

Ephesians

INTRODUCTION

Paul's epistle to the Ephesians is the most deeply spiritual of all his letters. It reaches a higher plane of spiritual experience than any of his lofty writings. It has been compared to the book of Joshua in the Old Testament as a manual of the higher Christian life and the saints' inheritance in the Land of Promise. Some of the fathers have compared it to the place of the heart in the human body, the most vital and important organ, and therefore not in the extremities, but in the very core of our physical organism. So this epistle is in the very heart of the New Testament, and constitutes the very core of spiritual teaching and experience.

The keynote is the third verse of the first chapter, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with the heavenly realms [places, KJV] with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

This verse, unhappily translated "in heavenly places," describes not so much a local situation as a spiritual region—that sphere of resurrection life, that realm of divine things, that higher, holier element of the supernatural where we know God and dwell with Jesus Christ in the atmosphere of the Holy Spirit, and find ourselves in a real world of unseen, yet glorious verities which the deeper senses of the spiritual nature alone can perceive and realize. We have been translated into this celestial realm through our resurrection life in Christ. It is illuminated and vivified by the Holy Spirit. It is the very element of our new life, and in it we have been introduced to the enjoyment of our new life, and in it we have been introduced to the enjoyment of unspeakable blessings which are here called "spiritual blessings."

These blessings are unfolded in detail throughout the epistle. The first is the blessing of our divine election in the eternal purpose of God. Next is the blessing of redemption, followed by the blessing of our personal salvation and calling. Then comes the blessing of our sealing by the Holy Spirit. This is followed by the blessing of our divine illumination, to know "the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints" (1:18). These fill up the first chapter.

The second chapter leads us into the unspeakable blessing of our quickening with Christ through death and resurrection, and our exaltation in Him to share His ascension life in the heavenlies. Next comes the blessing of our collective life as the Body, the Bride and the Building of God, the blessing which we share with the household of faith and the Church of Jesus Christ.

This leads us into a still deeper personal experience of blessing as, "with all the saints," we come to know in the third chapter, "how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love...that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" (3:18-19).

Having led us onward and upward to this infinite height of blessing, the apostle next brings us back to earth, and takes us to the practical sphere of our common life in our homes, our business and our social relationships; and he unfolds to us the blessing of practical holiness in all the minutiae of our daily experience as husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, brethren and citizens—representing Christ, living out His life amid the secularities, temptations and trials of common life.

Finally, the crowning blessing is the supreme conflict and the complete victory of the risen life unfolded in the closing paragraph, where we meet at the very gates of the heaven and in the very heavenlies, the principalities and powers of hell, and become "more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).

Such is the scope of this great epistle. Altogether it contains as many words as an ordinary sermon, it outweighs in richness, beauty and spiritual power all the sermons that have ever been written and all the combined libraries of earth. Let us reverently follow our heavenly Guide through all the blessings of the Spirit in the heavenlies, and, as each new vision unfolds, may faith hear Him say, "All this is yours," for "we have...received...the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us" (1 Corinthians 2:12).

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Ephesians 1:1-3

Ephesians has been called the “Joshua” of the New Testament, for in both books (Joshua and Ephesians) is enacted a scenario of conflict, failure, victory, rest and possession — in the book of Joshua for the Israelites, and in the book of Ephesians for the Christian believers. The Israelites were told to take the land promised to them as we are told to lay hold of the spiritual blessings God has given to us.

God bestows on believers spiritual blessings here on earth that prepare him for heaven. **What are these spiritual blessings that we have inherited as sons of God, and how do we take hold of them?**

Matt. 18:20 John 17:21-23 Rom. 6:3-4 1 Cor. 12:13 2 Cor. 5:17 Gal. 2:20 Eph. 1 (all) Eph. 3:16
2 Tim. 2:1 Heb. 2:11, 18 Heb. 10:19-20 Heb. 12:28 1 Pet. 2:5, 9-10 2 Pet. 1:3-4 1 Pet. 3:12
1 John 3:1-3 1 John 5:12

Ephesians 1:4

“He chose us in him before the creation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4). We are carried back into the remotest ages of the past eternity, and we are taught that God was thinking about us, loving us and planning to bless us long ago. Redemption is then no afterthought, no hasty provision to remedy the catastrophe of the fall, but a great original and eternal thought of God’s heart of love. We seem to hear Him saying to us in the words of Jeremiah, “The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying: ‘I have loved you with an everlasting love’” (Jeremiah 31:3), eternal in its beginning and in its duration. God chose us and purposed to save and bless us before He ever made us. Therefore He must have made us on purpose that He might save us. Our very creation must be designed for some higher destiny than human nature alone would indicate. We were always intended for the high dignity of the sons of God.

Moreover, if this be true, God’s purpose for our salvation and blessing was anterior to the creation of the world itself. Therefore the very world must have been made with a view to man’s eternal future. The whole creation must have been designed to illustrate and set forth the greater work of the new creation. The light that shines in heaven must have been shot from the quiver of His hand in order that it might set forth the light of life. The beauty and glory of nature were constituted just as an alphabet, to spell out the story of redemption.

Further, this implies that the thought of our salvation was prior to the fact of our fall. We were chosen in Him before Satan ever appeared upon the scene and sin ever entered earth’s spotless Eden to wreck man’s innocence and happiness. Therefore God began long before the devil did. Redemption is no second thought, no mere remedial scheme to undo the work of the fall, but God’s great primary plan for which all nature was formed, all existence brought into being and all other things created.

What a wonderful sweep this gives to the wings of faith! What a wonderful horizon is extended before the vision of the heaven-taught soul! What a grandeur and a majesty it adds to existence and to the standpoint and outlook of the child of God and heir to glory!

“He chose us in him” (Ephesians 1:4). God’s purpose of blessing toward us is related to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to Him alone. He has been from all eternity the central Object of the Father’s thought and Agent of all His purposes and plans. Away back of the story of salvation is the ancient covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son—that sublime transaction in which the Father promised all the blessings of His grace, and the Son undertook to fulfill all the conditions through which He now claims the mighty reward, not only of man’s salvation, but of that inheritance of glory which was given Him for us in the remotest ages of the past. Christ therefore, as the Son of God, the Son of man, the great Head of the covenant of redemption, stands above all things as the archetype for whom and by whom are all things.

It was for Him as well as by Him that the first creation sprang into being. “He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (Colossians 1:17). So the apostle expresses this sublime truth in the sister epistle to the Colossians, which he wrote about the same time that he wrote this one to the Ephesians. He is called in the book of Revelation, “the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world” (13:8). In God’s thought He was always the Christ who was to live and to die, and rise and reign for the redemption of men. So we find Him in the remarkable vision of the eighth chapter of Proverbs speaking of the time when there were no depths, no fountains of water, before the mountains were brought forth, before the earth was spread abroad, before the firmament was stretched on high: “Then,” He says, “I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence” (8:30). Then, with unutterable tenderness he adds, “Rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind” (8:31).

It was then that we were chosen in Him, and that God perfected the mighty plan of bringing many sons unto glory through the Captain of their salvation, and creating in the ages to come a new order of beings who should bridge the infinite chasm between the Creator and the creation.

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Why does God choose one person over another?

Ephesians 1:5-6

That we should be His sons (see 1:5). His eternal object was that a new order of creation might be developed. The mightiest archangel in the glory was not a son—only a servant. But His Father-heart longed for the fellowship of children, and purposed that marvelous design which should bring into being a whole race of His own very offspring, representing on the one side the lower sphere of creation itself, and on the other the sublime height of His throne.

This is the race to which it is our privilege to belong; not the creatures of God merely, not the servants of God only, but His very sons. Sons, not only by the new creation, but sons by our very union with the Lord Jesus Christ and the participation of His own nature, so that He can say of us, “my Father and your Father, ...my God and your God” (John 20:17b). “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God” (1 John 3:1).

“To be holy and blameless in his sight” (Ephesians 1:4)—His purpose for us is that we should resemble Him, that we should wear His perfect image, that we should be beyond question of criticism, and that this holiness should consist in the perfection of love which is the glory and the essence of His own nature. It is very evident, therefore, that anyone who talks about being elected to salvation and being saved in consequence, no matter what they may do, is talking in the blindest ignorance. We are not elected to salvation and heaven; we are elected to holiness and faith, and if we are not receiving and exhibiting these qualities, it is an idle dream and a shocking mockery to rest in any such delusion, which is simply fatalism of the grossest kind.

We are elected “to the praise of his glorious grace” (1:6). We are to show in the ages to come, to the universe, how God can love and save a sinful race, and lift a being from the lowest to the highest condition, “in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus” (2:7).

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

What is God's purpose in choosing us?

John 15:15-17 John 17:15-19 Rom. 8:29 2 Cor. 5:14-15 Col. 1:16

Ephesians 1:7-8

“In Him we have redemption through his blood” (Ephesians 1:7a). Redemption means deliverance through a ransom, release from a claim and the judgment through a settlement of the claim. It is not mere good will and clemency overlooking a fault and blotting out a record, but it is strict justice recognizing the claim to its fullest extent, meeting every liability, and giving the receipt in full through the substitution of another's worth and kindness.

There is a milk-and-water type of sentimental theology widely prevalent and wandering from the truth, perhaps through a morbid straining after originality and philosophical speculation, which would make us believe that the cross of Jesus Christ was just an object lesson on the part of God to show to the world the beauty of patience, submission, self-sacrifice and the passive virtues so sublimely exhibited in the character of Jesus. Many are willing to admit also that it was a striking exhibition of God's love fitted to attract and melt the hearts of men; but it was for stage effect, and back of it there was no essential necessity for any vicarious suffering. There was no question of law or expiation or the substitution of an innocent for a guilty person. In a word, there was no real atonement by blood, but it was all designed for moral impression and spiritual persuasion.

