

# The Blessings of Ephesians



*Lionel Hartley*

# The Blessings of Ephesians



**Lionel D C Hartley**

**Second Edition**

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The Blessings of Ephesians

Second Edition (Updated 2005)

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The Blessings (p.4) of Ephesians

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The Blessings (p.6) of Ephesians

# The Blessings of Ephesians

The book of Ephesians is divided into two sections - Chapters 1 to 3 focus on beliefs and chapters 4 to 6 focus on behaviour.

Chapter 1 talks about the foundation of our life.






Ephesians 1:3-4 (KJV)  
Blessed be the God and  
Father of our Lord Jesus  
Christ, who hath blessed  
us with all spiritual  
blessings in heavenly  
places in Christ: 4)  
according as he hath  
chosen us in him before  
the foundation of the  
world, that we should be  
holy and without blame  
before him in love:

# Fifteen Blessings

I have identified fifteen blessings in the first fifteen verses of Ephesians chapter one. (Incidentally verses 3 to 14 is only one sentence - in fact, it is one of the longest sentences in all of Paul's writings.)


Ephesians 1:1, 2 - 1)  
Paul, an apostle of Jesus



Christ by the will of God,  
to the saints which are at  
Ephesus, and to the  
faithful in Christ Jesus: 2)  
GRACE be to you, and  
PEACE, from God our  
Father, and from the Lord  
Jesus Christ.

**Blessings 1 & 2 GRACE  
and PEACE**

Verse 3) Blessed be the



God and Father of our  
Lord Jesus Christ, who  
hath blessed us with all  
**SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS**  
in heavenly places in  
Christ:

**Blessing 3 SPIRITUAL  
BLESSINGS**

Verse 4) According as  
he hath **CHOSEN US** in  
him before the foundation

of the world, that we  
should be holy and  
without blame before him  
in love:

## **Blessing 4 He hath CHOSEN US**

Verse 5) Having  
**PREDESTINATED** us  
unto the **ADOPTION** of  
children by Jesus Christ  
to himself, according to

the good pleasure of his will,


**Blessings 5 & 6**  
**PREDESTINATION**  
**(being chosen by God)**  
**and ADOPTION**

Verse 6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath **MADE US ACCEPTED** in the beloved.

# **Blessing 7 ACCEPTANCE**

Verse 7) In whom we have through his blood, the, according to the riches of his grace;

Blessings 8 & 9  
**REDEMPTION and  
FORGIVENESS OF  
SINS**



Verse 8) Wherein he  
hath abounded toward us  
in all WISDOM and  
PRUDENCE;

**Blessings 10 and 11**  
**WISDOM and**  
**PRUDENCE**  
**(or common sense)**

Verse 9) Having MADE  
KNOWN UNTO US THE



• MYSTERY OF HIS WILL,  
• according to his good  
• pleasure which he hath  
• purposed in himself:

• **Blessing 11 MADE**  
• **KNOWN UNTO US THE**  
• **MYSTERY OF HIS**  
• **WILL.** In verse 5 he says  
• that it is according to the  
• good pleasure of God's will.

• Verse 10) That in the


dispensation of the  
fulness of times he might  
**GATHER TOGETHER IN**  
**ONE** all things in Christ,  
both which are in  
heaven, and which are  
on earth; even in him:

**Blessing 12 unity -**  
**GATHER TOGETHER**  
**IN ONE**

Verse 11) In whom also

we have obtained an  
**INHERITANCE, BEING  
PREDESTINATED**  
according to the purpose  
of him who worketh all  
things after the counsel  
of his own will:

**Blessing 13 an  
INHERITANCE and a  
repeat of blessing 5,  
PREDESTINATION**

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Verses 12 and 13) 12  
That we should be to the  
praise of his glory, who  
first trusted in Christ. 13)  
In whom ye also trusted,  
after that ye heard the  
word of truth, the gospel  
of your salvation: in  
whom also after that ye  
believed, ye were  
**SEALED** with that holy  
Spirit of promise,




## **Blessing 14 SEALED by the Holy Spirit.**

Many years ago I worked for a company with the menial task of tying parcels for posting.

