

Ephesians 1:15-23; 2:1-5

With The Christian Experience “It’s Done and Then You Do”

“Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, 21 far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 and hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, 23 which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” (verses 15-23) [wow, what a run-on sentence, Paul.]

“Father, we thank you for your Word, and Lord we're amazed at the things you do. We ask you in Jesus' name that you would continue to lead. Lord we do not know what day or hour you will return for your church. We pray at that moment we will be living in such a way without compromise that we might lift our heads in anticipation, without shame and Lord that our love in return for the incredible things you've done for us would fuel Lord that fire within us. We again pray for the nation, our leaders, for peace in Jerusalem Lord, and yet we know the only hope of the world is your return, so we also pray ‘come quickly Lord.’ In Jesus name, Amen.”

Introduction: “The Christian Experience Is Done, And Then You Do”

Ephesians 1:15-17, “Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him...” “We are in Ephesians chapter 1. Interesting, Paul again as he writes the letter, takes us through our paces. In the world that we live in, every race begins with a starting point and a finishing line. He says the Christian experience begins with the finishing line and Christ said **“It is finished,”** and then after you get settled, you come to the starting point in your walk. Or, the world that we live in begins with a walk. You spend your life working so that at some point hopefully you get to retire, whatever people do, and move to Florida and play golf, I don't know. But in the Christian experience you have to retire first and give up the work, and realize that Christ has done it, before you can find out what he wants you to do and how to walk. I mean, it's a funny thing, it's all inverted, it's all backwards. Most things in life you do, and when they're finished they're done. ***The Christian experience is done and then you do.*** It's all completed before you start, in your participation in it. So he's trying to communicate that in these first three chapters, that Christ has accomplished **all**, so that we will understand that we are responders. God is always the initiator, salvation is **his** work he's accomplished within the counsel of his own will, that which has benefited us that we haven't even realized yet. And as we get to chapter 4, he begins to talk to us about our response to those things. Now the first six verses he told us about this incredible plan of the Father that had been initiated before the worlds were even formed [so God must have been aware of the fact that Lucifer was *going south* on him before physical matter was created!]. That God knew us and called us then (verse 4). Verses 7 to 12 he began to speak to us of the Son's, Jesus Christ's part in that. **Verse 7**, saying **“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,”** and what Christ has accomplished, then insuring that inheritance for us, to where he brings us to **verse 12**, **“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.”** And in verse 13 he begins to talk to us [about being sealed with the Holy Spirit], and that's where we left off, about the Spirit's work in this circumstance. The Father's plan, the Son's redemption, and the Spirit keeping us in our present situation. He says **“In whom ye also trusted”** speaking of Jesus **“after you heard the Word of truth,”** the gospel, the Good News, it is **“of your salvation.”**

*The Ephesians Were Bankers, So Paul's Words Here
Meant Something To Them, About The Setting Of Seals,
These Were Banking & Shipping Terms*

Now I would remember throughout your Christian experience, if I was you--that the gospel means Good News. If you're in a church fellowship somewhere where what you hear every week is "bad news," I would really consider moving. You shouldn't walk out of a church (service) feeling depressed and beat up. You get beat up by Satan and the world all week. What's the sense of getting up early Sunday [or Saturday] morning on your day off, to get beat up again? You have to be sick to do that. So, the gospel is Good News. The time that we spend together studying the Scripture, worshipping, should be a time that we're edified and confirmed in the faith and built up. He says here, "***we trusted in Christ, after we heard the truth.***" That is the Good News. In regards to our salvation, **(verses 13b through 14) "In whom also, after that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory."** So he tells us that as we came to Christ we were sealed again with the Spirit of promise. And to the Ephesians it had a particular meaning. They were used to banking arrangements and purchases, it was the banking capital of Asia there, the temple of Diana, and there in those precincts, banking in that part of the world, they were accustomed to seeing a seal placed on a document or a scroll. They were accustomed to seeing a seal placed on cargo, and it would be a stamp of authority, it would identify ownership, it would ensure destination. If you see cattle branded it's telling you who the owner is. Much in the same way, remember that the Pharisees came to Pilate and said "**Set a seal on the tomb,**" and again that was the authority of Rome. If someone broke that seal, the guards that stood guard on the tomb would be killed, and the person who broke the seal would be crucified upside down. If they didn't catch you, they would crucify everyone in your village, if they knew who you were. Because the authority of Rome was behind it, and you messed with the authority of Rome. So he says you and I were '**sealed with that [Holy] Spirit of promise**' when we were saved. And again, take note that in Revelation chapter 20 verse 3, where it talks about Satan being bound for a thousand years, and by the way, that's by one angel, and at that point he is cast into the abyss, and there's a seal set upon it, that's the same Greek word. And take note in your studies that Satan does not have the power to break that seal for a

