "which is the word of God δια through / by means of prayer." So, it well may be that the sword is prayer, a praying in the Spirit type prayer, a prayer that is according to the will of God, a prayer sourced from the word of God. "Take up Word directed

(Spirit breathed??) prayer as a soldier takes up his helmet and sword ready for battle."

v18

NIV11, NRSV, NJB, CEV..., commence a new paragraph with this verse, but this is an unhelpful division. Verse 18a follows on from v17b, ending after "prayer and petition", ie., the sentence commenced in v17 includes v18a; "take up the victory helmet and / along with the spiritual sword, that is, the word of God in / through / by means of (δια + gen., instrumental, expressing means) all prayer and petition / entreaty." So, the "word / message / statement" of God through prayer indicates a prayer that is God-breathed / guided - prayer that is based on God's revealed will. A Christian soldier stands firm in the spiritual battle by prayerfully approaching life's difficulties, constantly seeking out God's will and committing that will to prayer through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

προσευχομενοι [προσευχομαι] pres. part. "**pray**" - PRAYING. Probably attendant on the imperative "stand up", and therefore serving as an imperative, as NIV. Commencing a new sentence which further expands on the business of taking up the helmet and sword, ie., prayer and petition according to the will of God. "Keep on praying fervently", Barclay.

εν + dat. "**in [the Spirit]**" - IN / BY / WITH [SPIRIT]. Local, expressing sphere; the sphere within which the prayers operate, but possibly instrumental, "by". Possibly "spiritual prayer", Phillips, but usually taken to mean "the Holy Spirit", the one who guides and inspires believers through the word of God.

εν + dat. "**on [all occasions]**" - IN = AT [EVERY TIME]. An adverbial temporal prepositional construction. "At every opportunity", so possibly "unceasingly", or even better, "regularly". "Never stop praying", CEV.

δια + gen. "with" - THROUGH, BY MEANS OF [ALL PRAYER AND PETITION]. Instrumental, expressing means.

και εις αυτο "**with this in mind**" - AND TO THIS VERY THING, AND FOR THIS. Reference; "with respect to this."

αγρυπνουντες [αγρυπνεω] pres. part. "**be alert**" - KEEPING WATCH. The participle is imperatival, as προσευχομενοι above. The sense is "don't lose interest in prayer"; "stay alert", CEV.

εν "-" - WITH [ALL PERSEVERANCE AND PETITION]. The preposition here is probably being used adverbially, modal, expressing manner. "Perseverance" carries the idea of doing something in the face of difficulties with great effort. Paul is not promoting divine arm-bending (keep asking until we get it), but rather that we apply ourselves to prayer. "Unsleeping alertness is to be shown especially in persevering intercession on behalf of all our comrades in the fight", Beare.

περι + gen. "**for**" - CONCERNING [ALL THE SAINTS]. Expressing advantage; "for the sake of." Possibly Paul's specific sense, namely "Jewish believers", although here probably just "believers".

v19

iv] Paul winds up his exhortation with what is virtually an aside, v19-20. Having exhorted the Ephesian believers to pray in the Spirit he now actually asks them to do that for him. He asks for their prayerful support in his service as an ambassador of Christ. First, "that he might have the right message and readiness of speech", Caudill; "that God might give him the words to make known the mystery of the gospel", Hoehner, v19-20b. Second, "that he might faithfully discharge his responsibility in making known the 'mystery' of the gospel", Caudill; "that he would speak as boldly as he aught about the mystery", Hoehner, v20b.

και "***Pray* also**" - AND. Possibly emphatic, "especially", rather than adjunctive, "also".

ὑπερ gen. "**for [me]**" - Expressing advantage; "for the sake of me."

ἱνα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [TO ME MAY BE GIVEN WORDS]. Possibly introducing a purpose clause, "in order that ...", but it is more likely to introduce a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of Paul's prayer request.

εν + dat. "**whenever [I open / speak]**" - IN [OPENING]. Here adverbial, temporal, "when".

του στοματος [α ατος] gen. "**[my] mouth / speak**" - THE MOUTH [OF ME]. The NIV takes the genitive as verbal, objective; "*I* open the mouth of me" = "I speak", NIV11; "ask God to give me a message when I speak", Barclay.

δοθῃ [διδωμι] aor. pas. subj. "**may be given**" - Divine / theological passive, God speaks through Paul.

μοι dat. pro. "**me**" - TO ME. Dative of indirect object, emphatic by position in the Gk.

