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Ephesians (Overview) - Part 2



Bible Book Overviews - Steve Gregg

Explore the rich teachings of Ephesians with Steve Gregg in this insightful overview. In this in-depth study, Gregg focuses on the significance of the church as the body of Christ, emphasizing the unity and identity believers share in Him. Addressing themes such as the heavenly blessings, spiritual warfare, and the purpose of chosenness, Gregg provides a comprehensive understanding of the key concepts in Ephesians. Gain valuable insights into the practical applications of living as followers of God and discover how to stand strong in the armor of God against the enemy's attacks.

Transcript

Ok, so we're going to take a rather quick romp through the book of Ephesians. I mentioned that the book is obsessed with the subject of the church. Not the local church per se, but the church, the body of Christ, which is a global reality.

And this is reflected in Paul's behavior. For example, when the church in Jerusalem went into a period of poverty, Paul went among the churches of the Gentiles and collected support for them to show the unity of them. Now, most of these people in Paul's churches would never see the people in the churches in Jerusalem.

They'd never have any contact with them, but they felt like they were one body with them. They had one common concern. And that was correct.

And that's why Christians in America send money to poor Christians in India or Haiti or things like that. We're one body with them. We may never see them, most of them, but then we'll never see most of the Christians in our own town.

But we're part of the same body and therefore have the same concern. Remember in 1 Corinthians 12, when Paul first introduced the idea of the body of Christ, he was saying, you know, no member can say I have no need of you to another member. All the members are needed.

And one isn't more important than another. And no one can say they're independent of the others. We have different gifts, but you know, this disuniformity or lack of uniformity

is not the same thing as disunity.

You can be unified without uniformity because there's different members of the body that are very different from each other, but in the one body. That's true globally as well. Different races, different nationalities, different denominations, different cultural practices in different areas, but they're all Christians are in one body and one family with us now because we're in the body of Christ.

Paul uses the expression frequently and more in Ephesians anywhere else. The expression is in Christ. Now, a lot of his epistles, he only uses this maybe once or twice or a few times in a longer epistle.

But in Ephesians, this is like so dominant. It gets to be like a broken record. You find it especially heavily represented this phrase in that long sentence I mentioned, which is chapter one, verses three through fourteen.

But he actually uses it before that, because in verse one, he says this to all the saints. Our mentors say who are in Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus. Now, the readers are in Christ Jesus.

What does it mean to be in Christ? Well, like the stones of a building are in the building and they're in its structure. The living stones make up the building, like the members of a body are in the body. Your organs and your limbs are in your body.

Jesus spoke about the branches of a vine. He says, I'm the vine, you're the branch, you have to stay in me, meaning you need to become remain part of the organism. If you have a kidney removed, it's no longer in you.

And it's not transplanted into someone else is going to die because it doesn't live on its own. A kidney that is part of your functioning part of your body is in you. It has a role to play in you and its identity is you.

I sometimes give the illustration of the difference being being in Adam and in Christ, as Paul uses that contrast. That if, let's just say there's a criminal on death row because he's committed crimes and he deserves to die. And he's got, you know, good functioning organs, he's in good health, but he's going to die.

And then there's a man who's just been elected to be, you know, the president of the United States. And let's say it's a good one. It's hard to imagine this, but use your imagination.

A good person has been elected to be president, but he's got a real bad liver. And in fact, he's likely to die if that liver isn't replaced. And let's just say the guy on death row donates his liver.

He's going to die anyway. So he donates his liver and the president has a liver. Well, that liver that was in the man on death row was in a body that was doomed to death.

But now it's in a body that's destined for power and prestige and significance. And it's like we were in Adam. We're like members of Adam's corporate body.

We were in Adam. But when we're saved, we're translated out of Adam into the body of Christ. And in Adam, we were doomed because that whole body's doomed.

And we're part of that body. But now we're part of a different body. And in that body, we have the same destiny as the whole body as Christ himself.

That's why Paul can say that in Christ, we are seated in heavenly places in him. Why? Because he is and we are in him. We are counted to be part of him.

Organs of his of his flesh and bones, his arms and legs. We are organs in that body. And in Christ, we have his identity.

As opposed to our own. And as opposed to the Adamic, I didn't see in Adam, our identities had to be found in, you know, it well, we're in Adam, of course, but we would have other ways to identify ourselves. We're men or women, or this race or that race.

Or maybe, you know, we identified with other people of common interest, surfers or bikers or things like that. I mean, there's people who have things in common. We look for a group to be a part of.

And then that becomes an identity for some people. Yeah, we're part of this bike gang, or we're we identify with this sports team that's from our city or whatever. And we have these things that we identify by.

I mean, I heard just yesterday, a guy whose whole identity and his whole life was wrapped up in the team. I think a football team, if I'm not mistaken, maybe it's basketball from his town. And, you know, his his mood was totally shattered if they lost or totally elated if they won.

I've never been able to understand that. I've never been able to see what difference it makes who wins or loses a game. I end of the game that was at the beginning of the game.

I mean, all the problems that are solved by the players were created for the game. So it's not like the game solved any problems. I know there may be sports fans here.

I never could figure out why someone would let their identity be. I'm a you know, I'm for the Dodgers or I'm for the Giants or I'm for whoever. Who cares? That's not an identity that's worth having.

But when you're an atom, you look for some smaller group to identify with a local team, a club, something like that. Maybe your gender. You become a radical feminist because, you know, your whole identity is I'm a woman.

Hear me roar. Or, you know, let's say you're a black person. You're attracted to join up with Black Lives Matter because that's obviously affirming that particular identity to the point where they get upset if you say all lives matter.

I mean, they're so into that particular identity that they don't want to be included with all other identities. So but in Christ, all those things disappear. All those things are nothing.

And we're we all have the same identity. We're one in Christ. Now, Paul says that Galatians three, of course, because there's no Jew or Gentile, no male or female, no bond or free.

He says similar things in Ephesians and Colossians as well. Now, therefore, the big emphasis in Ephesians is what it means to be in Christ. A lot of it has to do with the privileges we have because we're now in Christ.

It's because they are Christ's privileges. In him, we have them. And this is something that you don't understand can lead people into confusion because he lived.

I've made a list of all the things he says are true of us in Christ. Just in that one long sentence, there's more, but there's a thick collection of them in this one long sentence in beginning of verse three. He says we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

In verse four, he says we're chosen before the foundation of the world in Christ. In verse six, we are accepted in that is by God in Christ or in the beloved who is Christ. That's one six and one seven.

It says in him, we have redemption through his blood and the forgiveness of sins. In verse ten, in him, we're gathered. He's getting us with all things in him.