Each parcel was sealed with a strip of adhesive tape. The purpose of the tape was to stop the parcel from falling apart.

When we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of




promise, it helps to  
prevent us from falling  
apart!

Verses 14 and 15) 14  
Which is the earnest of  
our inheritance until the  
redemption of the  
**PURCHASED**  
**POSSESSION**, unto the  
praise of his glory. 15)  
Wherefore I also, after I  
heard of your faith in the  
Lord Jesus, and love

unto all the saints,

**Blessing 15 we are His  
PURCHASED  
POSSESSION.**

Note also that the Holy Spirit is described as the **EARNEST** of our inheritance. Interestingly Paul wrote this in Greek but Paul uses a Hebrew word (arabown) meaning

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a guarantee, deposit or down-payment on a promised or purchased possession.


So we have the promise of every spiritual blessing being available to us.

According to verse 4, the purpose of this gift is that we should be holy and blameless.




Ephesians 1:7-8 (KJV)  
In whom we have  
redemption through his  
blood, the forgiveness of  
sins, according to the  
riches of his grace; 8)  
Wherein he hath  
abounded toward us in  
all wisdom and  
prudence;

In Ron Duffield's "*The  
Return of the Latter  
Rain*", the author

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recounts an 1888  
controversy in a certain  
denomination over  
righteousness by faith.  
Some leaders were  
arguing the classic  
"salvation by works,"  
while others were  
arguing "righteousness  
by faith."

Paul says that we  
become "holy and  
blameless because we  
are forgiven and

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redeemed through the  
blood of Jesus.

Duffield reveals that  
those arguing for  
righteousness by faith  
were also arguing that by  
the power of the Holy  
Spirit we could go on to  
overcome sin.


This overcoming was  
not for the purpose of  
being saved, but rather to

honour God.

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**Chapters 2 and three  
remind us that we have  
been resurrected with  
Christ.**

Ephesians 2:1-3 (KJV)  
And you hath he  
quickenened, who were  
dead in trespasses and  
sins: 2) Wherein in time  
past ye walked according  
to the course of this  
world, according to the




prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Our former life is

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described in less than  
rosy terms.


Ephesians 2:4-5 (KJV)  
But God, who is rich in  
mercy, for his great love  
wherewith he loved us, 5)  
Even when we were  
dead in sins, hath  
quickenened us together  
with Christ, (by grace ye  
are saved;)

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This shapes our view of righteousness by faith and obedience, because when we were still in our former life ["dead in our sins (or trespasses)"], God saved us by grace. That means the argument that we cannot be "saved in our sins" is technically wrong.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (KJV)  
For by grace are ye



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saved through faith; and  
that not of yourselves: it  
is the gift of God: 9) Not  
of works, lest any man  
should boast. 10) For we  
are his workmanship,  
created in Christ Jesus  
unto good works, which  
God hath before  
ordained that we should  
walk in them.

