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Paul's Vision of God

Reflections

Epistle to the Ephesians

God's Self-Revelation

(The Source of Change)

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To my wife Teresa and children for their love and support

PREFACE

The story is told of twelve men who lived in Ephesus. They struggled with their new found faith in Christ until God sent them a man named Paul of Tarsus. He taught them for approximately 3 year. The results are staggering. All Asia heard the Word of truth. A great revival ensued and thousands were rescued from the curse and wrath of God. What causes human beings to become agents of change? No doubt, the Holy Spirit is responsible, but the Holy Spirit uses the tool of God's Words to carry out the task. God's message, as spoken through Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, transformed mere men into a masterpiece. As you read the pages of this study, I hope that you will reap the same benefit and experience the power others have known.

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Chapter One

Who is God?

In his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul reveals a wonderful vision of God. This study will address the following question: What vision of God is portrayed in the Epistle to the Ephesians? In this letter, Paul introduces the reader to three divine characters. Those characters are Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

PAUL'S VISION OF FATHER

FATHER: All missions on earth are assigned according to the will of God who works all things after the counsel and good pleasure of His will. When His grace flows, peace always follows.

FATHER is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ and of all. He is above all, and through all, and in all. He is the Father of glory, source of every spiritual blessing, a rewarder and master. He is rich in mercy and His love is great toward us. He is known as the revealer of mysteries, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and the owner of a kingdom. He is not partial. He dwells in heaven and in all saints.

FATHER chooses, predestines, makes us accepted in the Beloved, and gives us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Himself. He opens the eyes of the understanding and enlightens us by revealing the hope of His calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints and the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He works in Christ.

FATHER has created all things through Jesus Christ and is going to gather together and sum up all things in Him – in heaven and earth. He raised His Son from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. Father put all things under His feet and has given Him to be head over all things to the church.

FATHER makes us alive together with Christ, saves us by His grace. He raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

FATHER is going to display to us the exceeding riches of His grace for ages to come. He is kind toward us in Christ Jesus. He is the giver of the gift of salvation and the creator of masterpieces.

FATHER has created us in Christ Jesus for good works which He prepared before-hand. He makes us fellow heirs, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel. His manifold wisdom will be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. He has accomplished His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord.

FATHER strengthens us with might through His Spirit in the inner man according to the riches of His glory. He has forgiven us in Christ. He directs wrath toward the sons of disobedience. The fellowship of His mystery has been hidden in Him from the beginning of the ages.

FATHER desires that we be rooted and grounded in love. He desires that we comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height and that we know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. He desires that we be filled with all His fullness, understand His

will, do His will, and be filled with the Spirit. He desires that we put on the armor He makes available so we can stand against the wiles of the devil. He desires that we understand that our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

FATHER desires that we take up His armor in order to withstand the evil day. He desires that we use the following armor: truth, righteousness, the preparation of the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the Word, and prayer.

PAUL'S VISION OF THE SON

THE SON is our peace. He is the chief *cornerstone* and our one Lord. He is an offering, a sacrifice, and God's sweet-smelling aroma. He is the giver of light, the head of the church; and the Savior of the body.

THE SON is the sanctifier. He cleanses us with the washing of water by the word. He sustains and values the church. The whole family in heaven and earth is named according to him. His primary motive for action is a love for His church. He loves us both as individuals and as the church corporate. He desires to dwell in our hearts through faith.

THE SON redeems, forgives our sins and makes the riches of his grace to abound toward us. He makes known the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself. He has granted us an inheritance. He predestines us and draws us near through His blood. He unites us, breaks down walls of separation and abolishes enmity. He reconciles the Jew and Gentile to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

THE SON has created in himself one new man *from* two - Jews and Gentiles. He has come and preached peace. He gives us the gift of the grace of God by the effective working of his power.

THE SON has led captivity captive, and has granted us gifts. He has ascended far above all the heavens and has filled all things. He has descended into the lower parts of the earth. He teaches us. He has given some *to be* apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Through him we have access by one Spirit to Father. He has given himself for the church and will present her to himself a glorious church.

THE SON desires to dwell in our hearts through faith and that we make a melody in our heart to Him. He desires that we submitting to one another in the fear of God. Grace flows to us and peace follows from Him. The truth is in him. Peace and love with faith proceed from him to us. He is our Lord Jesus Christ.

PAUL'S VISION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE HOLY SPIRIT is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession (the body). The Spirit is the revealer of secrets. Through Jesus Christ, we have access by one Spirit to the Father. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

THE HOLY SPIRIT brings us unity. He is one and seals us for the day of redemption. The fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.

WHAT IS GOD'S INTENTION?