In verse eleven, in him, we've obtained inheritance. Verse thirteen, in him, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. All of that is in that that long sentence.

And then you go on in chapter two, verse six, we've been made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. In chapter two, verse seven, in Christ, we experience exceeding riches of his grace in the kindness toward us. In chapter two, verse ten, as in him, as his workmanship were created for good works in Christ.

Chapter two, verse 13, we were once too far off from the Jews, that is, and have been brought near by the blood of Jesus in Christ. In Christ, along with believing Jews, verse 15, we have become a new one new man in him. Chapter two, verses 21 and 22 says we

are built up as a building to be dwelt in the place of God through the spirit in Christ.

All these all these verses have the phrase in Christ, in Christ, in Christ. In chapter three, verse six, in Christ were fellow heirs of the same body and partakers of his promise through the gospel. Chapter four, verse 32, in Christ, we're forgiven.

God has forgiven us in Christ. And in chapter five, verse eight, he says we are light in the Lord in Christ. So why? Because Jesus is all those things.

That's the thing. We all know Jesus is all those things. He is accepted.

He is holy. He is elect or chosen. He is light.

All these things. He is the new man. But in him, we are.

We're all those things. So Paul has this idea that, you know, the church is not just a fan club of Jesus, a group of people who all decided that they like Jesus or even of disciples who have all just had to follow Jesus individually. Now, this is the thing we know from the rest of Scripture that we are required to follow Jesus individually.

We have an individual responsibility to be obedient, to be disciples, to continue in his works. But the focus here is not is on the fact that since we are disciples, since as individuals, we are disciples, we belong to a much larger phenomenon, which is this which God recognizes as his son, his body. And in chapter one, verse twenty three specifically says the church is his body, the fullness of him who fills on.

I think that the church is the fullness of him. It's the extension of him. His head alone is not.

It's not complete. Just like your head alone is not complete. The body fills is the fullness of the rest of your of your head.

Look at over first Corinthians twelve. Paul makes a similar and remarkable statement about the church. Only he doesn't use the word church.

He's talking about the church. This is very clear in first Corinthians twelve, verse twelve and thirteen. For as the body and in this case, he doesn't mean the body of Christ.

He means the human body. He's using the analogy of a body. This is where he's introducing the idea that the church is the body of Christ.

They start off and say, think about a body, anybody. OK, this is true of bodies in general. For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body.

So also is Christ. I says, when you think about a body, it's one body, it's got a lot of

members. But even though there are many and they're different, they're all one body.

That's what Christ is. He didn't say that's what the church is, which we'd expect. You think he'd say, you know, it's like a body.

So is also the church. It just so is Christ. Christ is a many membered body.

He, Jesus is the head. We are the rest of him. What is done to us is done to Christ.

That's why Jesus said it as much as it is done to at least my brother's son to me. When Paul said to in First Corinthians chapter eight, he said, if you sit against your brother, you're sitting against Christ. In chapter four, he says, do not lie to one another because you're members of each other.

Interesting thing that's in chapter four, verse twenty five, Paul says, therefore, putting away line each one speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another, because why we're the same body. So I'm a member of Christ. You're a member of Christ.

We're members of each other. All the members of my body are part of the one identity, which is me. And they're all members of each other as well as members of me collectively.

This is how Paul sees us. We're not just so many followers of Jesus who need to get along with Jesus. We're also a collective body which have to get along with each other and have to function together in harmony and unity.

So there's all these references to being in Christ in this throughout the book. But in the first chapter, we have a special emphasis on that. There's another phrase that you're going to come to repeatedly in the book of Ephesians, and that is the word heaven leaves.

Now, heavenly is an adjective like Paul talks in one place about the heavenly calling or the heavenly Jerusalem, Jerusalem and calling our now have a major. But the word in Greek, an adjective can be used as a substantive, meaning as if it's a noun. For example, when the Bible talks about the dead in Christ, the dead dead is really not a noun that is a negative, like a dead horse, a dead dog, a dead person.

It describes it's an adjective, but in Greek, an adjective is sometimes used as a substantive, as they say, which means it's treated like a noun. The dead would be collectively all the people who happen to be dead. The word heavenly is without a noun, and that's how Paul uses it throughout this book.

It leaves open the heavenly works. Now, most translations are the New Kingdom, which causes the heavenly places. So the word places will be italics, because that's how the

translators tell you that they added that word to make sense of it.

If the word heavenly is was in the masculine form, which is an option in Greek, it might refer to heavenly people. The heavenly could be the heavenly people, but it's in the neuter form, which which almost would mean heavenly things or heavenly places. The way it's used by Paul seems to refer to heavenly places, the realm of heaven, the heavenly realm, as opposed to the earthly realm.

And he speaks of the heavenlies numerous times, primarily in this book. It's not really a focus of any of his other books. For example, we saw in chapter one, verse three, blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly in Christ.

In Christ, we have spiritual blessings in the heaven, which is, of course, different than earthly blessings such as Israel. You know, people who hold the word of faith doctrine who say we should be wealthy because in one place it says in Galatians three that that the blessing of Abraham will come upon the Gentiles through faith. They said, well, the blessings of Abraham.

He was a rich man. So so we should be rich because the blessing of Abraham is supposed to be on us. No, not so.

That's not the blessing of Abraham. Paul says the blessing of Abraham is that they receive the spirit and are justified by faith. That's the blessing of Abraham.

Not well. But in Deuteronomy, chapter 28, God told Israel that if they're obedient, they'd be poor and defeated and sick. But if they are.

If they're disobedient, they'll be there. If they're obedient, they'll be well prosperous, but if they're disobedient, they'll be poor and sick. And so something they'll see God promised the blessings of crops and lots of livestock and all this stuff.

If you're obedient. Well, that was Israel. That's not us.

That's not a promise to us. That's a promise of the old covenant. We are promised blessings to, but they're in the heavenly place.

They're spiritual blessings. And what are the spiritual blessings? Well, Paul is some of them in this chapter. Election to be holy is a spiritual blessing.

Adoption of sons. He mentions redemption. Forgiveness, the spirit of God and inheritance.

All these things are some of the spiritual blessings in heavenly places. We have, but they're not in the earthly realm. That is, they don't exist in the earthly realm right now.

They're in the heavenly sphere. They're spiritual, as he calls them. He also used the word the heavenlies in chapter one, verse 20, where he says, which he worked in Christ Jesus when he raised him from the dead, sealed him, seated him at his right hand in the heavenly.

So where Christ is seated is in the heavenly office. We don't see them in heaven. So the heavenly sphere, the heavenly realm.

That's where Christ is seated. And that's where we see with him in the heavenly chapter to verse six. So the heavenly are the places in chapter three, verse ten.