This is not the Bible doctrine of redemption. This is another gospel, of which the Apostle Paul has said, whosoever preaches it, “let him be eternally condemned” (Galatians 1:8).

Redemption by the blood recognizes, in the first place, the real fact of sin, and the inexorable necessity of satisfying the claims of justice, equity and law. There is something in the instincts of humanity which is part of the fitness of things, and a direct intuition from the Creator Himself, which tells us that to lightly overlook wrong is in itself the grossest wrong. The man who can think with cold blood and unmoved spirit of the shameful abuse of innocence, helplessness and virtue is himself destitute of a true moral sense and capable, perhaps, of doing these very things.

The old heroic Roman gave voice to this sentiment when his own son was brought before him charged with treasonable crime, and the law and the testimony both demanded his instant death. A thousand voices—from family, from state, from the father's own heart—pleaded for his life; but he sternly said: “I am a father, and have my human feelings as truly as you; but I am a judge, and I must be just.”

This is part of the constitution of the nature and very character of God, and therefore He could not overlook sin without ceasing to be God. His father-heart prompted the love that would save the guilty, but His perfect attributes demanded the settlement of the question of eternal righteousness. It was then that His wisdom devised the wondrous plan that the Son of His love should come and take upon Himself the nature and the responsibility of the sinful race, and should be

punished in their stead, and settle in their behalf every question and every claim; and then, that they, on His account, should be dealt with on the ground of His settlement and released through the ransom that He paid.

Blood, which is here described as the ransom, just means life. "The life...is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement" (Leviticus 17:11). Our life had been forfeited. He gave His life instead; and then, through His divine power, He received back a new life, and He gives us this resurrection life as ours. Thus His life was given *for us* first, and now it is given *to us*.

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Redemption is deliverance from sin and from the evil consequences of sin, which has been procured by the atonement made by the Lord Jesus Christ. **Is redemption the effect of forgiveness or is forgiveness the effect of redemption? (In other words are you redeemed because you have been forgiven or are you forgiven because you have been redeemed? Which came first?)**

Isa. 44:22 Isa. 43:26 1 John 1:9 1 John 5:10

Ephesians 1:9-10

Having made known to us the mystery of his will. The word *mystery* means literally something into which one must be *initiated* before it is fully known; and then anything which is concealed or hidden. We commonly use the word to denote that which is above our comprehension or unintelligible. But this is never the meaning of the word in the New Testament. It means there some doctrine or fact which has been concealed, or which has not before been fully revealed, or which has been set forth only by figures and symbols. When the doctrine is made known, it may be as clear and plain as any other. Such was the doctrine that God meant to call the Gentiles, which was long concealed, at least in part, and which was not fully made known until the Savior came, and which had been till that time *a mystery—a concealed truth*—though when it was revealed, there was nothing incomprehensible in it. Thus in Col. 1:26, "The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." So it was in regard to the doctrine of election. It was a mystery until it was made known by the actual conversion of those whom God had chosen. So in regard to the incarnation of the Redeemer; the atonement; the whole plan of salvation. Over all these great points there was a veil thrown, and men did not understand them until God revealed them. When they were revealed, the mystery was removed, and men were able to see clearly the manifestation of the will of God.

Which he hath purposed in himself. Without foreign aid or counsel. His purposes originated in his own mind, and were concealed until he chose to make them known; see 2 Tim. 1:9.

(Barnes' Notes-Ephesians to Philemon, Albert Barnes)

What is God's great plan for man when the "fullness of the times" (Eph. 1:10) comes?

Ephesians 1:11

We are told that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Ephesians 1:11)—the Greek for "worketh" means "to work effectually." For this reason we read, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen" (Romans 11:36). Men may boast they are free agents, with a will of their own, and are at liberty to do as they please. But Scripture says to those who boast, "We will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell," that they ought to say, "If the Lord will" (James 4:13, 15).

Here then is a sure resting place for the heart. Our lives are neither the product of blind fate nor the result of capricious chance. Every detail of them was ordained from all eternity and is now ordered by the living, reigning God. Not a hair of our heads can be touched without His permission. "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps" (Proverbs 16:9). What assurance, what strength, what comfort this should give the real Christian! "My times are in thy hand" (Psalm 31:15). Then let me "rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him" (37:7).

(Gleanings In The Godhead, A. W. Pink)

Do you think all of God's eternal counsels are accomplished to their minutest details or is it that His will is accomplished but can take a number of different routes to get there?

Gal. 2:8 Phil. 2:13

Ephesians 1:12-14

While the Word of God is the ground of our faith, and faith is the receptive act by which we take salvation through the Word, yet, back of all that there is a personal drive and divine Agent, the Holy Spirit, through whom we are able to believe the Word, and by whom we are sealed after we have believed the Word and are led on into all the fullness to which this great salvation introduces us. Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit is actively engaged in leading us on, even in the earlier steps of faith; but after we have taken these steps, the Spirit comes into entirely new relations with us, and becomes the personal and indwelling presence and power of our Christian life. This is here described by the strong figure, "You were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13), or, as it might be translated, "with that Spirit of promise, the Holy One."

Now it is important to notice at the onset of this part of the subject the force of the preposition *with*. He does not use the word *by* but *with*. If *by* had been used, the meaning would be that it was the Holy Spirit who did the sealing, and that the seal was something different from the one sealing; but the *with* conveys the idea that it was God the Father who sealed us, and that the seal was nothing less than the Holy Spirit Himself. Sealing therefore is not some experience or feeling that the Holy Spirit brings us, but it is the actual reception of the Holy Spirit Himself, and He comes personally to live within us and to become the power of our new life.

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Besides renewing and sanctifying us, comforting us in trials and sustaining us in afflictions, is there anything else the Holy Spirit does for us as believers?

Ephesians 1:15-21

"The Spirit of wisdom and revelation" (Ephesians 1:17). The Holy Spirit is the source of this new light, and He gives it in two ways: first, by giving us knowledge of the truth; and, secondly, by giving us a direct touch of revelation, a distinct flash of celestial light that makes it all vivid and real to our spiritual senses. It is not enough merely to know the truth, but we must have the quickening of God to make it real to us and to cause it to live within our spiritual consciousness.

There is a place of revelation in the spiritual life; not the revelation of new doctrines and truths, but the revelation to us of the principles and doctrines already given. It was by such a revelation that we saw our sins and were convicted of our guilt. It was by such a revelation that we saw our Savior and accepted Him. It is by such a revelation that we behold the deeper life He has for us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The apostle speaks of this when he says, "It pleased God...to reveal his Son to me" (Galatians 1:15-16, KJV). There is a living Holy Spirit, and there is a light He gives which the eyes of the earthly mind or the most cultured scholar never see. Let us ask Him for it. Let us not rest short of it.

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Fill in the blanks below by use of the Scripture references:

Paul's prayer for his followers is not for material things, but his emphasis is on spiritual perception, and real Christian character, so he asks God to enlighten them on what they already have. This enlightenment is brought to them by the _____ (1 Cor. 2:9-16). He reveals truth to us from the Word, and then gives us the wisdom to understand, and then apply it. He also gives us the _____ (or enablement) to practice the truth (Eph. 3:14-21). Paul asks for the very highest knowledge possible for them—that they might _____ God (Eph. 1:17b). Not by our human senses or wisdom, but by the revelation of the _____ (1 Cor. 2:9, 10). Next, he prays that we might know God's _____ (Eph. 1:18a). The believer "has been called out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). Thirdly, Paul prayed that we might know God's _____ (Eph. 1:18b). Amazing—that God looks upon us as a part of His great wealth! And, finally, Paul prayed that we might know God's _____ (Eph. 1:19). This, especially is needed because we are weak, and also because there are enemies in the world who seek to destroy us and our witness for our Lord.

To what extent can you "know" what the hope of His calling is and the riches of His glory?

1 Cor. 13:12 Heb. 12:2

What can we do today as individuals and as the body of believers to have this same spirit of wisdom and revelation in us?

Prov. 2:1-12 Matt. 13:10-11 1 Cor. 1:30 Col. 1:23 Col. 2:3-4

After Christ's death and resurrection He ascended and is seated at the Father's right hand (Eph. 1:20). **What is Christ doing in that position at the Father's right hand?**

Ephesians A2

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Ephesians 1:22-23

"Head over everything for the church, which is his body" (1:22-23). He is not only Head over all things, but He is Head for the one purpose of blessing us. He holds His high throne wholly on our behalf. He has entered heaven as our representative. He has left the other half of Himself behind on earth. He is but a Head. We are His body, and He reigns yonder and here for the sake of that body. The wheels of the universe are moving entirely for the sake of His Church. The forces of nature and providence are subject to the need and help and blessing and glory of His little flock, His glorious bride. This gives us the right to claim His fullness. Not as gratuity, but as a primary claim, and the very object for which He has ascended to His mediatorial throne.

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Comment on what a comfort these verses are for us as we look at ourselves, the world, temptation, sin, Satan, sickness, sorrow, guilt, our enemies, the earth's attractions or Satan's hate, the inveterate weakness of the souls we love, or even the helplessness of our own poor, weak hearts. Can you come to the point when you say, "Christ, my living and ascended Lord, is far above all these things, and what is Christ's is mine, for I am part of His body, and He is my living Head, my other self, my all in all?"