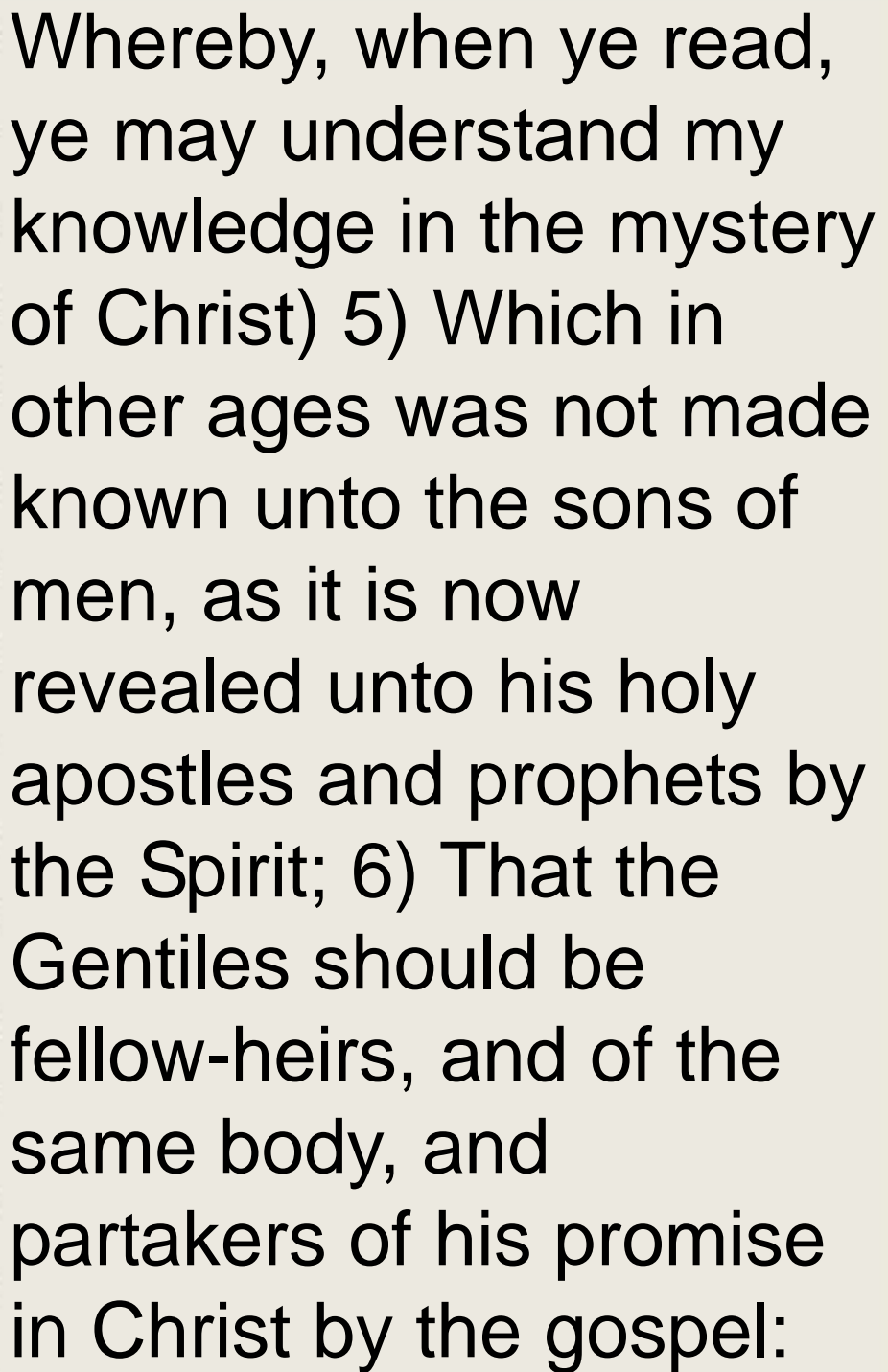
It is not God's goal that  
we should be "saved in

our sins". Verse ten explicitly states God's goal for our life is that "we should walk" in "good works."

Blessing number 12 was unity as described in Chapter 1 verse 10.

# **Ephesians 3 introduces the mystery of Unity.**

Ephesians 3:2-6 (KJV)  
If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3) How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4)




Whereby, when ye read,  
ye may understand my  
knowledge in the mystery  
of Christ) 5) Which in  
other ages was not made  
known unto the sons of  
men, as it is now  
revealed unto his holy  
apostles and prophets by  
the Spirit; 6) That the  
Gentiles should be  
fellow-heirs, and of the  
same body, and  
partakers of his promise  
in Christ by the gospel:

The mystery that forms the basis for Paul's work in life is that the "Gentiles are fellow heirs" in the church and the gospel (verse six). For a Gentile, it is wonderful news.

Ephesians 3:8-10 (KJV)  
Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the

Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9) And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10) To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

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Our goal in our new unity with the Jewish people is to reveal the wisdom of God to "the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places."


In reference to those rulers and authorities, Paul must be referring at a minimum to unfallen and fallen angels. This

may also be a reference to other worlds.