He talks about principalities and powers in the heavenly. Now we're talking about Chris Powers in a moment in chapter three, verse ten, he says to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church. That is through the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

Now, I'm going to say that significant that he says in the heavenly sphere, because principalities and powers don't always refer to spiritual principles. They can say more about that in a moment, because Paul does talk about the principalities and powers a number of times. Then the last time he talks about the heavenly is in chapter six.

We also talk about principalities and powers in chapter six, verse ten. He says, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Verse eleven, put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand.

He was we're going to be on first two verses to verse thirteen. Therefore, take up note. Verse twelve.

I'm all around before and after. Verse twelve is what I'm looking for. Because we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly.

So he talks about Christ and us are seated in the heavenlies. In chapter one, verse twenty and chapter two, verse six, he says that our spiritual blessings are the heavenly and chapter one, verse three. He says there are principalities and powers in the head of this.

Now, what is the reference? What's the meaning of the principalities and powers? Well, he uses this term also in Romans and Colossians, but in Ephesians, it's not clear how he means them. If he's different, because if you look with me at Titus, Titus chapter three and verse one, Paul says to Titus, remind them, remind the Christians to be subject to the rulers and authorities in the Greek. That's principalities and powers.

The very same phrase used in Ephesians that's translated principalities and powers. Tell Christians to be subject to the principalities and powers to obey and be ready to do

every good work. Obviously, this is not saying to obey the angels or the demons.

These are referring to earthly powers. The term principalities and powers means dominions or jurisdictions and rulers. And it is used of ordinary earthly rulers be subject to them, like Paul said in Romans thirteen to be subject to the authorities.

So he says here in Titus three, one, be subject to principalities and powers. And there's several times Paul uses the term principalities and powers in other places that we don't know if he's talking about earthly or spiritual. We saw him qualify it in chapter three in verse ten.

We're talking about principalities and powers in the heavenlies. Okay, that's not talking about earthly dominions and powers, that's not about spiritual ones. Likewise, we wrestle against principalities and powers, rulers of the darkness of this age and spiritual witness in the heavenlies.

So there's this. There are principalities in the heavenlies and there's principalities and powers that are earthly. The same to the same two words taken together can refer to either one in different context.

So there's times when it's not clear what is the meaning in a certain context. For example, in Romans chapter eight in verse thirty eight. This is one of the places where Paul's rhapsodizing about our privileges and security in Christ.

But he says in verse thirty eight, I'm persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height or depth or any other created thing should be able to separate from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Now there's principalities and powers. They're just a list of things.

If you talk about earthly ones or spiritual ones, you might say that since he mentions angels just before he's thinking of heavenly spiritual things, principalities and maybe he is. On the other hand, maybe the fact that he mentions angels separately means he's not referring to angels as principalities and powers. Which might be said, well, they're not angels.

We don't know exactly how he meant it here, but certainly Paul knows that the earthly authorities can be a danger to the Christian and that it's reassuring to know that they can't separate from the love of Christ, too, because Christians in Rome, especially writing to eventually are being fed the lions by the principality called Nero and his power. The government officials in many places have persecuted Christians and we're supposed to be subject to them, but sometimes they end up being persecutors of us. And so principalities and powers sometimes is not talking about spiritual beings.

In Colossians 1:16 is similarly somewhat questionable. We have in Colossians two references, I believe, to the principalities and powers. I'm not mistaken.

In Colossians 1:16, Paul says, for by him, all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones and dominions or principalities and powers. All things were created for him. Now, he doesn't clarify these principalities and powers because he does mention thrones and dominions, which is no doubt earthly thrones and earthly dominions.

Then he mentions principalities and powers. It's possible, since he distinguishes in the verse before that, or earlier in the same verse, between things in heaven and things on earth, and things seen and things unseen. That means his thrones and dominions, he's talking about the things that are on earth that are seen, and principalities and powers are things in heaven that are not seen.

I mean, he does talk about both categories, but Paul's a little ambiguous there in many cases. But in two places, at least in Ephesians, he seems clearly to be referring to principalities and powers in the heavenlies. And Christ is above them all, and Christ is showing off to them in the church, Ephesians 3:10, that the principalities and powers in the heavenly places are learning about the wisdom of God through the church.

What Paul says is that by watching what Christ is doing in the church, he's teaching lessons to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. The angels are learning about it, about his wisdom. And then, of course, we wrestle against principalities and powers.

It would appear that in Ephesians 3:10, the principalities and powers in the heavenlies are angels, good angels probably. Although it could be bad ones too, because they could be learning something from watching the church as well. But in chapter 6, in verse 12, it's obviously demonic powers.

So we come across this phrase in various connections in Paul's writings. But here, and here alone, does he ever connect in his writings the principalities and powers with the word in the heavenlies. So that it's clear in those cases, which is not the case in the other instances, that he's talking about angelic or demonic beings.

Both can be seen as principalities and powers. You know, when Daniel, in Daniel 10, was praying and fasting for 21 days, and the angel finally got through after that period of time. He says, you know, the Lord sent me.

The day you started praying, I was sent. But I was resisted by the principality of Persia. In our version, it says the prince of Persia.

But in the Greek Old Testament, it's the same word principality that's used in Ephesians. And this was certainly a demonic power that was resisting this angel. This angel was bringing the answer to Daniel's prayer, and it was delayed because of this warfare in the heavenlies.

From the principality of Persia fighting against him. So we know that there are demonic authorities, demonic rulers in the heavenlies. And Paul says that's who we wrestle against.

So I'm just trying to make you aware of some of these terms that are used almost uniquely in Ephesians. He uses the word principality and powers more in Ephesians than anywhere else. Also in the heavenlies is an Ephesians term.

Also in Christ. It's not strictly in Ephesians, but it's more dominant here. Now, let's talk about the book, how it's laid out and so forth.

The first chapter is dominated by some long sentences, as I pointed out. Verse 3 through 14 is one of them. And verse 15 through 23 is another one of them.

In the first of these, we're not going to dissect it because it's quite an elaborate sentence. But we can see he's talking very largely about the doctrine of election or chosenness. He introduces it in verse 4. He says that he chose us or elected us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Now, election or chosenness is obviously a theological controversial subject because especially Calvinists emphasize it. But I mean, it can be emphasized. Paul emphasizes it here.

It's just the question is, what does it mean? Are there's different ways of looking at what Paul means by being chosen to the Calvinist? This means that each individual who becomes a Christian was chosen or elect. The word election chosen or interchangeable in English. They both translate the same Greek word.

That if you are a Christian, then you were chosen to be a Christian. In the Calvinist system, people can't decide if they'll be Christians or not. God decides that before you're born.