thousand years. That's very important, **because it tells you here that God Almighty seals you. And Satan has no authority to break that seal either.** And yet the church is filled with people talking about '*Satan does this, Satan made me do this.*' They're almost promoting people for hell or something. And don't you get tired of that? Let's talk about the amazing things that the Scripture tells us that God Almighty has accomplished on your behalf in that **'he has made you accepted in the beloved'**--you're in Christ. And Satan is not moving into Christ, where you are, into that sphere. You're sealed with the Spirit of promise. That's God's seal of ownership, it's his seal of authority, it's his seal that ensures your destiny. As it tells us in Peter, there's an inheritance, as we also talked about last week, that's kept, it's undefiled, it fadeth not away. God would not keep that inheritance unless he knew somebody makes it, he knows that we'll be there. So that inheritance is reserved for us. Now he says that the sealing of the Spirit of promise--and when we hear **'that Spirit of promise,'** certainly, as it says in the book of Acts--this is the promise that was spoken of in the prophets, of the Holy Spirit and the coming of the Holy Spirit, the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. And in that sense the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was the Spirit of promise--but obviously the implications here are that it means more than that, because it says **'that Spirit of promise is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession.'** Now what that's saying is this, the earnest--we might think of a down-payment, that might give us the idea--is really the first installment of a greater thing that's to be ours someday. I don't want you to confuse it like it's Christmas time and probably a lot of you are putting things on lay-away, you give the store \$10 and they put things on lay-away for you. It's not like lay-away, because you can change your mind and go back and say '*Oh, I want to take that off lay-away*' and some of you probably, sometimes feel like God has you on lay-away, going to return you before Christmas. That's not the same thing here. This earnest, this word "earnest" is in the sense of an installment and that is, it is a little foretaste of the greater experience that is assured to be ours through the work of Christ. And it's not something to be given and to be taken back again. And the idea is, all of us here this evening [or whenever, reading this] are spoiled for this world--I mean, when you think about your relationship with Christ, you know. Thank God we are somewhere where we have the freedom to worship the way we want to, and the freedom to study the Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. We don't have to talk about politics every week, except the politics of heaven. We have the freedom to study the Word of God. Because of that, when you think of Christ, what's your hope? We are thinking of the return of Christ, we're looking at the prophetic

scene that's on the news, we're waiting for the blast of a trumpet. We're longing for the day when that 7 years is ended, and human suffering comes to an end and Christ sets up his Kingdom [on earth, cf. Zechariah 14:1-15, esp. vs. 9]. We're looking forward to a new heavens and a new earth [cf. Revelation 21:1, read vs. 1-17, the new Jerusalem Abraham was longing for, hoping for, mentioned by Paul in Hebrews 11:8-10]. But either we've lost our minds, or we've all got the first installment. Now you know, when you talk about New-Ager's and then they're weirder than anybody. They can come into the corporate set-up, and they can teach their philosophies, they bring in all this nonsense--and here we are talking about the return of Christ and all of the things that he has for us--and people think we're crazy. And again, I think it's sad if you're here this evening and don't know Christ personally, you know. What is your hope? Is it N.A.F.T.A.? I mean, look what's happening on the news. Are you hoping that the North American Free Trade Association is going to produce a better quality of living for you and fill your refrigerator and pay off your bills? Are you hoping for that? And if that happens, somebody's going to negotiate the nuclear arms problems so that after NAFTA does pay off your bills somebody doesn't blow it all up. Are you hoping that even if they negotiate nuclear arms, somebody takes care of industry so you can breathe the air and drink the water? Are you hoping that A.I.D.S. doesn't spread? [or if the corona virus doesn't kill us all, or the new outburst of the Civil Rights movement doesn't devolve into Civil War or national anarchy]. I mean, what is your hope? Again, I think if your hope is in this world you've got more faith than we do. We believe something simple--Jesus Christ died, he rose and is returning. And he's going to blow a trumpet and catch us up off the face of the earth. That's easier for us to believe than what you believe [cf. 1 Corinthians 15:49-56; Revelation 19:1-21; Zechariah 14:1-15]--because what we believe is in the hands of Almighty God, what you believe is in the hands of men. That's scary. **So it tells us here as believers, we have been spoiled for this world.** Now again, that is part of God's work, because he knows our tendency to wander, he knows our tendency to get involved in other things. You know in our thinking and hearts it's nice on the scale of balances, we have the riches of Christ in the eternal heavens to weigh against the things of this world. Remember it tells us that Moses esteemed the riches of Christ more than the riches of Egypt (cf. Hebrews 11:23-26-28). **Thank God that we have an installment, we have a glimmer into the Kingdom that's coming to weigh against all the things that Satan sets before our hearts here in this world.** But I also thank God that when a Christian gets off the course and starts to make his career his god and when he starts to make some other thing his god, or when he starts to make money his god, that he can't get settled down