If the audience is at least fallen angels and Satan, then the battlefield for the war between good and evil just got a lot bigger.


How should you react to an expanded battlefield? (This tells us that the



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battle is not just about us,  
it is about the greater  
community of Christians.)

Michael Boyland writes,  
"Aqaba in 1917 seemed  
impregnable. Any enemy  
vessel approaching the  
port would have to face  
the battery of huge naval  
guns above the town.  
Behind Aqaba in every  
direction lay barren,  
waterless, inhospitable

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desert. To the east lay the deadly 'anvil of the sun.' The Turks believed Aqaba to be safe from any attack. But they were wrong.

Lawrence of Arabia led a force of irregular Arab cavalry across the "anvil of the sun." Together, they rallied support among the local people. On July 6, 1917, the Arab

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forces swept into Aqaba  
from the north, from the  
blind side.


A climactic moment of  
the magnificent film  
Lawrence of Arabia is the  
long, panning shot of the  
Arabs on their camels  
and horses, with  
Lawrence at their head,  
galloping past the  
gigantic naval guns that  
are completely powerless

to stop them.

The guns were facing in the wrong direction.

Aqaba fell, and the Turkish hold on Palestine was broken, to be replaced by the British mandate and eventually by the State of Israel.

The Turks failed to defend Aqaba because

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• they made two mistakes.  
• They did not know their enemy, and they did not have the right weapons.

• We must be careful not to make the same mistakes. Ephesians 6:12 makes it very clear who our enemy is: 'Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities,

against the powers of this dark world.'"


Ephesians 3:16-17

(KJV) That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17) That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,



The Holy Spirit and God's love are related, because we are grounded in God's love first by His sacrifice on our behalf, and second, because of the gift of the Holy Spirit.)


Jesus made a tremendous sacrifice to come to earth to save us. Is it a similar sacrifice for the Holy Spirit to spend



His time helping all of us?

Ephesians 3:18-19  
(KJV) May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19) And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.



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If we are filled with God we are filled with love. In the battle against evil, it is hard for us to have a positive attitude towards the people who are doing so much harm. Perhaps our attitude needs to be modified.

# Chapter 4 is about walking in Unity

Ephesians 4:2-6 (KJV)  
With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3) Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4) There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5) One Lord,