No one is no one is born with the freedom to either become a Christian or not a Christian. They're born already destined to be a Christian or destined not to be one, which means that if you're not just if you're not chosen, well, then you're never going to be. You can't be.

It's just not available to you. If you're not elected before the foundation of the earth to be saved, you as an individual simply can't get saved. Might as well give up all hope.

But if you are elected before the foundation, there's no way you won't be saved. It's inevitable. God's not going to let anything else happen, but that you'd be safe.

So the Calvinist view is that God selects individuals. They often say there's a finite number that cannot be added to or subtracted from that before any man is born. God

has decided for the financial world of all humanity.

This one, this one, this one, this one and that one are going to be saved. The rest, not so much. In fact, not at all.

So they see election as an individual choice of individuals. The other way to see election, there might be others to. I mean, some people might say that God has elected all people, but not all people respond.

You know, it's like you get a draft notice. A draft notice might be sent out to every every citizen, but not everyone shows up. Some go to Canada instead.

I mean, so in a way, one could argue that Paul says he's chosen all of us, all human beings to be in his purpose to be part of Christ. But many people just don't show up for duty and they never get saved. But the way I think that Paul uses the word election is in terms of corporate election.

The church as the body of Christ is elect regardless who's in it. It's Christ who is the elect one. And in him, we share in that status of being elect if we're in him.

Now, Paul does not say that we were chosen to be in him. Since we are chosen in him. That's different.

If he said he chose us to be in him, it would mean that the very constituencies, constituency of the body of Christ was selected down to the individual to be in him. But we're not anywhere told that God chose us to be in Christ. But we chose us because we are in Christ.

He's assuming his audience are Christians. And therefore, they are in Christ. He says it all the way through.

You are in Christ. In Christ you have this, this, this. Among the things you have in Christ is chosenness.

Why? Because Christ has chosenness. He's the chosen one. In Isaiah 42, verse 1, God says, behold, my servant whom I've chosen.

It's a reference to Christ. He's the chosen one. If you're in Christ, if you're part of his body, you're in him.

Then you're chosen too. As it were, the example I gave of a criminal donating his liver to a presidential candidate who's been elected, that man has been chosen by the electors. He's been elected to become the president.

Every organ in his body was elected in him. And even if an organ from another man is translated, that now is part of, is elected to be president too. See, it's the whole man

that's elected.

The constituent parts may or may not be involved. For example, the man may be elected as president. He's got two arms.

He'll be getting an accident, lose one of his arms. That arm's not going to be elected anymore, but the man still is. All the parts of the body that are part of him are elected.

And even after the election, some may be added or subtracted by injury or by transplant. But it's still, it's the group that's in him. Back in the 60s, there was a song about the Green Berets.

Any of you are old enough to remember that. And as I recall, it's been decades since I heard it. But I remember when I was a kid hearing it.

I think he said something like this. He's talking about the Green Berets. 300 men will test today, but only, I think it's only three.

Make the Green Berets or something like that. Might be 10, I forget. Some very small number.

A bunch of people are going to test out to be in the Green Berets, but a few are going to be chosen. Now, suppose in that scenario, let's just say some military leader has chosen these people to be Green Berets. Now, the reason he chose them is not so much for them to have ribbons and medals and things like that, but for them to go out and do scary, hard stuff.

They're chosen for a purpose. There may be medals and trophies and things like that as a result of it, if they do it well. But the chosenness is not for purpose.

The chosenness is for responsibility. Chosenness is for a mission. They're chosen for a mission.

When I was in grammar school, I was the last kid chosen at recess to play on the teams, the baseball team, whatever, softball team, because I was no good. But people who are chosen for the team, it wasn't that they were chosen for the privilege of being on the team, though they might very much like to be on the team. They're chosen to win a game.

They're chosen to play and win a game. That's what you choose team members for. The team is collectively chosen to do something.

If they do well, there's a reward. There's maybe a trophy or something. But the thing is being chosen as a group.

You know, once you're in the group, the group may be chosen for something where other

groups are not. I think of, let's say, a high school choir. The senior choir, let's say, are chosen to sing at the next presidential inaugural event.

OK, well, every kid can go home and say to their mom, hey, we've been chosen to sing for the president. You know, it's a great privilege we've been chosen for. But it doesn't mean that all the individuals in the choir are chosen.

The choir was chosen. Some people might join the choir before them, and some might leave the choir before them. It's still the same choir, but the individuals in there are the same.

It's the choir as a group that is chosen. What God has chosen is those who are in Christ as a group. Some may leave.

As Jesus said, if anyone does not abide in me, he's cast forth as a branch and the wither and burn. Or some may be converted. But it's the collective that is chosen.

And so in Christ, we share in his chosenness. We are chosen in him. Now, when Peter talks about this, he mimics Ephesians because Paul says we were chosen before the foundation of the world.

If you look at 1 Peter 1, talking about Christ, it says, Christ in 1 Peter 1, 20, he indeed was foreordained or predestined, actually that's what the word is in the Greek, he was foreknown, and he was foreordained before the foundation of the world. OK, Christ was chosen before the foundation of the world. And since he has that status of having been chosen before the foundation of the world, we in him were chosen before the foundation of the world.

Not as individuals. It's not like before the foundation of the world, God said, Steve Gregg is going to be a Christian. And his neighbor, Josh, was not going to be a Christian.

What God determined from the beginning of the world is that Jesus is the chosen one. Once I have become part of Jesus, I'm chosen too. And that chosenness took place before the foundation of the world.

That chosenness before the foundation of the world, that's mine now. If I abide in him. You know, in the Old Testament, Israel as a nation was chosen.

They were the chosen nation. It's a collective. If a person abandoned God, and though they were an Israelite, they wouldn't be in Israel anymore.

They were cut off from the people. If a Gentile became a cross-eyed and became part of Israel, then he was among the chosen. Being part of the chosen is an individual choice based on individual choice.

But the collective is chosen. So God chose Israel. But he didn't, before the foundation of

the world, decide who's going to be in Israel.

People who were born Israelites might become pagans. People who were born pagans might become Israelites. But in becoming an Israelite, you become part of the chosen people.

In becoming part of Christ, you become part of the chosen one. And this was before the foundation of the earth that God made this choice. And so election is in Christ, Paul says in verse four.

And he used the word predestination a couple times here, too. Now, predestination is not really used of people very often in the Bible. Paul uses it also in Romans.

In Romans 8, verses 29 and 30, Paul said, whom he foreknew, he also did predestinate to be conformed into the image of his son. And whom he predestined, then he also called. And whom he called, he also justified.

And whom he justified, he glorified. So predestined is found in Romans 8, 29 and in Romans 8, 30. And it's found in two verses in Ephesians.