in that. That he ends up very frustrated in it. And the reason is because ***you're spoiled for this world--you've been touched and sealed by God's Holy Spirit and given the first installment of something that is far away and beyond anything that this world has to offer.*** You know, I love that fact--Satan is wise, he's been at this a long time. We see in Matthew 4 that he takes Jesus Christ on a mountain top and shows him all the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them, and he says, ***"All of these will I give you, because they're given to me to give where I want to, if you fall down and worship me."*** And Christ does not argue with him in the sense that he can give them to whoever he wants--he's going to give them to the anti-christ. But before the Bible closes off and signs off in Revelation chapters 21 and 22, it says that John is taken away to a great and high mountain, and he sees something that far outshines any old thing that Satan has to show us down here. [Revelation 21:1-23 shows the New Jerusalem, a fifteen hundred mile wide, by long, by high be-jeweled city of pure gold, coming down out of heaven, our new home, and future dwelling place of God with the resurrected immortal children of God that have been made immortal in the 1st Resurrection to immortality (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:49-56). This occurs after the new heavens and earth have been created (Rev. 21:1). Heaven on earth anybody? That's what it says. This is the same city Paul says Abraham was looking forward to in Hebrews 11:8-10.] Satan has got to put glass-plus on his stuff and got to, you know, put furniture polish on it, and gold polish. We see there an eternal city with streets of gold and walls of jewels. It's remarkable the thing that God's given us to weigh against all that's in this world. And because you're never going to be satisfied [with what Satan has to offer]. Again, you try to walk away from Jesus Christ, you have a problem [if you're genuinely born-again, of the Spirit.] [Non-Christians ,*who think they're Christians*, can and do walk away from Jesus Christ, all the time. Let me explain. If God hasn't sealed a person, even if that person has attended a real Christian Church for 20 years, has gone through all the motions, says the right things, can hold a spiritual conversation with you, was baptized--the problems of life, when they really boil up and over and get bad enough, that person will walk--walk right away from church, from Jesus, like they never knew him (because they never really did know him, never had him indwelling within them by the Holy Spirit). But we human beings cannot discern that in an individual until it happens. Often times it will happen within a Christian marriage, where problems boil up, one partner leaves--leaves the marriage, church, Jesus. Why? Because they were never really sealed with and by the Holy Spirit. Simple as that. How do I know? Because it happened to me, and then the identical thing happened to a close Christian friend of mine. All the

spiritual evidence of our two wives non-conversion steadily surfaced after the divorces occurred, and continue to surface to this day. Won't go into details, that's personal, and not necessary. That's why Paul warned believers to marry believers, and not unequally yoke yourself to a non-believer. That means if you're a Christian, do not date non-Christians!] So you're just going to be miserable [if you're sealed and trying to walk away from Jesus]. And that's exactly how you're supposed to be. If you're backslidden this evening and you're miserable, don't feel bad [laughter], no, don't feel bad about feeling bad--just, feel bad. That's how you're supposed to feel. We all pray that you are miserable. We pray you get ulcers. We pray you don't sleep till you turn back. Because we love you. And you know in your heart, ***there isn't anything out there that compares with what God has shown you in your heart that lies ahead of you. So we thank God that we have been sealed by this Spirit of promise, and given the earnest, the down-payment, the first installment of our inheritance, "until the complete redemption of the purchased possession."*** By the way, that first installment is not in regards to forgiveness of sin, that's something that was settled 2,000 years ago. That installment is in regards to our inheritance. That's still ahead of us, the fullness of it. And if you go to Greece today, and there is this word used for earnest here, it's their word for engagement ring. And I like that, because it helps us from just feeling like cargo, it helps us from just feeling like we're in a commercial deal with God's, shipping and receiving. There's a great amount of emotion in this too, that what he's given to us is an engagement ring. And in a sense we're in a period of espousal. And Paul say's he's espoused us unto one husband, that we're the Bride and he's [Christ] the Groom. So the Holy Ghost [Spirit] has slipped the engagement ring on your finger. I like that.

The Knowledge That We Have By Divine Revelation

"Wherefore" Now verse 15 begins "Wherefore", wherefore, because of everything he just said since verse 3--because of God Almighty's plan, because of the signs of redemption, because of the Spirit's keeping us--***“Wherefore because of this, I also after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.” (verses 15-16).*** Now Paul's in prison, he's got a lot of time to pray. ***“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of***

glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him” (verse 17). Now look, he's writing to believers. And these are believers that of course already know the Lord, obviously, but what he's saying is, as Paul says in **Romans**, that he prays that you might comprehend with all the saints ***‘that you might comprehend with all the saints what is the height and the depth and the width and the breadth of the love of God towards us in Christ Jesus.’*** Here he's saying ***‘You know, I pray that God will give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that you might understand what is the hope of his calling and the riches of his inheritance’*** and so forth. He's saying that there's something now that also I want you to have--it is beyond I.Q., I.Q. will do you no good, the person the world considers brilliant [like Einstein or Stephen Hawking] has no more of a chance of learning this information than someone who just made it out of grade-school. It has nothing to do with intellect. It has nothing to do with your ability to graduate from a university--it's by revelation, it's by enlightenment, that the youngest child who has turned to Christ, a five or six year old is entitled to this greater revelation about what Christ has accomplished and still has waiting for us. Or the older saint, laying on his deathbed, waiting to check out, has access to this information, by revelation. ***So he asked God to give to the saints at Ephesus now this spirit of wisdom, revelation and knowledge--and again, it's something that we should pray for.*** God has an incredible ability to give understanding and knowledge and insight. Look at Solomon, the wisest man that had ever lived. What he asked for was a hearing heart. He asked God for the ability to hear God's leading and God's voice. And he ended up to be the wisest man that ever lived. Now that was not from his father. His father was a shepherd. Solomon didn't learn about the migratory pattern of animals, he didn't learn about photosynthesis, he didn't learn--evidently he had an incredible knowledge about all kinds of things given to him by revelation by God Almighty. If you're getting ready to take your final exams I think you should cram, but I think you should pray too, because God can do amazing things. And here Paul says, ***‘I Paul, pray that God will give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him--the eyes of your understanding (for those of you who don't have an NIV), says ‘the eyes of your heart being enlightened.’*** Now he makes a reference to the Gentiles, that their understanding is darkened.

What Is “The Hope Of Our Calling?”

Here Paul says, ***‘Pray that the eyes of your understanding would be enlightened, that you might know what is (first of all) the hope of his calling’***--first thing he asks us to know. Now by the way, when you hear about the *blessed hope*, when *the hope of the believer, the hope of the church* is mentioned--realize that the hope that worldly men have differs in a way, because a worldly person is--it's kind of a *maybe* hope--*‘I hope I hit the lottery this month,’* you know what I mean? Or *‘I hope my mother-in-law is not coming for Thanksgiving Dinner.’* You know, *‘I hope my kid makes it home the first time I give him the car keys.’* You know, worldly people have a *maybe* hope. But the *hope* of the church, the *blessed hope*, is not that kind of hope. It's not a *maybe* hope. It is identifying an established fact, that you are bound for glory. **You have been signed, sealed and delivered by God Almighty.** And his Spirit has sealed you into the day of redemption. You are on your way and that is the hope of his calling. It is a fixed, an established fact in Eternity. **“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,” (verse 18)** It began before the worlds were formed. You didn't have anything to do with it. So when we talk about ***‘the hope of his calling,’*** we have to realize this is a reality, this is not something, you know, where I get saved, and God's saying *‘Ok, I hope you make it the rest of the way on your own, I hope your gonna get here, hope to see you in heaven [to some: “in the Kingdom of God at the resurrection to immortality”], see you later.’* It's not that kind of hope. It's our hope because it's a reality. We hope it happens now. It's part of our thinking, it's part of our planning. It's part of our life. Death [strangely enough] is part of our vocation. As sons and daughters of God it tells us to walk worthy of the vocation you've been called to. What we've been called to is to be the sons and daughters of God. Part of our vocation is dying, and passing out of this world. Now some of us will do it in an accident, some of us in our old age and death, some of us are going to do it in a trumpet blast, and will be reborn again in a twinkling of an eye, as it were, physically [some denominations and/or theologians believing we receive Spirit composed bodies at this point--have to wait and see]. But that's part of our vocation. For you and I, death does not interrupt, it's not going to interrupt my plans. You know, you look at people in the world, who don't have this hope, and death is a tragedy because it severs relationships with loved ones. It destroys their plans for their future. It takes everything away from them that they thought to possess. And yet as a believer, first of all, death doesn't sever our relationships [sort of like when a close friend is moving away and

says] *“see you in awhile.”* There's a reunion, there's no severing of relationships. Second of all, it is not an interruption of my plans, because I am planning on going there. It is part of my plans. It doesn't take everything away from me, because like Paul says, **‘We count it all as dung [all that we have now] that we might get there, and knowing him.’** [And king David said in one of the Psalms that it was better to be a door-keeper in the Kingdom of God than someone who dies without hope.] The stuff we're really hankering to get a hold of is in eternity. So that's our hope, our calling. It's part of our vocation, it's part of our life, it's established fact. It isn't something that, *'Oh I hope I get there. I hope it works out. I hope when it happens it's all true'*--that's not what it's talking about. Secondly, he says, **‘he prays that through the spirit of wisdom and revelation that you would understand what are the riches of his’**--capital HIS, God's inheritance in you (the saints)', which is an incredible thought. God is going to be happier when you get there. You know, we spend most of our Christian experience thinking *'Have fun, we'll be there soon,'* you know, like we're going to ruin heaven a little bit when we get there. Well the Bible teaches the opposite. No wonder we need the Spirit of God to minister these things to us. That there are certain facets of God's glory that are still not complete, again, that the angels, it tells us, long to look into the things concerning the heirs of salvation.