We call Father-Son-Holy Spirit the ONE GOD. He has good intentions toward us? He has chosen, predestined and made us accepted in the beloved. He has redeemed, forgiven our sins, and has made known to us the mystery of His will. He has granted us an inheritance, sealed us with the Holy Spirit of promise, given us a foretaste of our inheritance and will work in us until the redemption of the purchased possession.

God has good intentions toward us. He has given us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. He has enlightened us by revealing the hope of His calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints and the exceeding greatness of His power.

God has good intentions toward us. He has made us alive together, raised us up together and has made us sit together. He wants to reveal the exceeding riches of His grace toward us and save us by giving us the gift of salvation. His desire is to make us His masterpiece. He has created us for good works and has brought us near by the blood of Christ.

God has good intentions toward us. He breaks down walls of separation and abolishes enmity. He has brought us peace, desires to reconcile us, and has given us access to Himself. He has made us fellow citizens with the saints and members of His household. He has built us on a firm foundation and causes us to grow into a holy temple. He is building us together and has made us His dwelling place.

God has good intentions toward us. He is making known His mysteries and offers us the unsearchable riches of Christ. He desires that we see the fellowship of His mystery and wants to make know His manifold wisdom through us. He gives us boldness and access with confidence to Himself and strengthens us according to the riches of His glory. His desire is that Christ dwell in our heart. He wants us to be rooted and grounded in love and that we know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. God desires that we be filled with all His fullness.

God has good intentions toward us. He dispenses gifts to us. He enables us to equip others to do the work of ministry and to edify the body of Christ. He offers to bring us to the stature of the fullness of Christ, and longs to renew the spirit of our mind.

God has good intentions toward us. He wants us to put on the new man. He offers us an inheritance in His kingdom, makes us a light and enables us to find out what is acceptable in the Lord. He gives us His light and enables us to understand His will. He fills us with the Spirit, gives us a song and a melody. God sanctifies, cleanses, sustains and values us.

God has good intentions toward us. He desires that we do His will from the heart. He wants us to be strong, put on His armor and be stand. He wants us to love our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER TWO

WHO AM I?

- Two Portraits -

The epistle to the Ephesians provides two portraits of the human condition. **The first portrait** describes our state of being before our conversion to Christ.

We were born in sin. Before Christ came, we were in a helpless and hopeless state. We were dead in trespasses and sins. We walked according to the course of this world and were governed by the prince of the power of the air who now works in the sons of disobedience. We conducted ourselves according to the lusts of the flesh, fulfilled the desires of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath.

We were called uncircumcised Gentiles in the flesh. We were without Christ, without hope, and without God in the world. We were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise.

In relation to God, we were far off and a wall of separation divided them. There was enmity between God and the human race and we were considered strangers and foreigners.

We were like children tossed to and fro and carried by every wind of doctrine and the trickery of men. We were carried about by the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting and walked in the futility of their mind.

We had our understanding darkened and were alienated from the life of God. There was ignorance in us and blindness was in our heart.

We were past feeling and gave ourselves to lewdness. We worked all uncleanness with greediness and conducted ourselves according to deceitful lusts. We were liars, thieves and corrupt words issued out of our mouth. We were full of bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking and malice.

Some of the sins named among us included fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking, and coarse jesting.

We had no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God because we were fornicators, unclean persons, and covetous idolaters. The wrath of God was upon us. Our fellowship was with the unfruitful works of darkness, our actions were shameful, and we faced the battles of life without any protection.

The second portrait describes our state of being after Christ rescued us from our fallen condition.

We are now called saints and have the potential to be faithful in Christ Jesus. We are recipients of grace and peace. We are now blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. We are chosen, predestined to adoption as sons and are made accepted in the beloved.

We are now redeemed, forgiven and have been granted knowledge of the mystery of His will. We have obtained an inheritance.

We are now sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise and have received the guarantee of our inheritance. We are under construction until the redemption of the purchased possession.

We have faith in the Lord Jesus and love all the saints. We have received the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him and our understanding has been enlightened. We can now know the hope of our calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints and the exceeding greatness of His power.

We are now the fullness of Him who fills all in all. We have been made alive and are loved by God.

We are alive together in Christ. We have been raised up and made to sit together in Christ Jesus.

We can know and see the exceeding riches of His grace. We are now recipients of God's kindness in Christ Jesus and have been saved by grace. We have received the gift of God and are His masterpiece.

We have been created in Christ Jesus for good works. We have been brought near by the blood of Christ and now own Christ as our peace. The walls of separation have been broken and enmity has now been abolished. We have been reconciled to God and the enmity that existed between us has been put to death.

We have access by one Spirit to Father and are now fellow citizens with the saints. We are members of the household of God and are being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. We are being fitted together and are now a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

God has made known His mystery to us and we have become fellow heirs and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.