And beyond that, we don't have the word predestination used of people. Christ is predestined. But predestination is used of people only in that passage in Romans, only here.

And neither of them speaks of anyone being predestined to be saved. In Romans, he says, whom he foreknew. Okay, there's a group of people that God foreknew, namely in Christ.

Those he predestined, those people he knew, he predestined that they would be conformed to the image of Christ. That's still our destiny. We're not yet conformed to the image of Christ, but we're being changed from glory to glory in that same image.

It says in 1 John, chapter 3, my little children, you know, we are children of God. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but when he shall appear, we shall be like him. For we'll seem as he is.

So we're not yet like him, but we are predestined to become like him. Why? Because we're in him. God has predestined for Christians a certain end that we will be transformed into the image of his son.

That's what predestination is. It's not predestining some people to become Christians. It's predestining something for the people who are Christians.

What do they have in the end? Well, they're going to be conformed to the image of his son. Now, in Ephesians, we have the expression predestination twice. Once is in verse five and once in verse 11.

Verse five, he says, having predestinated us as Christians not to be Christians, but to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself. That is, God determined that people who would be in Christ would have the privilege of being adopted as his sons. Now, he didn't have to do that.

I mean, we could have been on God's side. He could say, sorry, I'm not adopting anyone. Thanks.

I don't need you. But he predestined that those who are in Christ, we, we were predestined as Christians to become adopted as sons. Now, to Paul, adoption refers to the resurrection.

We might not think so. When we become children of God, that's spoken of as being born of God, not adopted. Adopted as sons speaks of coming to our mature privileges when Jesus comes back and being glorified.

How do I know that? Well, because that's how Paul uses the term. Look at Romans chapter eight. Romans 8, 23, Paul says, not only they, but we also who have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves grown within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption.

Which he calls the redemption of our body. Which is our resurrection. We're groaning in this present body, looking forward to our resurrected bodies, our glorified bodies.

The whole of creation, he says, is groaning too, because they're looking forward to that too. The whole creation is going to change too when Jesus comes back and we'll be resurrected. And we're looking forward to that adoption as sons.

That is, we'll be mature sons then. We don't, we're children now. We're like baby, baby sons.

But adoption is a term in the Roman empire that spoke of a son becoming an adult. Sort of like when a Jew is bar mitzvahed, they become, come to adult responsibility. So, Paul says we've been adopted, we've been predestined to be adopted.

That's going to happen. That's the same thing as in Romans, to be conformed to the image of his son. That's when we're glorified.

In verse 11, he also uses the word predestined, but not in any way that would help us to understand much more about it. Verse 11 says, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. Now, we're predestined.

He doesn't say to what. He's already told us to what. In verse 5, he says we've been predestined to adoption of sons.

Here he mentions our predestination again, being according to God's will, but he doesn't specify what we're adopted to. He's previously already said, or predestined to. He's already said that.

We've got, you know, chosen or elect. We've got predestined as in this passage. And what we're chosen for, according to verse 4, we were chosen in him that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

That we should be holy and without blame before him alone. That's what God has chosen for. It doesn't say he chose us to go to heaven.

When God chose Israel, he didn't choose them to go to heaven. Most of them didn't. Many of them, the earth opened up and swallowed them or they died in the waters because they're rebelling against God.

Many of the people who were of the chosen people did not end up in heaven because the choosing was not a choice of who's going to heaven, who's not. It's a choice of who is going to be part of the group that God is assigning the task of bringing the Messiah into the world. That was what they were chosen for.

They were chosen to be the Messiah's nation, and they had to keep the covenant that God gave them Mount Sinai so that they could be part of that. And he would bring the Messiah through them. Yes, there's privilege in that.

If you if you did, he told us you're faithful to this. You'll you'll be blessed. But the assignment again is to.

To do something or be something. And Paul says we were chosen to be. Holy and without blame before him in love.

So that's that's what we're chosen for to be holy. Now, we're also all of this is also said to have another purpose. It's mentioned three times in verse seven, verse nine and verse 11.

Verse seven says in him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. I'm sorry, that's that's the wrong verse. I'm looking at verse five.

So I'm thinking of having three destinies to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will. Verse six, to the praise of the glory of his grace. Now, God has done this to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he says again.

In. Verse 12, chapter one, verse 12, he says that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of his glory. And then in verse 14 says, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchase possession to the praise of his glory?

Now, three times he says all of this is to the praise of God's glory.

You know, he doesn't say God did all this for us because. So that we could have privileges. He did it so that he could be glorified.

He saved us, he produced us, he redeemed us, he reconciled us to the praise of his glory. To Paul, salvation is about God and God's glory, not about us and our privileges. Now, Paul doesn't deny we have privileges.

We've been blessed with spiritual blessings in the heavenly spirit. You know, we've got all kinds of privileges, but salvation is not for our privilege. It's for God's glory.

And the glory of God is what the whole universe exists for. The heavens declare the glory of God. The firmament shows forth his hand.

The glory of God is the purpose of existence that God be glorified in my life. That's why Jesus said, let your light in. Matthew five, let your light so shine among men so that men will see your good works and glorify your father.

Which is in heaven. That's the point. Paul said, whatever you do in word, or you do all to the glory of God.

Everything is for the glory of God. And we often think about, well, salvation is such a privilege. Well, it is.

It's truly a privilege. But it's not about me. Even though I do receive privileges, it wasn't because I'm the center of attention or because I'm the center of interest.

It's the glory of God that's the center of interest. And I'm chosen. I'm predestined.

And I've got all this privilege is in Christ. My concern is that God be glorified. That's got to be my whole concern.

Now, we're not going to go into all the rest of this because we have to scan through the chapter more. There's other things I could bring up, but and some of them are in your notes. But I want to just kind of go through the book.

The book divides into three chapters and three chapters. It's six chapters. The first half is the theological portion and the second half is the practical portion.

This is very similar to, say, Romans. Romans, the first 11 chapters are theological and then chapters 12 to the end are practical. Colossians is four chapters.

Two of them are theological. Two of them are practical. So Paul's pattern is to build a foundation of theology, truth, and then say, now, because of this truth, behave this way.

In Romans, it's very clear because after he gives the theological portion in the first 11

chapters in chapter 12, Paul says, in view of the mercies of God, meaning all these mercies of God, he's been talking about the first 11 chapters in view of God's grace and mercy. Present yourself, your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God. And he goes on to talk about practical living for the rest of the book.

But because of the mercies of God, because of the truth in this theology, you should live a certain way. And that's what he does here in Ephesians chapter four on is about that. Now, a real simple outline of the book that was given some years ago in the book, Sit, Walk, Stand by Watchman Nee recognizes the first three chapters as maybe could be summarized in sitting or your position in Christ, where you're sitting.