[What follows is a short article I wrote which might help explain an apparent contradiction in Scripture on the subject of *“once saved, always saved.”* After the article, the sermon transcript will continue.]

Apparent Contradiction: ‘Once Saved, Always Saved vs. You Can Fall Away And Lose Your Salvation’

In **Ephesians 1:13** Paul said that we **“were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.”**, giving rise to the "once saved, always saved" doctrine a great many Christian fellowships ascribe to. Yet in **Matthew 24:11-13** Jesus states, **“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love [agapeo] of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure to the end shall be saved.”** A smaller number of fellowships adhere to Jesus' words here and say salvation isn't a sure thing, but that you have to hold on to the end, or else you won't be saved, receiving eternal life in the resurrection (cf. 1st Corinthians 15:49-54). In the expository sermon on Ephesians 1, Pastor Joe Focht was stating that Paul was praying that the Ephesians, and by extension all of us Christians, would receive from God **“the spirit of wisdom and revelation.”** As he

expounded on how we were "sealed" to the end by the Holy Spirit, and how powerful that sealing was, this contradiction (above) came to mind, so I asked God to give me a spirit of revelation concerning this problem. I shouldn't have been so amazed and surprised when various Scriptures came flooding into my mind, but it's always amazing when the Lord starts revealing the meaning of a Bible truth in this manner. I will give the Scriptures that came to mind and comment on them as I go. Matthew 24:11-13 came to mind first, and then to counterbalance that one, **Romans 8:35, 37-39**, which states, **“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** So considering these two Scriptures, is it possible for a “sealed believer” to leave the body of Christ? People do, apparently. Then I remembered a Holy Spirit led pastor had once remarked to the congregation as we sat there, and said that he estimated that 50 percent of us were or people in general in any Holy Spirit led church were “*seat warmers*,” were unconverted. Of course in the fellowship I was in at the time, we didn't ascribe to the “once saved, always saved” doctrine, but what Jesus had stated in Matthew 24:11-13. So what came into my mind next, as these Scriptures were coming into my head? I couldn't remember the exact Scripture, but just the passage and what it said. I'll look it up for this article. But the passage came to mind about Saul and his soldiers chasing the future king David, and how Saul and his soldiers entered into one of Samuel's religious colleges looking for David. Obviously Samuel and probably most of the students had the Holy Spirit indwelling in them, or what I am about to relate wouldn't have occurred. Saul and his carnal, gruff soldiers obviously didn't have God's Holy Spirit indwelling in them, being on a mission to kill David. In the presence of Samuel and all these students, obviously filled with the Holy Spirit, who were singing songs to the Lord, Saul and his soldiers started singing to the Lord along with them, you might say, “*caught up in the Spirit of things*.” God's Spirit obviously was shining into them so they “reflected” the influence of the Spirit back out of their beings for awhile. Three whole groups, one after the other, were sent by Saul to apprehend David, but soon each group of battle-hardened soldiers forgot why they had come in pursuit of David, as they left the college singing songs to God (1 Samuel 19:18-24). Then it clicked. Recently I have been made painfully aware of the fact that someone can “fall away” from their calling--my wife of 20 years

recently divorced me and is now exhibiting an extremely worldly lifestyle which I won't elaborate on. She turned her back on the church and Jesus, and anything she had believed. On further examination and subsequent conversations with her, now confirmed by her own admission, she had demonstrated "interest" in the church I was attending at the time we were dating and about to get married, just so she could "land me", so that I would marry her. She then got baptized by one of the pastors in that church I was attending, and by all appearances from then on, became a solid member along with me. Then when severe problems hit in our marriage, as happens in most marriages from time to time, she walked away from me, God, and the church. I became painfully aware of the fact that the Holy Spirit was not in her, and I think now probably never was. Just as Saul and his soldiers "reflected God's Spirit", and in the strong presence of the Spirit of God being beamed onto these hardened soldiers, they took on the attitudes of the other Spirit led people who were in their presence. The Holy Spirit was in Samuel and his students (called in the Bible "the sons of the prophets"), and they were "shining" the light of God's Spirit onto and into Saul and his men, hardened soldiers. I became aware of the fact, which these passages in Romans 8:35, 37-39 and Ephesians 1 seemed to indicate, that once God's Holy Spirit has sealed an individual, it is God through his Spirit who won't let go of you. But people can and do come into our midst, into the church, into our lives, and for some reason, say like wanting to marry someone who's a Christian, they will make a "decision for Christ" which is not entirely honest, but out of an ulterior motive. Though we may be fooled, God is never fooled by this, and refuses to honor such baptisms and subsequent bestowal of his Holy Spirit within such a person. That person, then, in the constant presence of other Christians, reflects the presence of the Holy Spirit of the other Spirit-filled and led individuals around him or her. **Daniel 12:3**, in talking of the just resurrected saints, says, "**And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament**" which is a King James way of saying we will shine as the very stars in the heavens. In Revelation 1:13-18 it states that the face of Jesus right now shines as the very sun in its brilliance. As one pastor said (he had had occasion to interview several demon-possessed people), the demons don't like to be around a real Christian, as they shine with the light of the Holy Spirit who is dwelling within them. As these "revelations" were coming to my mind I was driving to work. It was dark out, the sky was clear and cold. Venus and the moon were shining brightly in the early morning sky. Then it hit me. The moon, and even Venus, are like unconverted people who may be, for awhile, fellowshiping with us in the church. The moon reflects the light of the sun, and on the surface of the moon when the sun is hitting it