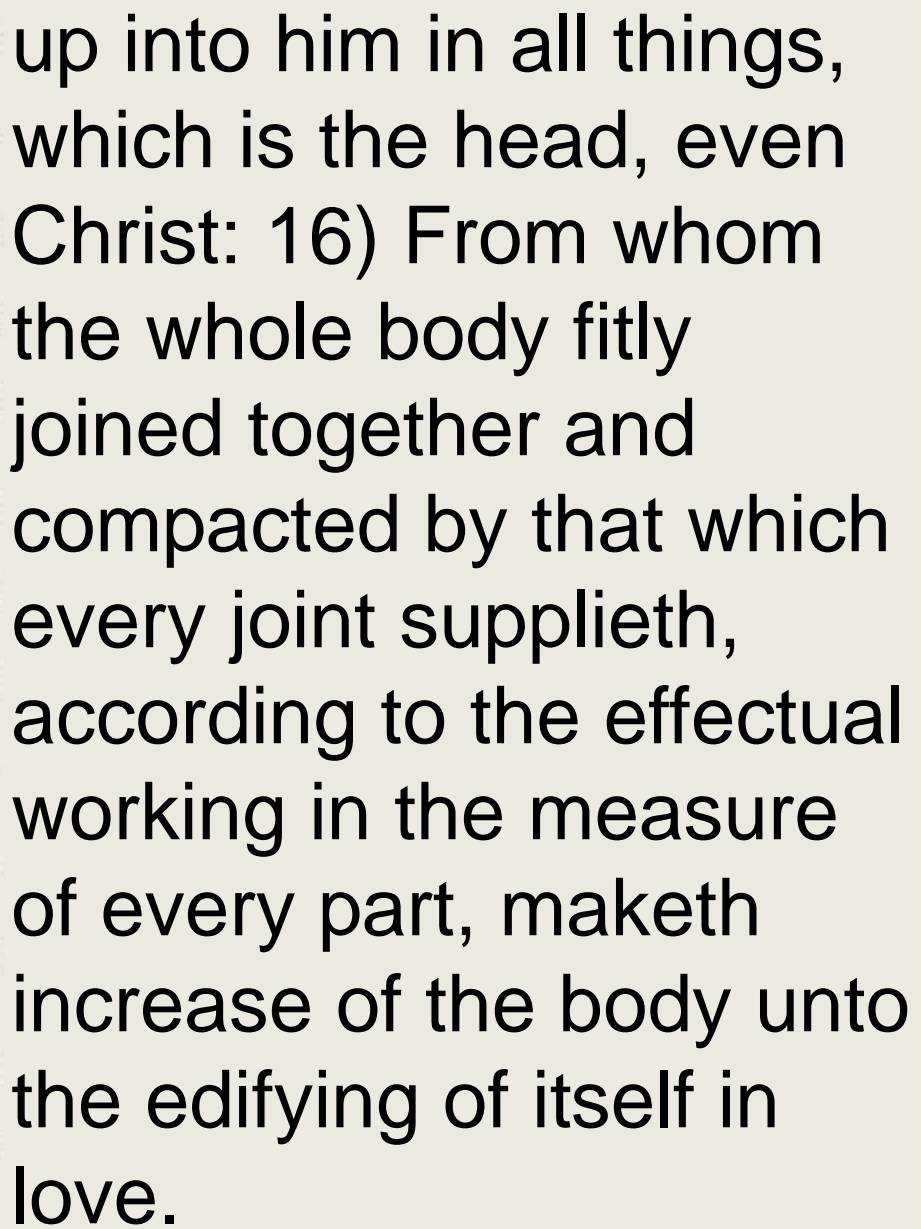
one faith, one baptism, 6)  
One God and Father of  
all, who is above all, and  
through all, and in you  
all.

Every Christian's goal  
should be unity (at least)  
with fellow believers. We  
need to resist attacks on  
fellow Christians  
especially those of a  
different denomination.


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J.B. Priestley wrote,  
"We are members of one  
body. We are responsible  
for each other. And the  
time will soon come  
when, if men will not  
learn that lesson, then  
they will be taught it in  
fire and blood and  
anguish."

Ephesians 4:15-16  
(KJV) But speaking the  
truth in love, may grow




up into him in all things,  
which is the head, even  
Christ: 16) From whom  
the whole body fitly  
joined together and  
compacted by that which  
every joint supplieth,  
according to the effectual  
working in the measure  
of every part, maketh  
increase of the body unto  
the edifying of itself in  
love.

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Robert C. Shannon  
wrote, "The Polish border  
town of Cieszyn  
(pronounced che-shin)  
has an interesting name.  
It's a contraction of a  
Polish sentence that  
means 'I am happy.'

According to legend  
there were three  
brothers, long separated.  
They were reunited in  
this place and one said,

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'I am so happy,' giving the town its name. It reminds us of Psalm 133:1: 'How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!'"


"Speaking the truth in love" works for unity with other churches because if we argue over what is true, we find problems with building a unified

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body. In reality we all have much in common with Christians of all denominations.

John Wesley had a dream. In this dream he went to hell and knocked on its gate. A despicable horned creature demanded to know what he wanted. When John asked if there were any Catholics in hell he was





told that the place was  
overrun with them.

'What about Anglicans?  
Are there any Anglicans  
in hell?' John asked.

'If there were no others  
in hell but Anglicans our  
work would be more than  
cut out,' the devil  
snorted.

'Just one more  
question,' said John, 'Tell  
me, please, are there any

Methodists in hell?'

'Look!' said the devil,  
'there are more  
Methodists here that you  
could shake a stick at.'

In his dream, he says  
that feeling quite  
discouraged he went to  
heaven and knocked on  
the gate there. A  
courteous angel came  
and asked him what he

wanted.

'Are there any Catholics in heaven?' asked John.

'No' replied the angel. There are no Catholics in heaven.'