And of course, it's in that section that in chapter two, verse six, as we are seated in Christ in heavenly places, the idea is our position in Christ is where we're seated. And that's what chapters one through three largely focus on our position in Christ. We have these positions in Christ.

We have this status in Christ. We have all heavenly blessings and so forth. And it's because we are positioned in Christ.

The reason we can command demons is not because we're so special, but because we're in Christ. And he is seated above all principality and power and every name that is named. And so are we in him and our it's our our position in Christ seated in Christ.

That is the focus of the theological first three chapters. But then in chapter four, a different verb could summarize it. And it begins in verse one.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling. Now, the calling is what he's been describing in chapters from three. Now, does that OK? Now, you're calling walk worthy of that.

So now we're told about how to walk. Our Christian walk rose out of where we're seated, our position in Christ, because we're seated in Christ and have these provisions. We now walk a certain way.

So the next section, Chapter four, would be summarized by the verb walk. And you could say that's to the end of the book, except there's another verb in chapter six and. Verse 13, therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand.

That is to remain standing when the battle is over. You're you're in a fight. Someone's going down.

Make sure it's not you. You take the armor of God so you can withstand all opposition and the evil and having done it all. When it's all said and done, you're still standing.

So standing firm as opposed to being moved or dropped by the enemy's devices. So watchman, he's books that walk standards about Ephesians. He says the first three chapters are really about where we're seated, our position in Christ.

Then Chapter four begins to talk about how we walk. And the last few verses in Chapter six talk about standing, not just walking, but standing firm and not losing your footing and not not not going down in the in the battle. So this is one way to outline it.

But the main thing to recognize is that the first three chapters are the theological portion. The last three are the application portion. Now, in Chapter one, we see in from Chapter one, one through Chapter 210, we could say this is about salvation and its benefits.

And we've talked about some of those benefits. And this discussion goes all the way up through Chapter two, verse 10. Then.

At Chapter two, verse 11. It's talking about our being united with Israel in one body. And so he talks about in Chapter two, verse 11.

Therefore, remember that you once Gentiles in the flesh who are called uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision made with the flesh in the flesh by hand, that at that time you were without Christ in aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far, that is, you and you were far from Israel. You were Gentiles.

You were alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel. You were far from them, but you are now brought near to each of the Jews and Gentiles in Christ. You who were far off have been made near by the blood of Christ, for he himself is our peace.

The peace between Jews and Gentiles who are formerly hostile, who is made both one as the Jews and Gentiles have been made both one and has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity that is the law of commandments contained in ordinances. So as to create in himself one new man, the body of Christ from the two Jews and Gentiles. So making peace.

And he goes on about that. Many says in verse 19. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners as inverse as you were.

You were strangers to the covenant and foreigners to the covenant. Not anymore. You're not strangers and foreigners.

Now you're in the covenant. You're in Israel. You're part of Israel now, not alienated from them.

Your fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone in whom the whole building being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for habitation of God in the spirit. Now you have an individual walk with God, but you are as so many individuals in Christ being built together, growing in one body being constructed as one building and so forth. How Paul stated the whole church is like a building, although we're individually parts of it.

I hope churches like a body that were individual members of it. And when you come to chapter three, Paul simply marveling at the mystery, which is, as he says in verse six, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body and partakers of fellow heirs with the Jews of the same body and partakers of this promise of Christ through the gospel. The reason this is such a marvelous thing to Paul is that he grew up as a Jew and throughout all of history before Christ, Jews were the chosen people.

The Gentiles were a lesser breed without the law. They were unclean, uncircumcised. They were not God's people.

But now they're just as much God's people as Jews. To a Jew like Paul, this was just an astonishment. I mean, he accepted it.

It was, you know, it was revealed to him. He reveled in it. It was a wonderful mystery, but but it's still astonishing when he thought about this for so many centuries.

Only the Jews were God's people. And now Gentiles who don't become Jews by cross, like they just say Gentiles in a sense that they don't get circumcised there. They're acceptable to just like the Jews.

And so Paul Paul actually got some long sentences here again. And at the very end, he offers a prayer in verses 14 through 21. He says, For this reason, I bow my knees to the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might through his spirit in the inner man that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith that you being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and the length and the depth and the height to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to exceedingly abundantly above all do all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us to him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Now, again, the whole end is may God be glorified in the church to him be glory in the church. It's all about the glory of God as far as Paul's concerned.

Now, he's got an idea that the church is going to be unified. He's praying that they will comprehend with all the saints the full breadth and depth and height and depth and width of Christ's love. That's something that it seems hard to imagine the Saints church worldwide ever having the same opinion about any of these things.

I'm comprehending together these things and yet Paul says, well, you may not think it's possible, but God is able to do more than you ask or think. He could do more than you think. He's doing it through the power that works in us.

That's the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit working in true Christians is going to bring the church into a unified state and in chapter four, where he begins to talk about our walk. He begins by talking about being humble and patient and endeavoring to keep the unity of the peace in verse three in the bond of peace, the unity of the spirit of the bond of peace.

He says, there's one body, one spirit, just as you're called in one hope of your calling one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all who is above all and through all and in you, not just in a local church, but in the global church. There's only one God. All Christians have the same God, the same father, the same hope, the same baptism in Christ and so forth.

Now, he says that these things are the basis of the unity in the spirit, which says we need to keep. Now you can only keep something if you already have it. And he assumes we do.

He assumes the church already has unity in the spirit. But in verse 13, he talks about a future time. He says, until we all come in the unity of the faith.

And of the knowledge of the son of God to a mature man to the measure of the stature before the Christ. So he says we already have unity of faith. What's that based on? Well, the fact we have the same spirit, whether we know it in our gods or not, we all are one body.

We might not act like it, but God knows it's true. He's given us all the same spirit, the same Lord, the same baptism, the same father, same family we're in same everything. Everything that makes us one is the sharing in these things that all Christians worldwide have, whether they act like it or not.

He says we need to grow until we come into the unity of the faith. We've got unity in the spirit because we all have the same spirit. We don't have the same beliefs.

We don't all have the same. We're not seeing things the same. We don't have unity in our knowledge and in our faith, but we will.

We will come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of God unto a mature man. Now,

he's already said we're a new man. Remember in Chapter two, verse 15, God made the church a new man.

This new man has got to grow up into a mature man. The word perfect in the New King James is the word mature. Notice this says we plural must become a singular new man.

The new man is the church, the body of Christ. But it has to grow up. How does it seem to be weak or immature or grown? Well, it's maturity is in unity until we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of God unto a mature man.