the temperature can be in the hundreds of degrees Fahrenheit. When the moon's surface goes into darkness and shadow it then falls down hundreds of degrees into the below zero range. We see the light at night, and it can be brilliant and beautiful. That is like an unconverted person within our midst, reflecting all the Holy Spirit to all around, having and displaying a degree of spiritual knowledge, so much so as to fool those around them, and yes, even themselves. But God is never fooled. Then when real trouble comes into their lives, some fiery trial, they "fall away". Why? God had never really sealed them. **John** makes this plain statement in **his first epistle, chapter two, verse 19, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."**

In Matthew 24:11-13, the word for love is *agapeo*, which is a Greek word used to denote God's love which comes into us by the Holy Spirit. It is not a human love. So by the very use of that word, it shows Jesus is apparently talking about believers, Christians--or is he?. My question is, are they "real believers," those who have really been sealed by God's Holy Spirit, or are they those that I have described here, reflectors of God's Holy Spirit, those who absorbed and reflect God's Holy Spirit from other real Christians around them? I also recalled examples in Foxes book of Martyrs of ordinary Christians who willingly died for their beliefs in Jesus, when all they had to do was renounce him verbally. Paul's words in **Romans 8:35, 37-39** came to mind. **"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."** So that pretty well sums the matter up, at least in my mind. Some may not think so. In no way am I taking a dogmatic stance one way or the other on this matter, either the **"once saved, always saved"** or **"we must endure to the very end to be saved"** side of the doctrinal fence. Personally, I believe both principles apply. It is a matter of "we will endure to the end because we are sealed with God's Holy Spirit." But we will all know for sure when Jesus returns, when we're in the resurrection to immortality Paul spoke of in 1st Corinthians 15:49-54. So I defer any hard and fast judgment on the matter until then. But let this be a strong warning to any Christian who may desire to date unbelievers. These facts also ought to be a strong warning to pastors as well. Not everyone

within your congregation is born-again--and you can't really discern who is and isn't until you see, long-term, the fruits of their lives. That's why Paul cautioned Timothy not to appoint a novice, or new-believer as a deacon. When I learned of the untimely death of Jon Courson's wife and daughter in two separate car accidents, Paul's words in Romans 8:35-39 rang out loud and clear, this man is a Christian, sealed with the Holy Spirit. Why? An unconverted, unsealed individual would have cursed God for not protecting his loved ones, and turned his back on God and walked out the door of the church. Jon didn't do that, but instead wrote a book titled "*A Future and A Hope*" [Available from "A Foundation for Living," P.O. Box 1698, Chino CA 91708-1698. paperback, \$9.00] The Holy Spirit inspires believers to take the lemons the world hands them and make lemonade. Non-believers take the lemons the world hands them, and use those as an excuse to turn their backs on the Lord and their beliefs, and leave. Jesus did say that it is by their fruits that you will know them--this goes for believers and non-believers alike. It is through the fruit of peoples lives that true discernment comes between believer and non-believer. Tragedy and severe trial separate the men from the boys. Sad it has to be this way, but it's the only way Jesus gave to discern between believer and non-believer, for we can't see the Spirit glowing in believers, and merely reflecting off wannabe believers. Only God and the angels (and yes, demons) can see the difference visually. Like the saying, "Anybody can talk the talk, but can they walk the walk?"

[You might be asking right now, "What kind of lemonade did you make? For starters I transcribed and got permission to put on my website two incredibly good articles describing how to make a marital relationship work. It applies to believer and non-believer marriages with equal success, and if you're married to an unbeliever and struggling, it may just be what you need to keep things going. To access these two articles, log onto [http://www.UNITYINCHRIST.COM/christiangrowth/HisNeeds_HerNeeds_HerNeeds.htm](http://www.UNITYINCHRIST.COM/christiangrowth/HisNeeds_HerNeeds.htm).] Now let's continue the sermon transcript of Ephesians 1:15-2:5.