We have received the unsearchable riches of Christ. We will make known the manifold wisdom of God to principalities and powers in heavenly places.

We now have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him and have received the riches of His glory. We are strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man and Christ now dwells in our hearts through faith.

We are being rooted and grounded in love and we can comprehend the vast dimensions of Christ. We know the love of Christ which passes knowledge and can now be filled with all the fullness of God. We have been called and have received grace according to the measure of Christ's gift.

We have received men as gifts. We can now equip saints, do the work of ministry and edify the body of Christ.

We can come to the unity of the faith, to the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man and to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

We can now speak the truth in love, grow up in all things, and be the cause of growth in the body of Christ.

We can now hear Christ and be taught by him. We can now be renewed in the spirit of our mind and put on the new man. We can now speak truth with our neighbor, impart grace to the hearer and be imitators of God.

We now have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. WE are children of light, can know what is acceptable to the Lord and be filled with the Spirit.

Wives can submit to their husbands in everything as unto the Lord. Husbands can love their wives. Children can obey and honor father and mother. We can be sanctified, cleansed, nourished and cherished.

Parents can bring up their children in the training and admonition of the Lord. Servants can obey their masters with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart and as to Christ.

We can now do the will of God from the heart, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. We can put on the whole armor of God and stand. We can gird our waist with truth, put on the breastplate of righteousness, shod our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, take the shield of faith and quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. We can put on the helmet of salvation, take the sword of the Spirit, and pray always. We can love our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

What is God's Expectation?

In the epistle written to the Ephesians, God calls us to act. We are called to be holy and without blame, to trust Him, to hear the word of truth, believe and praise Him. We are to have faith in the Lord Jesus and love for all saints.

We are to know the hope of His calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance and the exceeding greatness of His power.

We are to be saved through faith, to walk in preordained good works. We are to remember our previous condition, be built, and fitted with others. We are called to understand His mystery and make known His manifold wisdom.

We are to allow God to strengthen us, be rooted and grounded in love and comprehend with all saints all God's vast dimensions. We are to know the love of Christ, be filled with all the fullness of God, and walk worthy of His calling.

We are called to bear with one another, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, equip the saints, do the work of ministry and edify the body of Christ.

We are to come to the unity of the faith, come to the knowledge of the Son of God, become a perfect man and come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

We are to be children who escape being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. We are to speak the truth in love, grow up in all things, and do our share. We are to hear Him, and be taught by Him.

We are to put off our former conduct, be renewed in the Spirit of our mind, put on the new man, put away lying, and speak the truth. We are to be angry and sin not. We are called to ensure that the sun does not go down upon our wrath, and avoid giving place to the devil.

We are to labor in order to give. We are to ensure that corrupt words do not proceed out of our mouth, but instead speak words that edify and impart grace to the hearer.

We are to ensure that we do not grieve the Holy Spirit and that we put away things that are contrary to God's standard. We are to be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving. We are to imitate God, walk in love and give thanks.

We are to avoid being deceived. We are to walk in light as children of light and discover what is acceptable to the Lord. We are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, rather we are to expose them.

We are called to awaken, arise, and walk circumspectly, not as fools. We are to walk as wise, redeem the time and understand what the will of the Lord is.

We are not to be drunk, but instead, we are to be filled with the Spirit. We are to sing and make a melody, give thanks, speak to one another in psalms, hymns, spiritual songs and to submit to one another.

Wives are to submit to their husband in everything as unto the Lord. Husbands are to love their wives and leave father/mother to be joined to them and become one flesh.

Children are to obey and honor father and mother. Fathers are to ensure that they do not provoke their children to wrath. They are to bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Servants are called to obey their masters with fear and trembling, in sincerity, not with eye services, but as to the Lord.

We are called to do the will of God from the heart, be strong, put on the whole armor of God and stand against the wiles of the devil. We are to take up the whole armor of God and withstand in the evil day. We are called to gird our waist with truth, put on the breastplate of righteousness, shod our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, take the shield of faith and quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. We are to take the helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit and pray always.

OTHER BOOKS AND QUICK READS

BOOKS

The Narratives of Christ (Gospel)
Is God Speaking? (Minor Prophets)
God's Life-Changing Curriculum (An Agent of Change)
Worship (In the New Testament)

QUICK-READS

The Authority of the Believer
Transforming Power
Redeemed from the Curse (Entitled to the Blessing)
Emotional Intelligence (Models: A Brief Review)
Why He Came
The Kingdom (13 Parables)
Divine Transition
Divine Expectation
Unclaimed Wealth
Times of Refreshing
Unlocking God's Diary
The House of James
The Will of God (In James)
The Pure Gospel (Galatians)
Paul's Vision of God (Ephesians)
The Journey

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