Ephesians 2:1-3

Paul gives us this glorious vision of the risen, reigning Lord, and then he comes down, down, down to earth, and says: "And you hath He quickened," you who were "dead through your trespasses and sins" (R.V.). What is quickening? Life! You did not struggle to obtain it—He quickened you, put new life into you, "when you were dead." Dead men cannot do anything for themselves, and this is a picture of the condition out of which the sinner is raised; helpless, dead through trespasses and sins, "wherein aforetime ye walked." Why, this is worse! This man is dead, but he "walks"! How does he walk? "According to the prince of the power of the air": the activity which is in him is under the control of the prince of the power of the air. The man is dead to God, but he is alive to Satan, and he walks step by step according to the power and influence to which life is "alive." That is the condition of every unsaved soul.

(Prayer and Evangelism, Jessie Penn Lewis)

They are therefore "children of wrath" by nature and by action! But they do not know that the prince of the power of the air is working in them, behind and through the flesh, and their darkened mind—and thus the adversary retains his hold. "Let them please themselves," he cries, "let them fulfill the desires of the flesh, and of their thoughts, and they will remain like myself 'sons of disobedience.'"

(The Warfare with Satan, Jessie Penn Lewis)

Paul is very plain in his teaching. **What does Paul mean in Eph. 2:1 when he says; "he is dead?"**

Matt. 13:13 Rom. 6:23 James 2:26 Isa. 59:2

Satan and his demons desire to make all people "children of disobedience" because he (Satan) was disobedient to God.
What is one of the chief tools he uses in getting people to disobey God?

John 8:44 Gen. 3:1

Why does a sinner behave like a sinner?

Ps. 51:5 Ps. 58:3

In v. 3 Paul describes a sinner completely, and could call him "depraved." **Are his actions considered sinful because his appetite is sinful?**

Rom. 8:5-8

Is the unbeliever doomed—has sentence already been passed upon him?

John 3:18

Ephesians 2:4-10

In perfecting any great product of human invention, the first thing is to secure a perfect pattern, a model, a sample, an actual specimen, after which all other copies may be made. The inventor often spends nearly a lifetime in revising, remodeling or modifying his pattern; and when at last it is complete, and the model is placed in the patent office, it is a comparatively easy matter to reproduce that pattern in millions of copies.

This illustration is scarcely worthy of its transcendent object; but if we may rise from the earthly to the heavenly by such an imperfect steppingstone, it is true in a much higher sense that God has been spending the eternal ages in preparing and revealing His divine pattern for redeemed humanity. Pathetically the ancient prophet represents Him as saying, "I looked for a man among them . . . but I found none" (Ezekiel 22:30). Vainly did God scan the highest types of mere humanity only to have an Adam, a Noah, an Abraham, a Moses, a David, a Solomon, an Elijah completely break down under the final test, and often prove weak in the strongest place.

At last, however, there stood on the banks of the Jordan a Man on whom the Father looked with complacent gaze, and exclaimed: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). At last He found a Man who met His expectation and fulfilled the standard of true humanity. Since that time God's one business with the human race has been to make men after that heavenly pattern. Christ is the one great Type, and every saint is but a copy of the divine Original.

But it was not merely in His earthly life that Christ was the ideal Man. Much more it was in His death, resurrection, ascension and heavenly life that He was designed to be our prototype and head for He represents humanity after it has passed through the crisis of death and come into a resurrection, an ascension, a supernatural, incorruptible and eternal life. It is not the Man of Nazareth or of Bethany merely that is our Pattern and our Head. It is the Man upon the throne, seated at the Father's side, "head over everything for the church, which is his body" (Ephesians 1:22-23), and bringing redeemed humanity up to His own level.

This is the sublime conception of the passage before us in connection with the former context. There we were taught that the power, the grace and the glory which God has for us are according to what "he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms" (1:20). This passage goes a step further, reaching down to us on our low plane of helpless ruin, and lifting us up to share all the glory of that transcendent vision. As He is so are we to be. You have seen Him on the throne, now ascend and sit with Him there. For "God . . . made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions" (2:5).

And this is not nearly all. It is not as a hope, an ambition, an ideal, a pursuit that this high object is presented, but it is recognized as something that is already ours. He "made us alive with Christ" (2:5). He "raised us up" (2:6) with Him. He has "seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus" (2:6). It is all counted as something already ours as certainly as the purpose of God, as certainly as the reckoning of faith.

Here we come face to face with that extraordinary principle which underlies all God's operations, the principle of faith—a faith that counts the things that are not as though they already were; that reckons upon the future as though it were already past; and that feels and acts in the light of God's promises as if they had already become accomplished performances. This is God's principle of action, and in accordance with it Jesus Christ was counted "the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world" (Revelations 13:8). We are recognized and dealt with by God as though all His eternal purposes for us had already been fulfilled. God discounts His own notes, and turns into actual currency the facts which to human reason would seem to be only probabilities and promises. And so He requires us to meet Him and take Him at His Word, and to reckon upon things as real long before they come to pass. Hence we take our forgiveness and salvation in the exercise of immediate faith. We take the answers to our prayers by believing that we receive the things we ask, and then we have them. And here we are called to take the place which is to be ours after centuries have passed, and to look upon things as though we were already seated upon our millennial thrones and enjoying the glories and felicities of the ages to come.

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

The grace of God which brings us His salvation through Christ is known as "unmerited favor" or "the kindness and love of God our Savior toward me" (Titus 3:4). Below it is shown in acrostic form:

G	God's
R	Righteousness
A	At
C	Christ's
E	Expense

Explain how although we consciously made a decision to accept Him we cannot take any credit for coming to Christ.

Gen. 15:16 John 1:17 John 15:4-5 Acts 9:1-8 Acts 10:44-45 Acts 11:16-17 Rom. 3:23-25 Rom. 4:3-5
Rom. 11:5-6 James 1:18 1 John 4:19

Listed here are four activities that God performed on behalf of sinners in order to save them from the consequences of their sins, along with a fifth activity that sustains a sinner once he has received Christ. Bring these out more strongly by your comments in connection with the Scripture references.

1) He loved us (Eph. 2:4)

1 John 4:8 Rom. 5:8 John 3:1 6

2) He quickened us (Eph. 2:5)

Ps. 147.15 Isa. 49:2 John 12:48 1 Cor. 14:24,25

3) He exalted us (Eph. 2:6)

Col. 2:9,10 John 12:1,2

4) He keeps us (Eph. 2:7-9)

Eph. 1:6,12,14 1 Pet. 1:3-5

5) He continues to work in us through His Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:10)

2 Cor. 5:17 Rom. 8:29 Phil. 2:13

Ephesians 2:11-22

"At that time you were separate from Christ" (2:12). To be without Christ is to be ignorant of God's plan of salvation through the Mediator. You may know Him as the deist knows Him; you may know Him as the Creator, the Sovereign of the universe, as the ultimate fountain of all power and wisdom; but without Christ this God is nothing to you. The gospel is emphatically a revelation of Christ. God was in Christ, and until you receive Christ as God's Messenger and channel of all blessing, you have not met the God of redemption—you are without Christ. The very first step in the Christian life is to come to Christ, to receive Christ, to become united to Christ, and to find Christ the channel, condition and source of every blessing and all interaction with God. The question for every man is the Christ question. It is not: Have you informed your mind? Have you reformed your morals? Are you engaged in benevolent works? But, Have you received Christ? Do you know God in Christ? The saddest fact about the heathen world is that they are without Christ. The turning point of every life is its direct relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

"For he himself is our peace, who has . . . destroyed the barrier ... to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace" (Ephesians 2:14-15). This applies not only to the settlement of the long-standing alienation between Jew and Gentile, but to the settlement of the breach between man and God. Not only has Christ made a settlement for us on God's side, meeting all claims of His law, but He comes to the sinner and meets his need by reconciling him to God and taking away the old natural heart of enmity and alienation, and giving him the Spirit of Christ as a Spirit of trust and love. He lifts us into the new creation. He puts His own nature within us, and He puts us into the very relation with the Father that He Himself sustains. Thus He becomes in our heart the Spirit of peace as well as the Mediator who brings us to God. Like the dying mother who called her husband and boy to meet by her bedside after long years of alienation, and joining their hands in the clasp of her own, bade them to be reconciled for her sake, so Jesus Christ stretching out one hand to God pleads, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34), and extending the other to sinful men, He cries, "Be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

You do not have to make your peace with God. Christ has made it. He offers it to you, and He comes to undertake your part of the agreement as well as to guarantee God's promise to be your peace. If you will this moment accept His terms and be reconciled to God, you may enter into the eternal friendship of the Lord of heaven and earth, and rise to all that is meant by being "brought near through the blood of Christ."

It brings us into the most intimate relations with God. The first of these is the relation of son-ship; for He says, "You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household" (Ephesians 2:19). We come into His household. We become members of His family. We are treated as His sons and daughters. We call Him Father. We stand nearer to Him than the highest angels in glory. We are "heirs of God and coheirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). We are firstborn sons in the firstborn One. We are born into His very nature and received into the bosom of His love. "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! . . now we are children of God" (1 John 3:1-2).

Not only are we brought into the relation of children, but we enjoy the fellowship of children, "For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit" (Ephesians 2:18).

We draw near to Him in the fellowship of prayer. We commune with Him about what is within our hearts. We roll over on Him all our cares, fears, griefs, and sins. We "approach the throne of grace with confidence" (Hebrews 4:16), and may ask largely not only the greatest but the least thing that our life can need. We are invited to abide continually in His presence, to dwell in His communion, and to know the fellowship more perfect, unclouded, and eternal than it is possible to know with the fondest human friend.