*God Provides A Way Of Salvation For The Human Race,
Taking Us From Glory To Glory*

“Because there has never been a “saved angel,” there has never been “a savior” for angels. The angels were all created in one day. When the rebellion took place in heaven [may have happened or started on earth--or that's where it ended up] and Satan seems to have led one third of the angels in rebellion against God (cf. Revelation 12:3-4), they all made their choice for themselves on the same day. And angels don't have little angels, just you and I do, we have little angels. Angel's don't propagate, there's a fixed number, there's not generations of angels. And the difference with human beings is, here we are in this mess, and we can blame it all on Adam. It's not our fault, it's Adam's fault, that's why we're in this pickle. [And by extension, the buck stops on God's desk, he was the one who allowed Satan and this host of fallen angels, demons, to remain on earth--it was Satan, disguised as a serpent, that beguiled and deceived Eve--God allowed this, full well knowing Adam and Eve's spiritual weakness, as they had not the Holy Spirit (the Tree of Life) indwelling in them yet, and never would.] And because of that, the Bible says God is just, because death has come to the whole race because of one man, that eternal life and forgiveness comes to the whole race through a man too. The angels never experienced that. See, you and I weren't around when Adam blew it for us. So God has provided a way of salvation for the race. The angels were all there [good ones and bad ones]. They made their own decision. So the angels that are in heaven that are worshipping God, their song will be complete in some way once we arrive, and they understand a little bit more about why all this took place. [Here's an explanation which came from the old Worldwide Church of God, which may apply. Satan and his demons were cast down (or back down) to earth when they rebelled (cf. Luke 10:18; Revelation 12:3-4a). Satan was in the Garden of Eden when God created Adam and Eve. Who deceived Eve? Who is the god of this evil world? (cf. 2nd Corinthians 4:3-4; 1st Corinthians 11:13-15) Mankind is being taught a huge and painful lesson about Satan's way of life and wrong attitudes. All of mankind in this world, us included, are learning a lesson which will not be soon forgotten. And so to teach that lesson to mankind God has allowed mankind to write a history, a history of a world which is so violent and filled with wars, hatred and violence, this world of Satan's, a mixture of good and evil, symbolically right from the Tree of Good and Evil. This world we live in, as Paul points out, is not God's world. To read some examples of world history, see <https://unityinchrist.com/ezra/ezra1.html> and <https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans1.htm> just for a taste. You'll never read all of history in a lifetime, but it's all the same picture of a mixture between good and evil, violent, nasty, hate-filled evil. God wants to teach mankind something he'll never forget.] Jesus said, **“Lo, I go**

to prepare a place for you that where I am you may also be. If I go and prepare a place, I'll come again and receive you unto myself, that wherever I am you may be also." [Where will Jesus Christ and God the Father's dwelling place end up, initially Jesus and us at his 2nd coming, and then the Father (and of course the Holy Spirit, who is omnipresent throughout the universe, and will probably always be so)???. Look up Zechariah 14:9; Revelation 5:9-10; Revelation 21:1-17.] Now think of that city that we read about in the book of Revelation (Rev. 21:1-17), streets of gold, walls of jewels, the incredible beauty of this city [which Abraham looked forward so much too, cf. Hebrews 11:8-10]. But you know what it says? It says there's no light there. Imagine that city in darkness. What would it be? One of the incredible beauties of that city is that it has the ability to reflect and refract light. And it says **'the Lord God is the light thereof,'** and it says **'the saints will shine like the stars of heaven'** (cf. **Revelation 1:13-18; Daniel 12:2-3**). What gives beauty and meaning to that city is the redeemed standing around their Lord and Savior and looking into his face. If it wasn't for that, it would be a ghost-town. The idea is, that when we think about it, and you and I pray and seek the Lord, there's facets of God's glory and God's creation that have not seen the fulness of their purpose, and won't see it until all the redeemed are gathered home [and this occurs at the very end of the time period spoken of as the Millennium, just after Gehenna fire has consumed the whole earth (and perhaps the universe) (cf. Revelation 20:14-15; 21:1-17)]. So there is within the saints a greater richness to his inheritance in us, that adds to his glory. And he says, **'I pray that God will show you that.'** One of the reasons that we're going to be redeemed is for his name's sake. A lot of the verbs through these first three chapters are in the middle voice, which means he's doing it for himself. Through the Old Testament we read about God working for his name's sake, that he preserved Israel for his own reputation, for his own name's sake. Moses pleaded with God, **'God, forgive the children of Israel for your great name's sake, so the heathen don't say 'he brought them out of Egypt and lost them in the wilderness.'** And there's something about God's name and God's glory that's at stake if we don't get there. So it says **'know this, our future, not only is our past is secured, our future is secure too, because the hope of our calling is a certain hope, it's involved in God's glory and the riches of his inheritance in us, bringing us home to himself.'** And it's taking place, he says, through the power he wrought in Christ. And he prays that we might know **"what is the exceeding greatness (verse 19) of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly**