'Well,' said John, 'are there any Anglicans here?'


'I've never heard of Anglicans,' replied the angel. 'If there were any here I would know about

them.'

'Tell me then,' said John, 'are there any Methodists here?'

'Methodists' said the angel, thoughtfully. 'I've never heard of Methodists. There are definitely no Methodists here.'

'Are you sure?' asked John.




'Positive?' replied the angel. There are no Methodists in heaven.'

'Well, who on earth do you have in heaven?' blurted out John in his confusion.

'Only the saved,' replied the angel, 'Only the saved.'


In God's eyes there are only two classes of people, the saved and

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the lost. There are no  
denominations in  
Heaven.

"To live above  
With the saints we love  
That, Lord will be glory;  
To live below  
With the saints we know  
Well, that's another story!"

-- Anon

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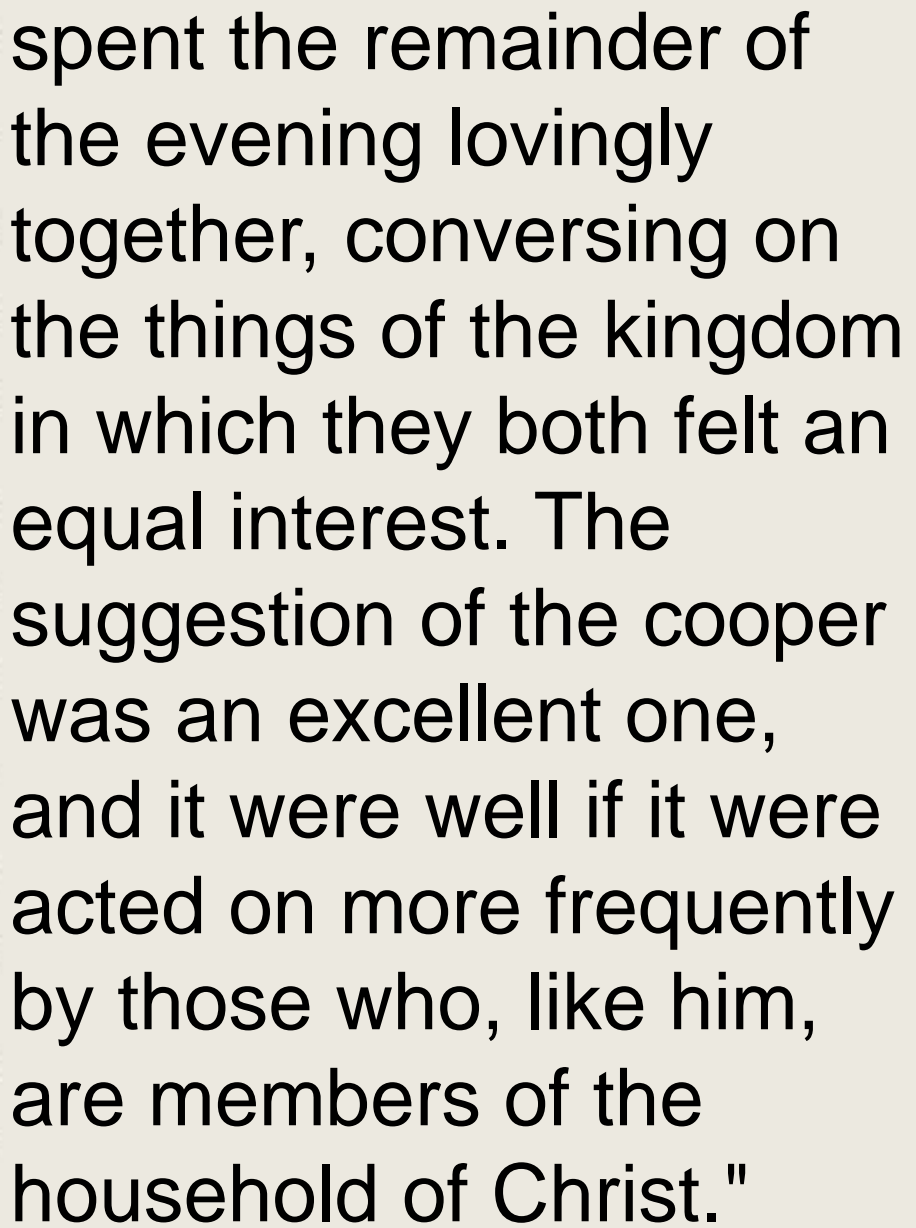
Charles Haddon  
Spurgeon wrote, "Two  
neighbours, a cooper  
and a farmer, were  
spending the evening  
together. Both were  
professors of religion, but  
of different  
denominations. Their  
conversation was first on  
topics relating to practical  
religion, but after a time it  
diverged to the points of  
difference between the  
two denominations to