γνωρισαι [γνωριζω] aor. inf. "**so that I will [fearlessly] make known**" - TO MAKE KNOWN. The infinitive is adverbial expressing purpose / result, as NIV; "In order to expound", Moffatt.

εν + dat. "**fearlessly**" - IN / WITH [BOLDNESS]. Here the preposition is adverbial, expressing manner, "with boldness"; "fearlessly", NJB etc.

το μυστηριον [ον] "**the mystery**" - THE MYSTERY. Qualified by "gospel", see below. The mystery is often defined in terms of Gentile incorporation with Jews in the forming of one new body, but this is likely the consequence of the mystery proclaimed by Paul to the Gentiles. The mystery is more likely "the

unfathomable riches in Christ which must increasingly be recognized and grasped (cf. 3:18f.)", Schnackenburg.

του ευαγγελιου [ον] gen. "**of the gospel**" - OF THE GOSPEL. Omitted in some texts, but a natural qualification of "mystery". The genitive is most likely adjectival, epexegetic / appositional, "the mystery which is / namely the gospel", so Bruce, Hoehner. O'Brien opts for a genitive of content, "the mystery containing the gospel", but the gospel is probably the mystery revealed.

v20

Again, Paul asks that he might make the gospel known "fearlessly". As a prisoner in Rome, the temptation is to *play it cool*, but he wants the gospel known and so he wants to be brave enough to proclaim it.

ὑπερ "**for**" - FOR, ON BEHALF OF [WHICH]. Here expressing representation / advantage; "concerning" / "on behalf of, for the sake of." "Which" = "the gospel", but possibly "mystery", or better both.

πρεσβευω pres. "**I am an ambassador**" - A representative of a ruling authority*.

εν + dat. "**in**" - IN [CHAINS]. Local, expressing space. Of being bound with chains = imprisonment; "I was sent to do this work and that's the reason I am in jail", CEV.

ἱνα + subj. "***pray* that**" - THAT. Probably introducing a dependent statement of indirect speech expressing the content of the prayer, as in v19. So, serving as a second prayer point. Of course, purpose is possible, so Best.

παρρησιασωμαι [αρρησιαζομαι] aor. subj. "**I may declare**" - I MAY SPEAK WITH BOLDNESS.

εν αυτῳ "**it**" - IN IT. Referring back to "which" = the mystery = the gospel; "that I may proclaim the gospel fearlessly." The preposition εν, "in", is either local, sphere, "in the sphere of [the gospel]", or reference / respect, "with respect to / with regard to / concerning [the gospel]", or even possibly standard, "according to the standard of [the gospel]. "Pray that I may speak of it (about / concerning the gospel) boldly", REB.

λαλησαι [λαλεω] aor. inf. "-" - [AS IT IS NECESSARY ME] TO SPEAK. The infinitive serves as the subject of the clause, "as to speak is necessary [for] me". The subject of the infinitive με, "me" is, as usual, accusative. "As I ought to speak", NJB.

6:21-24

Conclusion

Epilogue

Argument

In the conclusion of his letter to the Ephesians, Paul commends Tychicus to his readers, as a trusted associate, and one who will be able to bring the readers up to speed on Paul's present circumstances. All evidence points to the fact that Ephesians is a general letter for circulation among Paul's mission churches in Asia Minor, and so Tychicus is presumably the bearer of the letter, as he is of the more specific version penned for the church in Colossae, Col.4:7-9. In the final two verses, Paul concludes with a benediction, calling on God to bestow "peace", " love" and "grace" upon his readers.

Issues

i] Context: See 1:1-2.

ii] Background: 1:1-2.

iii] Structure: *The epilogue*:
Information regarding Tychicus, v21-22;
Benediction, v23-24.

iv] Interpretation:

Ephesians and Colossians are very similar letters, although not exact copies. It is usually held that Ephesians is a general letter based on Colossians. Quite a few commentators argue that it is not from the hand of Paul, but is composed by an associate who uses Colossians as the basis for a general letter to the early church. This is probably unlikely, but remains a matter of contention.

What is interesting about v21-22 is that they are virtually an exact copy of Colossians 4:7-8. The only difference is the phrase in Ephesians "what I am doing", and the additional phrase in Colossians, "a fellow servant", referring to Tychicus. In Colossians, Onesimus is included with Tychicus as the bearer of the letter. It is often argued that the author is directly copying from Colossians, but the information Paul provides is so specific that it could easily be repeated in a second letter penned even weeks later.