In First Corinthians Chapter three, Paul told the church they were immature and babes because they're saying I'm a Paul. I'm a Cephas. I'm a policy.

As long as you're doing that, you're carnal. You're babes. You're not mature as a church because you're still divided.

But the church is going to mature into a unified church. Don't think so. Well, God can do more than you ask or think.

According to how it works in us, the Holy Spirit's work. And he says in verses 11 and following Christ gave some to the apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ until we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to a mature man to the fullness of the stature, the fullness of Christ. We're going to be like Christ unified and holy.

That's what he predestined for us to be conformed to the image of his son. Now, for that purpose, God has given people like apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip the saints and build them up so they can the work of the ministry can be done, resulting in the maturing of the body of Christ into unity. Now, he mentions five ministries, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

Some people refer to this as the fivefold ministry as if like it's a unit. But Paul is just giving a list of different ministry gifts that God has given to people in the church for the benefit of the church for its growth. He's not saying these are the only five.

For example, if you look at other passages, he talks quite differently about that. If you look at First Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 28, he says, God appointed these in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers. Paul said apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastors and teachers.

Paul in Ephesians 4 talks about evangelists. They're not here. Here we have teachers, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

Those aren't even in his list in Ephesians. Paul in all his list of gifts is just giving samples. He's not giving a company.

He doesn't give a comprehensive list of all the gifts anywhere. There's no such thing as a fivefold ministry. But he is saying that among the leaders of the church that God has given include there are apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

Sometimes people say, are there apostles and prophets today? And you say, well, I doubt it. Then they'll say, but there are evangelists, pastors and teachers. Why would you say there are evangelists, pastors, teachers if you don't believe there's apostles and prophets today? Well, because Paul said in Chapter two, the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

The foundation of the church was laid 2000 years ago. No one has laid another foundation since then. You don't lay the foundation over and over again.

Every generation, the building builds on that foundation. What the apostles and prophets thought are what we are building the church upon through teachers and evangelists and pastors and so forth. They are building on that foundation.

Paul said to the church of Corinth in 1 Corinthians 3, he said, I, like a wise master builder, laid the foundation and another builds upon it. He says, an other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any man builds on that foundation, he needs to be careful how he builds on it.

Christ laid the foundation, Paul laid the foundation of the church. It's already laid. No one's got to lay a second one.

You don't have to keep laying foundations over and over again if it's done right the first time. The apostles and prophets are the foundation. Evangelists, pastors, teachers build on that foundation and have been doing so for 2000 years.

And the purpose is to bring the church to unity and maturity. Now, I'm going to jump around here a little bit because we're not trying to take the whole book. We're just glancing through it.

But I will say that before chapter four is finished, he makes this distinction between the new man and the old man. Unfortunately, many English translations mistranslate this. The word man is anthropos in the Greek.

That's what it is in the text. The new man and the old man are the new anthropos and the old man. Anthropos.

Now, also the word anthropos, like like the English word man, can mean collectively mankind or humanity. Anthropos, anthropology is the study of mankind. Right.

Anthropos is the Greek word for man or humanity. Now, in terms of the new man or the old man, he could be talking about the new humanity, the new humanity in Christ and the old humanity in Adam. Unfortunately, many translations render the old self and the new self.

The word self is not in the passage in the Greek. There's no reference to an old self or new self, but there is an old man and a new man. The old man is Adam.

The new man is Christ. We know that because Paul's already mentioned the new man in chapter two. Christ took Jews and Gentiles and made them one new man.

That's the new man, the church. The body of Christ is the collective humanity in Christ is the new man. The old humanity is collective humanity in Adam.

And Paul tells us that we need to put off the old and put on the new. And he describes behaviors that belong to the old that have to be replaced by behaviors that belong to the new. So after he says in verses 22 through 24, you need to put off the old man and put on the new man.

Verse 25 is therefore putting away or putting off lying. That's the old man. Let each one speak truth.

That's the new man truthfulness with his neighbor for members of one another. Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

Neither give place to the devil because that's what the old man. Let him who stole steal no longer. That's the old man steals.

But rather let him labor working with his hands. What is good? That's the new man. That's Christ behavior that he may have something to give to him who has need.

Let no corrupt communication proceed. That's the old man. Put that off.

But only speak what is good for necessary edification that may impart grace to the hearers. That's the way the new man speaks. Christ.

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speak to me. Put away or put off those things. That's the old man.

And instead, be kind. Put on the new man. To one of tender heart forgiving one another.

Just as God in Christ gave you. So office you have a new identity. Put on that new identity.

It is Christ. In Christ, you put off behaviors that don't belong to Christ. You put on the behaviors that are Christ behaviors.

You put off the behaviors that were part of your old. Association, Adam Adams. Collectively, the mankind and Adam acts a certain way.

Put off those behaviors. Don't do that. Put on the behaviors of Christ.

And then Chapter five, he goes on and says we should be followers of God. Now, I'm going to skip a little bit here, not because it's not important, but because we're out of time when he gets to Chapter five, verse 21. Well, let's make it verse 18.

Do not be drunk with wine, which is dissipation, but be filled with the spirit. OK, how do you do that? Well, I speak into one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and submitting to one another in the fear of God. So if you're to be being filled with the spirit is what he's actually told you.

How do you do that? Well, you make melody in your heart to the Lord and sing in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs and praise to God. Keep doing that. And that provides an environment that the Holy Spirit is pleased to fill.

Give thanks always for everything to God that to a thankful heart, a singing, rejoicing heart and a submissive heart submitting to one another. That is being a servant, taking the servant's role rather than the competing for prominence. Now, when he says submitting to one another in the fear of God, some people have taken that verse by itself and said, see, everyone's supposed to submit to everyone else.

This is usually brought up when husbands and wives, because they say, well, we know, we know a wife is supposed to submit to her husband, but Paul says everyone should submit to everyone, so husbands have to submit to their wives too. Well, I'm not opposed to that, but that's not what I think Paul is saying. The word submit in the Greek means to stand in rank below.

It's a military term. Someone submits to their officer because they're in rank below their officer. Now, Paul goes on to give examples in chapter five and six.

Wives submit your husbands. Children obey your parents. Servants obey your masters.

Submit one to another means you submit to one another. That is the ones who you're supposed to be submitted to. Now, the ones who are not in the rank below the ones who are ranked above and are being they are told to be as loving and gentle as Christ.

Husbands are to treat their wives as Christ treats the church. He's still the Lord. The wife still submits to the husband, but he's supposed to be like Jesus.

That's actually the higher bar when you think about it. I mean, anyone who grew up

obeying their parents knows how to obey, knows how to submit. But who knows by nature how to love as Christ loves? Who knows how to give themselves for everyone else? That's a high bar.