Not only are we "brought near" to the Father, but we are introduced to the fellowship of the family. We become related to an illustrious circle of the glorious company of apostles and prophets. The glorious company of the apostles, the noble army of the martyrs, the godly fellowship of the prophets, the saints of all ages — these are our brethren, our associates in the high and glorious employ in the ages and principalities yet to come.

We are introduced to lofty and noble citizenship, for we are "fellow citizens with God's people" (Ephesians 2:19). We come into another kingdom. We become subjects of the divine commonwealth, and while we still retain our human relationships, and our aspirations of earthly patriotism, yet we have "a better country — a heavenly one" (Hebrews 11:16); and we are waiting for the "kingdom that cannot be shaken" (12:28), and a King who will be worthy of our highest loyalty and our eternal devotion.

We are being trained to be the rulers of that kingdom. Some day that kingdom is to embrace not only all the things of this world, but all the realms of the heavenly world, and its vast colonies will extend from star to star, and we shall be rulers over many cities and principalities.

But there is still a higher honor and place involved in His bringing us "near." It is brought out in the last verses of the chapter. It is a great thing that we should be brought into His family and that we should find our home in God; but it is a much greater thing that God should find His home in us, and that He, whom the heavens cannot contain, should condescend to seek and find His dwelling in these houses of clay, in these hearts of human sympathy and love.

But so it is, for we read, "In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling [habitation, KJV] in which God lives by his Spirit" (Ephesians 2:21-22). The heart of God looks out in vain to the mighty worlds that roll in space for a response to His affection. Vainly He turns for fellowship to the glowing seraphs that sing and shine around His throne. They can worship and adore; they can fly and obey Him, but they cannot meet the longing of His heart of love.

Have you not seen some human heart, surrounded with splendor, wealth and troops of admiring friends, turn wearily away from all the magnificence of a palace, longing only for the touch of a vanished hand and the sound of a voice that is still? All these things cannot satisfy love nor fill the void of a human soul. So we can think of God alone amid the majesty of the universe, reaching out for love and forming the heart of man to meet His own, and to give him that understanding, fellowship, sympathy and devotion which are worth more than shining constellations or treasures untold.

God wants our love and wants to find in our hearts a home. This is the mysterious promise of Christ: "If anyone loves me . . . My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23). So He stands knocking at the door of His lukewarm Church, and crying, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

Two phrases are used here to denote two aspects of His indwelling. The one is the word "temple" and the other "habitation." The temple is the place of worship. A habitation is a place for residence. God wants to find both in the human heart. He comes as our Lord and King to claim our submission, our homage, the adoration of all our being. But He comes also, as of old when He came to Bethany, to dwell at home with us, to find rest for His heart in our communion, to rest in His love, to joy over us with singing (Zephaniah 3:17b, KJV), to enter into all the minutiae of our lives, to take care of the household, to look after the body and keep it in repair, to meet the little trials of every day and every moment, to rejoice with us when we rejoice, to weep with us when we weep, to be our Brother, our Bridegroom, our Friend, our Mother God, the God of our life and the Guest of our heart. This is what it means to be "brought near" by the blood of Christ. In conclusion, there are two lessons:

1. Come home, prodigal child, come home to God.

2. Draw near and dwell in the shelter of the Most High (Psalm 91:1), and give Him a dwelling place in every chamber of your heart. Will we not meet His love and say: "He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation" (Exodus 15:2, KJV)?

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Surely your heart is saddened, along with ours, as you realize that God not only chose Israel to be His holy people, but He also intended for them to be holy missionaries reaching out to all the heathen people of the world, so they could become His family as well. In Romans, chapters 9, 10, and 11, Paul tells this sad story. **Choose 2 or 3 verses from these, and speak to Israel's position with God - past, present and future.**

Read carefully Rom. 9:22-33. Then contemplate today's present separation from God's point of view among many Jews and Gentiles. Make your own comments as to what God desires to have done in order to accomplish reconciliation. Has He already provided what is needed for that reconciliation?

Matt. 18:20 Rom. 3:29 Rom. 9:23-24 Rom. 10:11-13 1 Cor. 12:12-13 Gal. 2:20 1 Tim. 2:3-4 Heb. 10:19-20 1 Pet. 2:5

Ephesians 3:1-13

It is a great and glorious truth that the offers of the gospel are made to us, who are by nature Gentiles; and that those offers are confined to no class or condition of men—to no nation or tribe; ver. 1-6. This truth had been concealed for ages. The Jews regarded themselves as a peculiar people, and as exclusively the favorites of Heaven. The gospel regards all men as on a level; offers the same salvation to all; and offers it on the same terms. This is one of its glories; and for this we should love it. It meets man as he is—as everywhere a fallen and a ruined being—and provides a plan adapted to raise *all* to the glories of the same heaven.

There is ample fullness in the plan of salvation by the Redeemer; ver. 8. In Christ there is unsearchable riches. None can understand the fullness that there is in him; none can exhaust it. Millions, and hundreds of millions, have been saved by the fullness of His merits; and still those merits are as ample as ever. The sun in the heavens has shone for six thousand years, and has shed light and comfort, on countless millions; but his beams are not exhausted or diminished in splendor. Today, while I write—this beautiful, calm, sweet day—(June 24, 1840) his beams are as bright, as rich, as full, as they were when they were shed on Eden. So of the Sun of righteousness. Millions have been enlightened by his beams; but today they are as full, and rich, and glorious, as they were when the first ray from that sun reached the benighted mind of a penitent sinner. And that fullness is not *to be* exhausted. No matter how many partake of his abundance; no matter how many darkened minds are enlightened; no matter though nation after nation comes and partakes of his fullness, yet there is no approach to exhaustion. The sun in the heavens may waste his fires and burn out, and become a dark orb, diffusing horror over a cold and cheerless world; but not so with the Sun of righteousness. That will shine on in glory for ever and ever; and the last penitent sinner on earth who comes to partake of the riches of the grace of Christ, shall find it as full and as free as did the first who sought pardon through his blood. Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ! Who can understand this? Who can grow weary in its contemplation?

(Barnes' Notes-Ephesians to Philemon, Albert Barnes)

God worked His mighty plan to bring all people unto Himself, starting with Israel alone and then the inclusion of the Gentiles. God sent His only Son to die on a tree which He created, so that the wall of separation could be brought down, providing salvation to ALL who would come, in the blood of the Prince of Peace. Only our hearts, enlightened by the Holy Spirit can grasp these tremendous truths. **Write a few lines as to how this portion of majestic, eternal truth is affecting you.**

God's ways often are "strange ways" to us, for we cannot see the end from the beginning, as He does, but we know His plans are perfect. Do you understand that it was not enough for Paul to win the Gentiles to Christ, and form them into local assemblies, but to teach them their wonderful position in Christ. **As members of the Body, would they be sharing God's grace equally with the Jews? Since this truth had not been revealed in the Old Testament, was it also difficult for some of the Jews to accept this about the Gentiles?**

Ephesians 3:14-19

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (3:17a). This does not mean that the relationship of Christ's indwelling is mere make-believe, as some would teach us; that He only dwells there by faith, but that He is not there in reality. There is nothing so real as the things we believe; for "faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). It simply means that faith is the organ by which we receive Him, the new sense of the soul which reaches out to apprehend and appropriate Him and then to communicate with Him. Christ does not come to us through our feelings, but through our convictions. His union with us is not a sensation, but a fact.

I once asked a young lady after I had married her to her husband, "Do you feel married?" She looked at me in surprise, and said, "Why, no; I don't feel anything; I am married." The fact existed, and she had never thought of the feeling. So we take Christ by an act of faith, believing He does come to take up His abode within us, looking to Him in all our need, recognizing Him as an actual Presence, bringing to Him all our difficulties and trials, and living in actual habitual dependence upon Him as our All in all.

Thus the act becomes a habit as natural as breathing, as spontaneous as the circulation of the blood. And then, in due time, the habit develops the senses of the new life. A whole group of spiritual organs and senses grows up as a channel of communion between us and Him. They are like the rootlets of a little plant after it has become imbedded in the soil. If you look at them through the microscope, you will find a thousand spongy pores open to receive the moisture and nourishment of the soil, and drinking in at every pore the sustenance which nature so richly supplies. So the Spirit grows into an organic life, and every fiber of our being becomes a channel of communion with Him. We know Him by an inner sense that we could not explain. Just as the dog scents his master's presence, and just as the bird of passage knows

where southern breezes blow, so we become intensely sensitive to the presence and voice of Christ. Like faithful sheep, we "know his voice" and "follow him" (John 10:4). We are "of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD" (Isaiah 11:3a, KJV). Our ear is open to hear His faintest whisper. We know the touch of His presence, and the breathings of His quickening love and faith have become a heavenly organism of a thousand sensibilities through which we "live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28) in Him.

"That you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge" (Ephesians 3:17-19). After faith has reached a certain point, it changes its character and becomes love. This is not a new fact. The natural world is full of it. Heat that water in a steam boiler up to a certain temperature, and you lose your water, for it has all become steam and has changed into a new and mighty force that propels your machinery and revolutionizes your industrial life. That little seed that you plant in the ground after a while becomes a stem, and the stem becomes a flower, and the flower breathes out its life in fragrance. The little dry seed has become a vial of richest perfume.

So faith when it has reached its fruition grows into a heavenly life of love. For faith perfected is just the confidence of love, and the best trust comes from a loving heart. When I get completely united to Christ, I do not have to reason out my faith. I do not have to ask, Does He love me? Do I love Him? It is so deep and spontaneous that I never think of asking. It is like the action of my joints. When they are healthy, I have no feeling in them, and I do not realize that I have any joints. To feel your joints is rheumatism. To be unconscious of physical conditions is health.