The benediction, v23-24, is in the third person, further indicating that the letter is intended as a general letter. The benediction is in the form of a wish-prayer, a prayer for God's peace and love for Paul's readers. This is

summed up in a prayer for grace, for God's undeserved favour to be poured out on his readers. The only difficulty we face with the benediction is the prepositional phrase "in immortality." We are probably best to go with Beare who suggests that it just means "for ever"; "Grace be with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ for ever." Of course, other possibilities present themselves; see notes below.

Text - 6:21

The Postscript, v21-24. i] Information regarding Tychicus, v21-22.

δε "-" - BUT/AND. Transitional, indicating a step in the argument / paragraph marker - best left untranslated.

εν + dat. "**in [the Lord]**" - [TYCHICUS, THE BELOVED BROTHER AND FAITHFUL SERVANT] IN [THE LORD]. Local, space / metaphorical; incorporative union, "in union / relationship with the lord." A common phrase which inevitably identifies the person as a believer; "in the Lord" = "in Jesus" = "united to Jesus" = "a Christian."

ὑμιν dat. pro. "**you [everything]**" - [ALL *things* HE WILL MAKE KNOWN] TO YOU. Dative of indirect object.

ἱνα + subj. "**so that**" - THAT [AND = ALSO YOU MAY KNOW]. Introducing a final clause expressing purpose.

τα "-" - THE *things*. The article serves as a nominalizer turning the prepositional phrase, "concerning me", into a substantive; "the things concerning me"; "He will tell you how I am doing", CEV.

κατ [κατα] + acc. "**how [I am]**" - CONCERNING, ABOUT [ME]. Expressing reference / respect.

τί "**what**" - WHAT [I DO]. Interrogative pronoun. This clause stands in apposition to "the things concerning me"; "The condition in which I find myself, and how I am faring", Cassirer.

v22

προς + acc. "**to [you]**" - [WHOM I SENT = AM SENDING (transitive)] TOWARD [YOU]. Spatial, expressing movement toward.

εις + acc. "**for**" - INTO [THIS IT = THING]. Here expressing purpose, "for the purpose of this thing", which thing is specified by the *hina* clause that follows, namely, "that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts", ESV.

ἱνα + subj. "**that**" - THAT [YOU MAY KNOW]. Introducing an epexegetic clause specifying "this thing."

τα "-" - THE *things*. The article serves as a nominalizer, turning the prepositional phrase "about us" into a substantive, direct object of the verb "to know."

περι + gen. "**how [we are]**" - ABOUT, CONCERNING [US AND *that* HE MAY ENCOURAGE THE HEARTS OF YOU]. Expressing reference; "with reference to." "I have sent him (am sending him) not only to tell you about us, but to cheer you on in your faith", Peterson.

v23

ii] Benediction.

ειρηνη [η] "**Peace**" - [*may there be*] PEACE. Nominative subject of an assumed optative verb; emphatic by position. Paul is not able to bestow peace on the brotherhood, so, as is typical of a benediction, he is praying that God will bestow peace on them. An optative verb, expressing a wish-prayer, is therefore assumed. Paul often uses the word "peace" in a farewell, as well as a greeting; a very Jewish "peace be upon you" - the blessing of God's peace. "Peace" is a central theme in Ephesians, but that is probably not driving its use here. "Peace is closely related to reconciliation in 2:14-18, and virtually equivalent to salvation, cf., 2:5-8", O'Brien

τοις αδελφοις [ος] dat. "**to the brothers and sisters**" - TO THE BROTHERS. Dative of interest, advantage, "for the brothers."

μετα + gen. "**with [faith]**" - [AND LOVE] WITH [FAITH]. Expressing association. Paul associates "faith" with "love", and probably "peace" as well, so Best; "May peace and love, with faith, be yours from God." Paul is praying for the bestowal of God's peace and love upon his readers, and this in association with faith. It is not clear whether Paul implies that faith, as well as peace and love, is from God. The preposition establishes a close connection between faith and peace and love, with the weight on peace and love, indicating that faith is of a different order. So, Paul is probably praying that his readers will respond in faith to the divine gifts of peace and love from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

απο + gen. "**from**" - FROM [GOD *the* FATHER AND *the* LORD]. Expressing source / origin. God is the source of peace and love.