The man has a higher bar to get over. And then parents are told to treat their children well. Fathers in particular don't provoke your children to rash after six verse four.

Bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Servants be obedient. But he says also that masters.

I do the same things to them. Now, it's not clear what do the same things means, though, in Colossians, where we have the same set of instructions in Colossians, he says, Master's duty is to give their servants what is just and fair. Now, realize in that society, servants didn't have any rights.

They were slaves. They sold themselves into slavery, their possessions. But Christians who had slaves who did so were supposed to give them what's just and fair, which is not something the law of Rome required, something the law of Christ requires.

Usually in a Adamic society, not Christ society, those who are in power over others take advantage. They manipulate them for their own advantage. Husbands do so to their wives, parents to their children, masters to their servants.

Paul says, no, it's it's the reverse. Masters have to treat their their service fairly. Fathers have to not provoke their children, but bring them up in the admonition of the Lord.

Husbands have to love their wives and lay down their lives for their children. Then we get down to, of course, the armor of God. And that's the last part of the book.

He basically says that we're to be strong in the Lord and take on the armor of God so we can withstand the enemy. The idea is that the enemy is attacking us. Armor is for defense.

Now, we're not only involved in defensive warfare, because Paul says elsewhere in 2 Corinthians 10, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty for God to pull down strongholds and cast down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bring every thought into captivity of Jesus. We have weapons. Weapons are for offense.

Weapons are for hurting your enemy. Armor is for protecting you from the enemy. When you when you go to war, you have two objectives.

One, you want to come home safe. The other is you want to take territory from the enemy. Or if you didn't want to take her territory, you wouldn't go to war in the first place.

The point is, your offensive is to advance and gain ground against the enemy. That's the offensive. You need weapons for that.

You have to attack the enemy. But you also want to come home safely. So you have to be wearing your armor so that, you know, you've got defense and offense as part of war.

In this passage, Paul talks mostly about defense, and that's what the armor is. He says so that you may withstand and still be standing. That's you're defending yourself against the wilds or the methods of the devil.

He said he's going to try to take you down in first Peter. Peter says, be vigilant, be sober, your enemy, the devil, like a roaring lion, seeks whom he may devour him, resist being steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren in the world. Now, if the devil's out to get you, you can resist him and defeat him.

But you've got to be defendant against him first. You won't be defeating him if he consumes you. And therefore, you need to have your armor on.

But once you have the armor on, it's not just so you'll be safe. It's so you can go out and engage the enemy. You know, in a football game in the locker room, the team before the game, they put on their helmets and their shoulder pads and knee pads, all this protective gear.

It's not so that they'll be safe if the other team breaks into the locker room and attacks them. It's so they've gotten butt heads with the enemy. They want to be safe, but that's because we're going to go out and try to take yardage, you know, take ground from the opponents.

There's an aggressive, offensive aspect of our warfare for our weapons, which Paul talks about elsewhere. And he does here, too, because he talks about five pieces of armor. He's using a metaphor.

He's just talking about normal Christian things. Salvation, truth, righteousness, the breastplate, righteousness, like a breastplate. Truth is like a belt.

Helmet is like salvation. The shield is like faith or faith is like a shield. I should say he's taking faith, salvation, righteousness, truth.

These are all things that are normal things that Paul talks about elsewhere without the military metaphor. But since Christian life is a military engagement of sorts, spiritually speaking, not not wrestling against flesh and blood, of course, but against Prince Prize and powers and rulers of the darkness of this age and the spiritual wickedness and enemies, we have a spiritual battle against demonic powers. And so those things that are ordinary things that Paul could talk about about the Christian our faith, our salvation,

our righteousness, the truth.

These things come up all through the Bible without the military context. But in the context of seeing the Christian life as a warfare, these things serve us as our security, our faith, like a shield against the flaming darts of the enemy. Our belt, like our truth, the truth we know is like a belt.

The our salvation is like a helmet. Our righteousness is like a breastplate. The idea is that we maintain these normal Christian virtues and walk in these things as we would, even if we didn't have this military metaphor.

And it's like walking in armor in a dangerous world where you can't be defeated while you're in it. But then after it talks about the armor, it talks about the sword, which is, of course, a weapon. And he says in verse 17, take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication of the spirit being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints and for me.

So he says in this warfare, the first priority is not to be killed, because if you get killed, you can't hurt anyone else. You know, you go to war, not for yourself, but getting home safe is like, in a sense, a big objective. Now, by the way, it's not the only objective, because you might be willing to die for your country in order to gain ground against the enemy and not come home safe.

But the idea is, as soon as the enemy takes you out, you can't take it out anymore. So because our goal is to take out territory from the devil, we need to make sure he doesn't take us out first. So the armor is for that.

The sword of the spirit is the way we make aggressive moves into the territory of darkness. The word of God, we carry the word of God to the nations who are in blindness and darkness, and we bring the light to them of the light of the word. And there we penetrate the devil's area and take that territory from him.

The souls of men who are converted by the word of God and prayer is also a weapon. He doesn't compare it with any known weapon, because in his day, there weren't nuclear weapons and things like that. That prayer you can do battle on the other side of the world from where you're from, where you're kneeling by prayer.

The sword of the spirit you can use with people you meet, you can you can preach the word of God when you meet people, but you can pray for people on the other side of the world. You can you can hit a target and cripple the enemy at a great long distance with prayer. They didn't have weapons like that in Paul's day, but we could call it a missile now or something like that, you know, satellite weapons, lasers or whatever.

But the prayer is a weapon. Yes, it is also a defense. Jesus said, watch and pray that you

do not fall into temptation.

So you fortify yourself by prayer, but you also use prayer to to gain victories. That's why she said, when you pray, say your kingdom come, your will be done on earth. My prayers are bringing God's will to be done on earth.

If he answers my prayers, then God's will will be penetrating the areas where God's will is not previous. Then his kingdom will be expanding those areas where only the kingdom of darkness reigned unchallenged previously. Anyway, this is much too fast to dash.

And it went over an hour. I was hoping to get it into an hour. But through the book of Ephesians, we'll stop there only because of the time and the limits on your ability to sit still.

But now what I hope will happen when we go through these quick breeze throughs of these books, I hope that you'll read that book again tomorrow or tonight. And it'll, you know, things we said will help you to get stuff out of it that you might not have noticed before. That's the whole purpose of this thing.

This is not a replacement for studying the book. It'd be a very poor replacement for it, since we don't even cover all the verses here. But it's intended to equip you to read the book with greater profit and with greater understanding.

So I hope that that may be something that will happen.