So faith reaches that stage at last where the intellectual element is lost in love, and the heart so fitly falls into Christ that its attitude is that of the disciple who leaned on Jesus' breast and who artlessly told us, without thinking there was any self-consciousness in the statement, that he was the disciple whom Jesus loved. Love feeds upon the love of Christ. At first we reach our apprehension of this love by some sort of intellectual process. We try to take its measure, its breadth, its depth, its height, but soon we get lost in the fullness that no fathoming line nor geometric measure can express, and we just sink back into the immensity of this boundless and fathomless flood and say, "It surpasses knowledge."

When a soul has reached this blessed experience, it dwells in a summer land of peculiar sweetness and rich maturity. There is a point in our Christian life where the tone of our character is legal, moral and marked by conviction of sin and the struggle of right against wrong. Farther on comes the element of surrender, of choice, of submission of the will, of singleness of purpose with which we cleave to God. Then comes the intellectual side of faith that believes on the testimony of the Word that holds its ground against the assaults of temptation. All this has in it the element of struggle and effort. But as we go farther on, we enter into the spirit of rest, of trust, of gladness and of confidence. The winter gives place to spring; and still farther on we come to the summer land of love, where the soul is lost in God, where even experiences are forgotten in the consciousness of Himself, and "rooted and established in love," we begin to fully "know this love that surpasses knowledge" (3:17,19).

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

How does comprehending the love of Christ effect you now and in eternity?

God's energy is effectual power — power at work in our lives, and this power works in our inner man (3:16). We also know that it is possible to be *cut off* from our source of power. **What are some of the ways in which this happens? Can a person who is robbed of power be of use to God?**

John 15:5 Eph. 5:25-32 Eph. 6:11-13 Phil. 2:3, 4 Col. 3:5-10

Ephesians 3:20-21

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (3:20a). This is no mere self-centered, self-complacent experience of blessing. It is something that leads to practical results and accomplishes definite things. There is power in it. It takes hold of God until something is done. If God is reigning in us, He will rule over everything around us. If we have the Holy Spirit within us, we will see the providence of God in His marvels of answered prayer and accomplished results. The limits are all on our side. We must ask. But He "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask." We must think and intelligently ask. But He "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ... imagine."

There is one limitation: "according to his power that is at work within us" (3:20b). He will do as much *for us* as we let Him do *in us*. "On the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will resettle your towns . . . This land that was laid waste" will be "like the garden of Eden" (Ezekiel 36:33, 35). This was His ancient promise, and it means that as fully as we receive Him as our Guest and Friend, so mightily will we know Him in the wonder-working providences of life, and the power that can meet every emergency, overcome every adversary, every circumstance, and "meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Show from these verses and other passages of Scripture how the Holy Spirit in us is the same as Christ in us and Christ in us is the same as God in us.

Rom. 8:9 2 Cor. 13:5 Eph. 3:16-17, 19

Ephesians 4:1-7

This chapter is the commencement of the *practical* part of the epistle, and is made up, like the remaining chapters, of various exhortations. It is in accordance with the usual habit of Paul to conduct an *argument* in his epistles, and then to enforce various practical duties, either growing out of the argument which he had maintained, or, more commonly, adapted to some particular state of things in the church to which he wrote.

There is one and the selfsame Spirit that dwells in the church. The same Spirit has awakened all; enlightened all; convicted all; converted all. Wherever they may be and whoever, yet there has been substantially the same work of the Spirit on the heart of every Christian. There are circumstantial differences arising from diversities of temperament, disposition, and education; there may be a difference in the depth and power of his operations on the soul; there may be a difference in the degree of conviction for sin and in the evidence of conversion, but still here are the same operations on the heart essentially produced by the same Spirit. All the gifts of prayer, and of preaching; all the zeal, the ardor, the love, the self-denial in the church, are produced by the same Spirit. There should be, therefore, *unity*. The church is united in the agency by which it is saved; it should be united in the feelings which influence its members.

Even as ye are called; see ver. 1. The sense is, "there is one body and one spirit, *in like manner* as there is one hope resulting from your calling." The same notion of *oneness* is found in relation to each of these things.

Let two men who have never seen each other before, meet in a distant land, and feel that they have the same Redeemer, and their hearts will mingle into one. They are not aliens, but friends. A cord of sympathy is struck more tender than that which binds them to country or home; and though of different nations, complexions, or habits, they will feel that they are one. Why should contentions ever arise between those who have the same Redeemer?

One faith. The same belief. That is, either the belief of the same doctrines, or faith of the same nature in the heart.

God is the common Father of *all* his people —of the rich and the poor; the bond and the free; the learned and the unlearned. He is no respecter of persons. Nothing would tend more to overcome the prejudices of color, rank, and wealth, than to feel that we all have one Father; and that we are all equally the objects of his favor.

(Barnes' Notes-Ephesians to Philemon, Albert Barnes)

We are all in some type position or situation today by God's guiding hand. We are here - By God's appointment - In His care - Under His training - For this time. **How then should we walk worthy of our vocation (calling) to which we are called? (Eph. 4:1)**

Ps. 15:1,2	Ps. 26:2,3	Ps. 51:17	Prov. 10:9	Micah 6:8	Matt. 28:19-20	John 6:27	John 12:24
Rom. 6:13,16,19,22	1 Cor. 6:19-20			Eph. 5:27	Phil. 1:29	Phil. 2:12-16	Phil. 3:10-14
Heb. 12:3,4	1 Pet. 1:11						

Ephesians 4:8-10

Christ's victory was not only legal, it was dynamic; that is, it was won by the application of irresistible force. Because He was "made sin" (2 Cor. 5:21), impregnated with sin, and became the very essence of sin, on the cross He was banished from God's presence as a loathsome thing. He and sin were made synonymous. In order to become a valid substitute He was compelled to satisfy the claims of justice by Himself alone, against the cumulative sin of the whole world, as if He were actually guilty of the sum total of that sin. His soul was made an offering for sin, the sin of all the generations of mankind (Isa. 53:10). *Eternal justice could not survive if it merely ignored the sins of the race.* That would make it a farce. Justice demanded that the full penalty for every sin of all mankind be paid by someone. This meant that it was not sufficient for Christ to offer up only His physical life on the cross. *His pure human spirit had to "descend into hell"* (Eph. 4:9 and Acts 2:27). He was an authentic man with body, soul, and spirit. His spirit must not only descend into hell, but into the lowest hell. *The extreme penalty had to be paid. He must "taste death for every man"* (Heb. 2:9). *There could be no adequate substitution unless Christ actually paid, once and for all, the eternal consequences of the aggregate sin of the world.* No finite mind can ever comprehend the depth of anguish He endured during that seeming eternity in the nether abyss. It is probably best described in the words of the prophet, "He hath poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12). He suffered in our stead, until, in the mind of God, the claims of eternal justice were fully met, as confirmed in Isaiah 53:11: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

(Destined for the Throne, Paul E. Billheimer)

We can never fully grasp why our Lord Jesus Christ had to go to such extremes to save any and all who will call upon His name, but the Word clearly spells out how utterly devastating sin is, for it places a great gulf indeed between a holy God and the people He created and loved! **Read 1 Pet. 3:18-22 and Rev. 1:18, and comment as you feel led.**

Ephesians 4:11-16

The members of the body are related to each other only through the Head. Your fingers work together simply because they are both in direct connection with the brain. Let one be separated from its source of power, and it will be at once separated from its associate member. A simple illustration will show how all true unity in the human body depends upon the brain.

Sitting at an organ, a singer is using four members of her body in unison. First, her feet are pressing the pedals and supplying air to the pump organ. Secondly, her fingers are sweeping the keyboard and striking the several keys. Thirdly, her eyes are watching the page and studying the appropriate keys to strike. Fourthly, her voice is keeping tune and time with the notes on the page and the keys of the organ. There are four members acting in concert. How are they to keep up the concert? Are the eyes to watch the fingers? Then how are they to watch the page? Is the voice to be thinking about the organ keys? No. Each member is acting independently under direct orders from the brain, and through the one head they all produce the one tune, the one song, the one harmonious result.

There is the secret of Christian harmony. If you and I come together with our separate minds and feelings, we will never harmonize. But if we suspend our personal life and take Christ's instead, we will always agree. "He himself is our peace" (Ephesians 2:14), and in Him we can have harmony, unity and power. We should never touch people apart from Jesus. A heavenly halo of divine presence should ever encompass us. And as we meet each other in this holy encompassment of divine life and love, we will be one in Him, and we will fulfill the glorious ideal so finely described in this figure: "In love may grow into him in all things who is the head, Christ; out of whom all the body fitly framing itself together and connecting itself through means of every joint of supply, according to an inward working in measure of each single part, is securing the growth of the body unto an upbuilding of itself in love" (4:15-16, Rotherham).

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

There is a difference between receiving the *life* of Christ, and receiving the *gifts* of Christ. All believers are given the Spirit of Christ at redemption, and then are given a diversity of gifts for the perfecting of the saints. **By use of the Scriptures below, explain what our Lord has graciously given us at our acceptance of His salvation. Following that, list the gifts made possible to us by the power of the Holy Spirit, as we daily work out the Christian life by faith—these are gifts for the edifying of the body of Christ.**

1 Cor. 12:1-11 1 Cor. 12:28-31 1 Cor. 13:12 Gal. 5:22-25

Ephesians 4:17-32

One might almost think it too sudden a transition to come from the lofty outlook of his glowing vision down to the question of common morality and honesty, and that it is almost an insult to Christians who have been living in the higher life in the heavenlies to talk to them about stealing, lying and personal purity. But such is not the mind of the Spirit of God. He knows that extremes must quickly meet, and that in the very highest realms of spiritual truth and life lie the most subtle temptations and the most serious perils. Therefore the gospel of Jesus Christ has a distinctly moral side to it, and emphasizes with the strongest definiteness the necessity of guarding our walk and conversations as carefully as we guard our inward experience.