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• which they belonged. It  
• first became a  
• discussion, and then a  
• dispute.

• The cooper was the first  
• to perceive its  
• unprofitable and injurious  
• tendency, and remarked,  
• "We are springing apart  
• from each other. Let us  
• pray." They kneeled  
• down and prayed  
• together, after which they






spent the remainder of the evening lovingly together, conversing on the things of the kingdom in which they both felt an equal interest. The suggestion of the cooper was an excellent one, and it were well if it were acted on more frequently by those who, like him, are members of the household of Christ."

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E. Stanley Jones wisely said, "Talk about what you believe and you have disunity. Talk about Who you believe in and you have unity."

I recall that before I was married I believed that wedlock was padlock and marriage was an institution and wondered who would want to live in an institution.

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However when my wife  
Rosemary and I were  
introduced to each other  
by God, His  
'matchmaking' changed  
all that.

The church is the 'bride  
of Christ', and God's  
'matchmaking' brings us  
into unity with him and  
each other.


**Chapter 5 introduces the theme of children of light in darkness.**

Ephesians 5:8-10 (KJV)  
For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: 9) (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) 10) Proving what is

acceptable unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:11-14  
discusses exposing  
deeds of darkness.

Ephesians 5:11-14  
(KJV) And have no  
fellowship with the  
unfruitful works of  
darkness, but rather  
reprove them. 12) For it  
is a shame even to speak




of those things which are  
done of them in secret.

13) But all things that are  
reproved are made  
manifest by the light: for  
whatsoever doth make  
manifest is light. 14)

Wherefore he saith,  
Awake thou that  
sleepest, and arise from  
the dead, and Christ  
shall give thee light.

Exposing evil helps in

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the battle between good and evil by bringing darkness into the light which reduces its power by allowing people to better understand the evil. This is the first step to allowing truth and righteousness to prevail.

Ephesians 5 tells us of the Love of God. You may be interested to know that there are at

• least 30 types of love in  
• Ephesians 5...

• Starting with verse 2:  
• And walk in love...


• Verse 20: Giving thanks  
• always (A grateful love)  
• for all things (A inclusive  
• love) unto God and the  
• Father in the name of our  
• Lord Jesus Christ;



Verse 21: Submitting yourselves (A surrendering love) one to another (A mutual love) in the fear of God.


Verse 22: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord (A Godly love).

Now you might think that this is a submission

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love, however the word 'submit' doesn't appear in verse 22 in the original language. Continuing from verse 21 where Paul says, 'Submitting yourselves one to another" in verse 22 he simply says, "Wives to your husbands." So submission is mutual not one-sided.

Verse 23: For the

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husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour (A "risk-all" love) of the body.

Verse 24: Therefore as the church is subject (First Corinthians 7:3, 4 calls this a benevolent love) unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing

(More inclusive love).

Verse 25: Husbands,  
love (A command!) your  
wives, even as Christ  
also loved the church,  
and gave (A sacrificial  
love) himself for it;

It is also interesting that  
husbands are told to love  
their wives (verse 25),  
but wives are told rather


to respect (or reverence) their husbands (verse 33). Why do you think that might be?

Continuing our list of the types of love in Ephesians 5

Verse 26: That he might sanctify (A purifying love) and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word (Love based on

biblical precepts),


Verse 27: That he might present (A giving love) it to himself a glorious (A glorious love) church, not having spot, or wrinkle (A pure love), or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (A love with no strings attached).