Ιησου Χριστου [ος] gen. "**Jesus Christ**" - Standing in apposition to "Lord".

v24

η χαρις [ις εως] "**Grace**" - [*may there be*] GRACE. Nominative subject of an assumed optative verb. "Grace" is the undeserved favour of God realized in Christ. The word is commonly used by Paul to begin and end his letters and serves to sum up the totality of God's mercy toward humanity.

μετα + gen. "**with**" - Expressing association through engagement with - may those who love the Lord engage with = experience the grace of God; "May you who love the Lord experience to the full the grace of God for ever and ever."

των αγαπωντων [αγαπαω] pres. part. "**all who love**" - THE ONES LOVING [THE LORD OF US, JESUS CHRIST]. The participle serves as a substantive.

εν αφθαρσια [α] dat. "**with an undying *love***" - IN IMMORTALITY, ETERNITY (of an unceasing state). It seems likely that εν here is adverbial, temporal, giving the sense "in an unceasing state" = "for ever and ever." Most commentators oppose this sense because Paul usually expresses the idea of eternity with a prepositional phrase like "into the ages of the ages." The NIV, as with many other translations, takes the prepositional phrase as adverbial, modal, expressing manner, modifying the participle "loving", "all the ones always loving"; "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love which will never die", Barclay, "undying love", REB, so Best, Hoehner, ... Although separated syntactically, some commentators link this prepositional phrase with "grace", either modifying "grace", "immortal grace", or more likely associated with grace, "God's grace be with you ..... grace with immortality", NEB, so O'Brien, Bruce, ...

Excursus

The faith of Christ

δια της πιστεως αυτου "**through the faith / faithfulness of him (Jesus Christ)**" The noun "faith" when used with the genitive "him / Jesus Christ" is usually understood as "a committal of oneself to Christ on the basis of the acceptance of the message concerning him", Burton, ie., the genitive is treated as verbal, objective. This classification is doctrinally foundational: "Faith in Christ is the sole and sufficient means of justification", Fung.

The trouble is that πιστις in Gk. at the time, and in the Septuagint (the Gk. OT), didn't mean "faith / trust" directed toward someone, but rather "reliability / fidelity / firmness / faithfulness / trustworthiness." This sense seems also to dominate the NT, including Paul's letters. Although not widely accepted, it is more than likely that the "faith" here is actually generated by Christ (subjective genitive; see Wallace 115 who argues that the vast majority of personal or impersonal genitives with πιστις are subjective), or belongs to Christ (possessive), or generally describes Christ's character (adjectival, descriptive). So, our right-standing before God rests on Christ's "faith / faithfulness" to the will of God expressed in his obedience to the way of the cross on our behalf; "Christ's trustful obedience to God in the giving up of his own life for us", Martyn, (cf., See Galatians 2:16, and also 2:20, "I live in faith, that is to say, in the faith of the Son of God", Martyn).

Most commentators remain unconvinced and opt for an objective genitive. Larkin notes that when πιστις is introduced by εν ᾧ, "in whom", then Christ is obviously the object of the faith, ie., an objective genitive. In Ephesians 3:12 Larkin argues that the εν ᾧ introducing the verse is also assumed for πιστεως αυτου, as NIV, "In him *and* through faith in him." Merkle p98 addresses the issue with respect to Ephesians 3:12 and concludes that "though the objective genitive is slightly more likely, the subjective genitive cannot be ruled out."

None-the-less, it seems likely that the genitive "of him" is subjective, or possessive, "through the faith / faithfulness of him", rather than the more widely accepted objective genitive, "faith in him", where Christ is the object of the faith, as NIV etc. Christ's faithfulness, evident in the cross, rests of the Father's faithfulness to his promises, the appropriation of which (the promises of God worked out in the cross) is to we who (επιστευσαμεν) believe, cf., Rom.3:22, Gal.2:22 "A person is ... justified ..... by means of the faith / faithfulness of Christ Jesus."

Donald Robinson in *Faith of Jesus Christ - a New Testament Debate*, published in the Reformed Theological Review, #29, 1970, opts for a subjective

genitive, translating πιστις as "firmness"; "Christ is the immovable rock established by the immutable God, upon which he invites men to take their stand without flinching." For the use of the genitive in Galatians, see Martyn and also Longenecker p87. For further reading see the doctoral dissertation by Richard Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, published in the Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study edition #56 edited by Bird, 1983, and republished as *The Faith of Christ*, Eerdmans, 2002.

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