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

What is the one word used in this passage that describes our relationship with God after we have given ourselves over to any one of the immoral and fleshly traits listed here?

Ephesians 5:1-2

"*For a sweet-smelling savor.*" The meaning here is, that the offering which Christ made of himself to God, was like the grateful and pleasant smell of *incense*, that is, it was acceptable to Him. It was an exhibition of benevolence with which he was pleased, and it gave him the opportunity of evincing his own benevolence in the salvation of men. The meaning of this in the connection here is that the offering which Christ made was one of *love*. So, says Paul, do you love one another. Christ sacrificed himself by *love*, and that sacrifice was acceptable to God. So do you show love one to another. Sacrifice

every thing which opposes it, and it will be acceptable to God. He will approve all which is designed to promote love, as he approved the sacrifice which was made, under the influence of love, by his Son.

(Barnes Notes-Ephesians to Philemon, Albert Barnes)

What did the sweet savor in the Old Testament represent?

Ex.29:18 Lev. 1:9 Num. 15:7 Ezra 6:10 2 Cor. 2:15

Ephesians 5:3-17

Awake thou that sleepest. (5:14) Arouse from a state of slumber and false security. *Sleep and death* are striking representations of the state in which men are by nature. In *sleep* we are, though living, insensible to any danger that may be near; we are unconscious of what may be going on around us; we hear not the voice of our friends; we see not the beauty of the grove or the landscape; we are forgetful of our real character and condition. So with the sinner. It is as if his faculties were locked in a deep slumber. He hears not when God calls; he has no sense of danger; he is insensible to the beauties and glories of the heavenly world; he is forgetful of his true character and condition.

(Barnes Notes-Ephesians to Philemon, Albert Barnes)

Looking at Ephesians 5:8-14, what are the three things God is asking us as Christians to do? What is the one serious warning there? And, finally, what will light do in connection with a person's sins? Remember, "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

"Awake, you that sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light." (Eph. 5:14)

Can a person awaken himself to the condition he is in?

John 1:4,9 John 8:12 Heb. 1:3

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Eph. 5:16) **Could we be innocently wasting our time and if so in what ways?**

Ephesians 5:18-21

We are often prone so to magnify our calamities, and to contemplate the woes of the race, that we overlook the occasions for gratitude; and we should, therefore, look upon the *mercies* which we enjoy as well as the miseries which we endure, that our hearts may be right. He who looks only on his trials will soon find his mind soured and complaining; he who endeavors to find how many occasions for gratitude he has, will soon find the burden of his sorrows alleviated, and his mind tranquil and calm. Yet, if the words here are to be taken as in our translation, "for all things" they are full of force and beauty. At the close of life, and in heaven, we shall see occasion to bless God for *all* his dealings with us. We shall see that we have not suffered one pang too much, or been required to perform one duty too severe. We shall see that all our afflictions, as well as our mercies, were designed for our good, and were needful for us. Why then should we not bless God in the furnace as well as in the palace; on a bed of pain as well as on a bed of down; in want as well as when sitting down at the splendid banquet? God knows what is best for us; and the way in which he leads us, mysterious though it seem to be now, will yet be seen to have been full of goodness and mercy.

(Barnes Notes-Ephesians to Philemon, Albert Barnes)

Witnessing to others about Christ is our Christian responsibility, but can giving thanks always for all things, no matter what our situation in life, surely increase our effectiveness while witnessing?

Ephesians 5:22-33

There is no danger that a husband will love a wife too much, provided his love be subordinate to the love of God. The command is, to love her as Christ loved the church. What love has ever been like that? How can a husband exceed it? What did not Christ endure to redeem the church? So should a husband be willing to deny himself to promote the happiness of his wife; to watch by her in sickness, and, if need be, to peril, health and life to promote her welfare. Doing this, he will not go beyond what Christ did for the church. He should remember that she has a special claim of justice on him. For him she has left her father's home, forsaken the friends of her youth, endowed him with whatever property she

may have, sunk her name in his, confided her honor, her character, and her happiness, to his virtue; and the least that he can do for her is to love her, and strive to make her happy. This was what she asked when she consented to be only his; and a husband's love is what she still asks to sustain and cheer her in the trials of life. If she has not this, whither shall she go for comfort?

Wives should manifest such a character as to be worthy of love. They owe this to their husbands. They demand the confidence and affection of man; and they should show that they are worthy of that confidence and affection. It is not possible to love that which is unlovely, nor to force affection where it is undeserved; and, as a wife expects that a husband will love her more than he does any other earthly being, it is but right that she should evince such a spirit as shall make that proper. A wife may easily alienate the affections of her partner in life. If she is irritable and fault-finding; if none of his ways please her; if she takes no interest in his plans, and in what he does; if she forsakes her home when she should be there, and seeks happiness abroad; or if, at home, she never greets him with a smile; if she is wasteful of his earnings, and extravagant in her habits, it will be impossible to prevent the effects of such a course of life on his mind. And when a wife perceives the slightest evidence of alienated affection in her husband, she should inquire at once whether she has not given occasion for it, and exhibited such a spirit as tended inevitably to produce such a result.

(Barnes Notes-Ephesians to Philemon, Albert Barnes)

The above was written by Albert Barnes around 1840 and we believe today men's and women's roles in marriage are not as clearly defined. **Even if roles have changed, do you think the basic principles for a sound and happy marriage are the same? What are these principles?**

Ephesians 6:1-9

The family government is designed to be an imitation of the government of God. The government of God is what a perfect family government would be; and to accustom a child to be obedient to a parent, is designed to be one method of leading him to be obedient to God. No child that is disobedient to a parent will be obedient to God; and that child that is most obedient to a father and mother will be most likely to become a Christian, and an heir of heaven. And it may be observed, in general, that no disobedient child is virtuous, prosperous, or happy.

As unto Christ. Feeling that by rendering proper service to your masters, you are in fact serving the Lord, and that you are doing that which will be well-pleasing to him. Fidelity, in whatever situation we may be in life, is acceptable service to the Lord. A Christian may as acceptably serve the Lord Jesus in the condition of a servant, as if he were a minister of the gospel, or a king on a throne. Besides, it will greatly lighten the burdens of such a situation, and make the toils of an humble condition easy, to remember that we are then serving the Lord.

(Barnes Notes-Ephesians to Philemon, Albert Barnes)

There are certain basic guidelines set forth for children, fathers, servants and masters. **What are these guidelines, and what are the consequences when people are not committed to following them?**

Ex. 10:12 Deut. 5:15-21 Matt. 22:37 Rom. 1:28-32 Gal. 3:19 Gal. 3:25 Col. 3:20-23 Col. 4:1
1 Tim. 4:1-3 2 Tim. 3:1-8 2 Tim. 3:13-15

Ephesians 6:10-24

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities [principalities, KJV], against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. (Ephesians 6:10-13)

We have been looking in a series of successive visions at the exceeding riches of the heavenly places which form the sphere of our spiritual life. We have seen in the distant past the eternal purpose of divine love, and in the distant future the consummation of that purpose in glory. We have seen that purpose of grace successively wrought out in all the stages of the plan of redemption. We have seen it in the exalted place to which our Redeemer has been raised at the Father's right hand, above all principality and power. We have seen it in the exaltation of the people of God to share the resurrection and the ascension glory of their Head. We have seen it in the calling and destiny of the Church, His Body and His Bride. We have that glory brought down and revealed through the indwelling of Christ in the heart of the believer. We have seen it carried forth into all the stations and situations of our practical human life. We are now to see it finally displayed in conflict with the superior powers of evil, and triumphant over even Satan's hate and rage. Higher than the heights of heaven, sufficient for all the needs of earth, we are now to behold it stronger and deeper than the gates of hell.

In this vivid picture of the greatest war of the ages let us look at the Adversary, the Onset and the Defense.

It is foolish to underestimate the power of an enemy. The Bible nowhere deprecates the tremendous resources of our spiritual foes. Satan is not omnipotent; but he is the highest created intelligence, strong through the mighty nature with which the Creator endowed him, and wise through the experience of 10,000 ages.

We have a vivid picture here of that fearful underworld of which Satan is the sovereign lord. Rank by rank the authorities and powers of the kingdom of darkness are brought before us.

"The world rulers of this darkness" is the literal translation of the next phrase. Satan is the god of this world, and he rules it with a spell of irresistible control and dark, unwholesome influence. One is especially conscious of this evil atmosphere in heathen lands. There the darkness can be felt. Your spirit is conscious of a weight of evil crushing out the presence and consciousness of God, and injecting a thousand stings that remind you that you are in Satan's realm. The lone missionary feels it at his isolated post. William Burns, of China, used to write to his family of the awful reality of the fearful satanic presence that constantly oppressed him.

The course of this world is directed by this influence. Public opinion is a kind of spell. The current of society, the trend of human thought and feeling, the power of minds thinking and feeling alike—all these form the drift and trend of the age, and only the mighty force of a heavenly impulse can lift and hold us above it. The great mass of men walk following "the ways of this world . . . the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient" (2:2). All this we have to contend with, and only divine strength can lift us above it.

"Spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (6:12), represents another class of spiritual foes, a very numerous one. Literally, it means "hosts of wicked spirits." But their sphere is distinctly marked. They are in the heavenlies. They are not the spirits of the slums. They are not the demons that incite to lust, drunkenness, cruelty, bloodshed and the grosser forms of crime. They are not the demon powers that rule in the sense of heathen barbarism. They are higher spirits. You find them in the cultured Brahmins of India, the reformers of Buddhism, the high thinkers of philosophy, the apostles of science, the professors in our colleges and seminaries, the popular preachers of the modern pulpits, the clever editors of our religious press, the leaders of free thought and liberal theology. They come as angels of light. They edit and issue the popular magazine, the journals of higher criticism. They tell you about the Christ of today; and while exalting His social and moral influence in practical life, they take away His cross and eliminate His sacrificial blood. They publish the polychrome Bible, and with many skillfully blended tints they try to teach the common people that portions of this holy Book are not authentic and inspired, and the larger part is but an accumulation of fragments and editorial editions that have been gathered through the ages until it simply ranks among the literary remnants of the past, a little better perhaps than the Vedas of India or the hieroglyphics of Egypt.

These heavenly spirits invade the very realm of sanctity, and lead their votaries to claim a perfection so high that they cannot sin, an infallibility so extreme that they defy temptation; and so from the pinnacle of spiritual pride they fall to the abyss of fanaticism, and find a way to hell from the gates of heaven.

The leader of all these hosts is Satan himself, that mighty angel who fell from heaven in his pride and impious plan to usurp the throne of God. Of how great he was before his fall we have a picture in Ezekiel 28:12-15,

You were the model of perfection,
full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

You were in Eden,
the garden of God;
every precious stone adorned you:
ruby, topaz and emerald,
chrysolite, onyx and jasper,
sapphire, turquoise and beryl.

Your settings and mountings were made of gold;
on the day you were created they were prepared.

You were anointed as a guardian cherub ...

You were on the holy mount of God;
you walked among the fiery stones.

You were blameless in your ways
from the day you were created
till wickedness was found in you.

This terrific foe is not omnipresent, and perhaps he seldom meets the individual saint; but he directs all the forces of his dark and malign empire, and he strikes individually wherever the blow is most needed. He has the power of death, and the graves of earth's 200 generations are the saddest evidence that he is still living. He has the dominion of hell, and he has not yet been confined within its fiery dungeons. He is the adversary, the embodiment of malignity and hate, and all who know his power will be wise to hide under the shadows of the Almighty.

"Take your stand against the devil's schemes" (6:11b). He does not come openly. He is the master of strategy. He disguises his approaches. He does not expect us to walk deliberately into his snares. He aims to make the wrong appear right, and to deceive us and destroy us through our good intentions and our thoughtless, unwatchful innocence. His last ruse is to try to persuade men that he is not the devil at all; that this is all a mistake; and when he gets them to believe it, his triumph is secure.

"You can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one" (6:16b). As soon as he has deceived us and has us in the position of his choice, then he opens his guns on us, and we become the targets of his flaming arrows. No modern military ordnance can approximate the fierceness of their assaults. He can inject them into the spirit until it is as dark as the very abysses of despair. He can hurl them into the mind until our thoughts are clouded and reason reels upon the throne. He can strike down a body until nerves and brain and physical organism are a furnace of fiery pain. And when he strikes us at a disadvantage, when he gets the soul under condemnation, when he springs upon you after some unwary act of sin, and adds to spiritual darkness mental confusion, nights of sleeplessness, nervous distraction and physical disease — then, indeed, life can be made a very hell of horror and agony. Many of us have good cause to remember some of these fiery darts. Alas for those who become exposed to them without the sheltering shadow of God's wing!

Then comes the closer contact described by the figure of wrestling (6:12, KJV). This is as when in naval warfare the two hostile ships come together and grapple with each other, and hand to hand and man to man they fight for mastery, until the decks are slippery with human blood. Satan can come so close to us that his very thoughts seem to be our own, and we almost lose our own consciousness, and the demon spirit wraps itself around us and tries to make us responsible for its vilest suggestions and most impious thoughts.

Then comes that startling expression that calls up a picture that is sometimes so terrible, "the day of evil" (6:13). It describes some crisis hour when the hosts of hell have concentrated their fire upon us; when mind, body and spirit all seem to be involved in the heat of battle, and every circumstance of life conspires to crush us; when even God seems to have withdrawn, and the soul cries out like Christ in His agony, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). Every strong and tested life has its Gethsemane, its "day of evil," its crisis hour, and he who has passed through it knows how helpless is all our strength unless we understand the power and panoply of God.

The very first thing in this battle scene is the command "Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power" (Ephesians 6:10). The original is much more emphatic. Translated by Rotherham it reads, "Be getting empowered in the Lord, and in the strength of his might." That does not mean that you are to cultivate your own strength, but you are to discount it altogether, and take the power of God Himself at the very outset of the conflict.

The panoply of God is next provided. This is like the armor of the battleship which comes between the soldier and the foe. God has provided for hiding us in the strife and covering us with a heavenly armor, without which we should be crushed.

In naval war we have seen a whole fleet of old-fashioned battleships annihilated by a smaller number of armored vessels without the loss of a single man on the part of the assailing fleet. They were armored. They were panoplied. They were protected. Rash is the man who attempts to fight the devil with his own resolutions, purposes or strength.

We have a part to do in putting on this armor. The Greek word is, "take up" the complete armor of God, and all through the vivid figurative language the command is in the active and imperative form. "With the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith" (6:14-16a). We are to be active in this war, not in fighting, but in covering ourselves with Christ by His divine provision for strength and victory.

The panoply itself is described in detail. First is the girdle (belt) of the loins, which is truth. Doubtless this means a deep sincerity of purpose, a single heart, a choice that has no equivocation, hesitation, or compromise; a surrender that is complete; a consecration that is wholehearted, irrevocable and utterly sincere. Any compromise here will be sure to ruin us in the battle of the heavenly places. You cannot possibly stand in two places here. If there is a least possible deviation of your aim, the least wavering of your footing, you slip and fall. Therefore, beloved, gird your loins with truth, sincerity, singleness of purpose and truth in the inward part. Be true.

The breastplate of righteousness is to cover your heart, and shield your bosom from the assaults of the foe. This means the righteousness of Christ. Of course, it is His imputed righteousness through which we are justified and which answers every charge against you. But it is more than this. It is the imparted righteousness of Christ. It is Jesus made unto you sanctification (1 Corinthians 1:30, KJV). It is the heart that has received Him to dwell within as its purity, its sanctity. Its answer to Satan's every question is "Jesus cleanses," "Jesus enables," "Jesus keeps." "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13).

The feet are to be shod with the preparation (readiness) of the gospel of peace. This denotes our spiritual activity in living and working for others. There is no greater safeguard against temptation than to give up the defensive attitude, and go forth against the devil by seeking and saving others. In recent naval battles the attacking fleet always kept moving, thus becoming a target that was difficult to hit. An active Christian is a very difficult target for Satan. Your feet are to keep moving, carrying the gospel of peace to men, and God will fence you in from Satan's fiercest blows.

We are to take up the shield of faith. The Romans had two kinds of shields: the one, a small buckler, held on the arm; the other, an immense shield, covered the whole person. This is the one here described. Christ is our shield; and as we

hold Him up by faith, the devil's blows do not reach us at all, but are all buried and quenched before they strike us. Counting them unreal makes them so.

The helmet of salvation covers our head. Most of Satan's wounds are made at our brain. He wants to lodge a thought in our mind, and this becomes either a doubt, a fear, an imagination, a desire or purpose; then comes the word, an act and sin. Therefore we need to have our head well covered. The only thing seen on this warrior's head is salvation. This is all he knows, and it is enough for us to know. If our thoughts are all absorbed in salvation and the Savior, we will be delivered from all the devil's darts.

"The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17), describes the use which the Holy Spirit makes of the Scriptures in the battle of temptation. This is partly a defensive and partly an offensive weapon. To a mind well stored with Scripture promises, the Holy Spirit will instantly suggest the word in season to meet the enemy's assaults—a promise, the direction, the correction appropriate—bringing all things to our remembrance whatsoever He has said unto us, and quickly disarming every attack of the adversary.

But the sword of the Spirit is meant for offensive warfare. We are to go forth to save others and guard them from the adversary, and the only weapon that Satan fears or the Spirit of God ever owns is the truth of the Holy Scriptures. All the speculations of modern thought, the theories and finely woven fancies of intellectual brains will dissolve before the fiery breath of hell; but against the steel armor of God's Word his shafts fall powerless, and he knows that he is defeated. If you will stand in the awful ordeals of these closing ages, be familiar with your Bible. Have your mind and memory crowded with Scripture promises. Meditate upon His law day and night. Be mighty in the Scriptures, and your life will be strong and your work will remain.

The artillery of prayer is important. "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me" (Ephesians 6:18-19). This brings into play all the armor already described, and, best of all, brings God into the action and covers us with His presence and almighty power.

It will be noticed that the moment He gets us to pray, the devil disappears from the scene. The battle seems to be over, and we even stop praying about ourselves and our conflict. But the whole scene ends in prayer for others, and a high and holy unselfishness that loses itself in the cause of God and the needs of others. This is literally true. Satan runs away from a saint upon his knees; and when we become occupied with God in prayer, we are lifted to a sphere where the dragon cannot reach us. This is not so much the act of occasional prayer under some great emergency, but it is the habit of prayer that is here described, a life encased in prayer, the spirit armored in God's overshadowing presence, so that it is impenetrable and unapproachable by the devil's wiles or wicked assaults.

This should be the normal attitude of the believer's life, and in this heavenly place we can smile at Satan's rage even as God sits in heaven and laughs at the futile fury of His foes.