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Verse 28: So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies (A caring love).

He that loveth his wife loveth himself (A love which builds self esteem).


Verse 29: For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth (A



nurturing love) and cherisheth (A precious love - emphasising value and worth) it, even as the Lord the church (A committed love):


Verse 30: For we are members (A unifying love) of his body (A complete love), of his flesh (A growing love), and of his bones (A strong love).



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Verse 31: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother (A love which considers priorities), and shall be joined (A bonding love) unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh (A physical love).

Verse 32: This is a great mystery (a love we can't explain): but I speak concerning Christ and

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the church (A spiritual love).

Verse 33: Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself (this is in the singular: a faithful love or the love of fidelity) and the wife see that she reverence (A love of respectful) her husband."




**And our last chapter,  
chapter 6 introduces us  
to the armour of God.**

Ephesians 6:13 (KJV)  
Wherefore take unto you  
the whole armour of God,  
that ye may be able to  
withstand in the evil day,  
and having done all, to  
stand.


George Burnside relates

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that on February 13,  
1918, in the closing  
phases of the First World  
War, Viscount Allembry,  
the commander of the  
British Army in the Middle  
East, was outlining to his  
officers a plan of frontal  
attack on the village of  
Michmash.

One of his officers,  
Major Petrie, felt sure  
that he had heard the

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name Michmash before,  
but could not remember  
where or when. That  
night he could not sleep,  
for turning the word over  
in his mind. Michmash,  
Michmash he mused.

At last it occurred to  
him. Michmash was the  
name of a place  
mentioned in the Bible.  
Quickly finding the  
passage in 1 Samuel 13

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and 14, the major rushed to his superior officer, roused him from sleep, and excitedly pointed out the verses describing a battle in that very place 3,000 years before.


The Biblical account tells how Jonathan and his armour bearer climbed up a steep path by two sharp rocks and subdued the Philistines

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in their rocky stronghold.  
The general decided it was worth investigating, and sent out scouts at once to check on the accuracy of the Bible description.

When the scouts located the sharp rocks and other landmarks, they reported their findings.


The commander and major studied the Bible



account more carefully,  
and that night changed  
their plan of attack.

The next morning a  
small detachment of  
British soldiers followed  
Jonathan's route,  
surprised the Turks, and  
routed them with ease  
(From Buried Evidence,  
Signs Publishing Company,  
Victoria, 1950).



The image shows a spiral binding on the left side of a white page, with the metal coils visible. The text is written in a large, black, sans-serif font.

The Bible was written to assist us in battle. Not necessarily the way that Petrie used it but nevertheless the battle is real enough

(Ephesians 6:12 reads, For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in

high places.)

Reading backwards, verse 11 tells us to Put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Continuing to read backwards, verse 10 tells us we don't have to do it alone: Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of

his might. Forewarned =  
forearmed; forearmed =  
ready for battle.


Our primary goal as  
soldiers in the battle  
between good and evil is  
to stand firm. Our first  
obligation is just to stand.

After all, the battle is the  
Lords -- Samuel 17:47  
says, the battle is the  
Lord's and 2 Chronicles

20:15 says, the battle is not yours, but God's.)


Ephesians 6:18 (KJV)  
Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Prayer bolsters our spiritual defences and

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offences, because prayer connects us directly to God, the source of our strength, wisdom, and guidance in every battle.


Tertullian in 'The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. III' wrote, "Prayer is the wall of faith: her arms and missiles against the foe who keeps watch over us on all sides. And, so never we walk unarmed".



The book of Ephesians guides us in understanding of the nature of our spiritual warfare.

Waging peace is not passive; it involves standing firm in our identity, promoting unity, walking in love, shining as light in the darkness, and wearing God's armour.

As we encounter

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spiritual battles may we  
be continually rooted in  
the teachings of  
Ephesians, harnessing  
God's power to wage and  
promote true peace.

Fin

The Blessings (p.94) of Ephesians

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The Blessings (p.95) of Ephesians