It is probably true that many of the most terrible temptations that come to Christians come because they have gotten out of communion with God, and away from the true place of abiding. "The Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials" (1 Peter 2:9), and the Lord lets the devil scourge the disobedient child to frighten him back to the fold.

Oh, beloved, if you are suffering this most fearful of earthly agonies, a season of spiritual conflict, a dark and dreadful struggle with the powers of hell, remember your only remedy is to fly to Christ, and in sincerity of heart surrender, and return to God. Throwing yourself wholly upon His grace and power, you will have cause to say: "Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).

Finally, is there any sinful soul struggling helplessly against temptation? Remember, the devil is mightier than you, and you will never gain the victory over the power of drink or any earthly lust by your own striving and resolving. You are "taken captive [by Satan] to do his will" (2 Timothy 2:26), and your only hope of deliverance and salvation is in a complete and immediate surrender to Christ, and

He breaks the power of canceled sin

He sets the prisoner free;

His blood can make the foulest clean;

His blood availed for me.

(The Christ in the Bible, A. B. Simpson)

Our battle is not against human beings; it is against spiritual powers. We are wasting our time fighting people when we ought to be fighting the devil who seeks to control people, and make them oppose the work of God. **By use of the accompanying Scriptures, fill in the blanks below, in order to be better informed about our enemy.**

The name "devil" means _____, because he accuses God's people day and night before the _____ of God. (Rev. 12:7-11)

The name "Satan" means _____, because he is the enemy of God (1 Tim 5:14-15).

Ephesians A2

Classic Bible Study Guide

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He is also called the _____ (Matt. 4:3), and the _____ and _____ (John 8:44).

He is compared to a _____ (1 Pet. 5:8), a _____ (Gen. 3:1; Rev. 12:9), and an _____ of _____ (2 Cor. 11:13-15), as well as "the _____ of this _____ (2 Cor. 4:4).

Satan's helpers are named by Paul as _____, _____, rulers of the _____ of this age, and _____ hosts of _____ in the heavenly places (6:12).

Jesus calls Satan a thief who comes to _____, and to _____, and to _____ (John 10:10).

We Christians are not to be _____ of his _____ (2 Cor. 2:11).

Satan is the arch enemy and adversary of the Trinity, and always will be until he is deposed by Christ in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10). **We ask our readers to search out his ways from the Holy Scriptures and recognize his subtle, evil workings.** He always comes, not as a fierce devil, but as an Angel of Light, with one plan only—to deceive and destroy, for he desires the throne of God for himself! Just note, for instance, that in today's troubled world, no one is blaming the devil for all the problems! He is a liar and excellent deceiver!

The following are Scriptures that teach about Satan:

- * An Angel of Light (2 Cor. 11:14)
- * An Adversary (1 Pet. 5:8)
- * A Tempter (1 Thess. 3:5)
- * A Deceiver (2 Cor. 11:3)
- * A Hinderer (1 Thess. 2:18)
- * A Beast (Rev. 19,19)
- * A Restless Lion (1 Pet. 5:8)
- * The god of this World (2 Cor. 4:4)
- * Prince of the Power of the Air (Eph. 2:2)
- * A Liar and the Father of Lies (John 8:44)

Remember, Satan can no longer attack God or the Lord Jesus Christ, so his present thrust is against the Lord's Church! However, we know that "greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). **List more verses that teach us how to be overcomers (of Satan) in Christ.**

It is necessary to take up the whole armor of God and stand against the spiritual forces of darkness with a clear mind, having our "loins girded about with truth," ready to uncover the enemy's deceptions and quench all his fiery darts. We are standing against an enemy who overcame his first victims by deception (Gen. 3:1-6), and he purposed to deceive us also. Jesse Penn-Lewis, in her book *Life in the Spirit*, gives five reasons why a Christian can be deceived, and she also stresses how we should prove all things in our daily experiences so as not to be ensnared in Satan's trap in this present evil day.

1) When a man becomes a child of God, by the regenerating power of the Spirit giving him new life, as he trusts in the atoning work of Christ, he does not at the same time receive fullness of knowledge, either of God, himself, or the devil.

2) The mind, which by nature is darkened (Eph. 4:18), and under a veil created by Satan (2 Cor. 4:4), is only renewed, and the veil destroyed, up to the extent that the light of *truth* penetrates the mind, which the man is able to apprehend.

3) "Deception" has to do with the *mind*, and means a wrong thought admitted to the mind under the belief that it is truth. A true and faithful Christian is therefore liable to be deceived by the devil in any sphere where he is ignorant. Assumed knowledge is as dangerous as ignorance, since it closes the mind to truth.

4) The thought that God will protect a believer from being deceived by Satan if he is true and faithful, is in itself a "deception," because it throws a man off guard, and ignores the fact that there are conditions on the part of the believer which have to be fulfilled for God's working.

5) Christ would not have warned His disciples, "Take heed ... be not deceived," if there was no danger of their being deceived, or if God would keep them from deception apart from their "taking heed," and having knowledge of such danger.

Satan has been able to penetrate many Christian lives. Please comment on the above according to your understanding of what the author is striving for us to receive here. Also, tell of any situation where this was true in your own life, and what were the consequences.

All who wish to know anything about taking the aggressive against the powers of darkness, should be sure that they know the preliminary stages of the spiritual life. They must know what it means to be regenerated by the Spirit of God, and have eternal life. They should know, indeed one may say, *must* know what it means to be filled with the Holy Ghost. They must know the power of the Cross of Christ in the meaning of Romans 6, and how to reckon themselves dead to sin, and to "let not sin reign," so that they wage war against sin. There must be no compromise with, or tolerance of any known sin whatsoever, in the life; for only while you are waging an uncompromising war against everything in your personal life that would in any way give ground to the enemy, or weaken your victory over him, will you know power for the spiritual warfare described in Ephesians 6.

(Power for Serving, Jesse Penn-Lewis)

Comment on the word "stand" in Ephesians 6:14.

What is the specific purpose of a breastplate in this soldier's armor? And why is it a breastplate of "righteousness?" Could any of the other virtues that Paul named be used in place of righteousness? Courage and determination are needed, yes, but as Isaiah states in Isaiah 61:10; "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,He has covered me with the robe of righteousness."

Ephesians 6:16 says we are to take the shield of faith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. But supposing the fiery dart is unheeded? At the moment it is not noticed, but it is there in the mind! It is a spark from hell. The enemy is content to let it lie. He has gained a spot from which he can act later on. Days pass, and the believer meets the one who injured him. A coldness comes over him, circumstances arise, and before he is aware he finds himself in friction and resentment. The fiery dart has done its work; the breastplate of righteousness is gone, and defeat follows. Sorrow, confession, shame and restoration come next, but what a loss of time! It has been victory for the adversary, and dishonor to the Lord! Yes, the helmet of salvation is needed for the protection of the thoughts, and the retaining of the heart in peace.

(The Warfare with Satan, Jessie Penn-Lewis)

Whether we are fully cognizant or not, Satan sends fiery darts of fear, temptation, sensual desires, depression, passivity, jealousy, hatred, anger, contempt, discouragement, carelessness, thoughtlessness, confusion, etc. into our minds and lives. **How are we able to fully appropriate the spiritual blessings and strengths we have received, in order to deflect these fiery darts and push back the forces of evil?**

Ps. 26:2 Prov. 17:27 Matt. 11:28-30 John 3:21 John 8:31-32 Rom. 5:5-8 Rom. 5:17 Rom. 6:1,6,11-13
Rom. 8:9-11 1 Cor. 10:13 Gal. 5:22-26 Eph. 3:16 Eph. 5:14-17 Phil. 1:6,9-11 2 Thess. 3:3-5 2 Tim. 1:7 2
Tim. 2:15 Heb. 4:14-16 Heb. 10:19 James 1:5 James 4:7 1 John 4:4

The Christ-encased Christian must never parley with the foe, but only say "It is written" so and so, or — "God hath said" this or that, and the sword must be gripped, and the whole armor retained by "all prayer and supplication, praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." Moment by moment the armor of light encases the soul in answer to prayer! Never for one moment in any circumstances, or in any place, may the soul dare cease to pray and supplicate the protecting power of the Lord. "At all seasons in the Spirit ... watching!" Never be off-guard, for the enemy is never asleep, and yet you are not to guard yourself, but ceaselessly trust the guarding of the Lord. Your every breath must be a prayer, and not only for your own victory, but for all the saints. Your victory is bound up with the victory of others; you cannot walk alone. Watch therefore, and be alert because the foe is watching you.

(The Warfare with Satan, Jessie Penn-Lewis)

In what manner did Jesus battle against Satan?

What weapon did He employ?

Did Jesus have any conversation with him? (Matt. 4:1-11) (Note Satan's method of waiting until Jesus was very hungry and tired, before he assailed Him.)

What should be the content of our prayers when, (a) we are in spiritual warfare; and also (b) when circumstances appear to be calm and peaceful around us?

1 Tim. 2:1-3 Jas. 5:15 Matt. 21:22 1 John 5:14 Matt. 7:7-11 Mark 11:24 1 Thess. 5:17 Dan. 4:34-35
Phil. 4:6 Ps. 66:18-19 Matt. 6:5-6 Matt. 18:19-20 Luke. 18:1-8 1 John 1:9

The study of the book of Ephesians has come to a close, but we trust its power and richness will continue with you all your days. **For your final thoughts, here list some of the tremendous spiritual blessings that you have discovered are yours in Christ, and how they vitally affect your life. Also, describe what you have learned about prayer that you intend to incorporate into your own prayers, realizing that this is God's way to achieve His plans and purposes for your life.**