places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that might be named, not only in this world"--this is pretty inclusive--"but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (verses 20-22). So, it says, also that we should understand that this hope is certainly, it involves God's glory, and is accomplished through the dramatic working of God's power whereby he rose Christ from the dead. And what it's saying is this, when you and I think of God and we think of God's power, and the incredible working of his power, I mean, you think of Charlton Heston holding a stick and the Red Sea parting, you think of the Pillar of Fire in the wilderness, you think of the ground opening up and swallowing Korah. You know, you think of God saying **"Let there be light"** in the creation scene--but what he's saying here, is that there is a greater demonstration and exercising of power that transcends every thing that's on this material plane, because it actually translates something from the "here-and-now" into a different realm, into Eternity. And where it was **'by the power that he rose Christ from the dead.'** Now this is an incredible thing you have to realize. He took genes and chromosomes that were not Spirit, and all of the blood was drained out of Jesus, he put Spirit drive behind it, you know, warp drive, different drive system, took the gas out of the tank--you saw what happened on *Back to the Future*, what they did with that car--well he took the body of Christ and put Spirit drive behind it, and that made that vehicle then able to transcend this material world. And he says that makes it eternal. Take something from the temporal and translates it into the eternal, that's an incredible thing. [Some believe and teach this is a virtual transformation of what was Jesus Christ's mortal body back into Spirit composition--and that in the 1st Resurrection our mortal bodies will go through the same transformation (cf. 1st John 3:1-2; Revelation 1:13-18)--and that like YHVH in Genesis 18 was able to transform into human physical form and back again to Spirit composition at will, so did the resurrected Christ, and so will we be able to as well. Revelation 1:13-18 is not a picture of the same body Jesus was resurrected back to in John 20 and Mark 16 by a long-shot. Many denominations differ in how to interpret this, so as John cautioned, we can't get too dogmatic or specific about what Jesus is like now, beyond what's said in Revelation 1, but we'll know for sure when we see Jesus again at his return, for we will be like him (cf. 1st John 3:1-2; Daniel 12:1-3; Revelation 1:13-18).] That's an incredible thing. It's greater power than parting the Red Sea, because the heavens and earth are going to pass away (cf. Revelation 20:14-15; 21:1-2; 2 Peter 3:10-14), and we will be something left out of this physical world that goes on throughout eternity [it's my personal

guess that we won't even be physical at this point--let's wait and see, as John cautioned]. That's an incredible thing. And again, I love to think about that, **1st Corinthians 15** says that **“flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God”** and yet when Jesus was risen from the dead, he said to the guys when they were **afraid “Touch me. Does a spirit have flesh and bone?”** So evidently flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, flesh and bone can inherit the kingdom of God [maybe-but this is getting too specific in an area John, much later writing in his first epistle said **“we just don't know.”** We do know Jesus at this point and before in Genesis 18, along with two angel companions, had the ability to transform himself from his Spirit composition into human flesh form and back again at will. There are simply too few Scriptures to hang a doctrine on this “flesh and bone” theory, one way or the other. Let's wait and see how things shake out, as the apostle John said in **1st John 3:1-2**. Pastor Joe and Calvary Chapels in general are taking this flesh and bone physical/spiritual state of Jesus' body and our future bodies a bit far on way too little Scriptural evidence to properly hang a doctrine on.]. But the idea is, there is an incredible working of God's power that will take our DNA, our physical frame, somehow, molecular change, who knows, and it will transcend this time/space world, this material world, and take something that's temporal and make it Eternal. We will step into Eternity, there will be enough reality to it that we will be able to embrace. [Embrace? More than that. When Jesus returns we will rise to meet him in the upper atmosphere, go to the Wedding Feast prophesied in Revelation 19:7-9, and then (maybe four or five months later) ride back down with him on Spirit white horses--as the very army of God (read Revelation 19:1-21). Another way to look at it is that spirit composition, God and the angels, are more solid than physical matter, but in another dimension. We'll just have to see when the time comes. That's my take on it.] When you see your relatives and loved ones that have passed on before you, it's not like you're going to say *'Mom!'* and you're going to run towards each other and go--*woosh!*--right through each other. It says they felt Jesus, they embraced Jesus. He said **“Touch me, feel me.”** You're going to see people that you love there and you're going to be able to put your arms around them, you're going to love them, you're going to experience their presence and reality. [Again, this world has a concept, and we all have as well, that the Spirit composition of God, Jesus, and the holy angels is something less solid than physical matter, more like air or nothingness. And this concept is all wrong. Spirit beings, God, the angels are living outside of space and time, and are more than likely more solid than the physical matter that the universe is composed of. When our bodies, down to the very molecular and atomic level are transformed into spirit as Jesus is in

Revelation 1:13-18, then we'll understand what spirit is, not until then. We must be careful not to try to get too specific in describing what we'll be like--flesh and bone, etc.--we just don't know as John wisely said. We do know we will be transformed, made immortal like Jesus at his 2nd coming, at the sounding of the 7th trumpet blast (1 Corinthians 15:49-54). That's all we do know. That's enough.] And he says here that there's some incredible working of God's power that is part of our fixed hope. We're awaiting the day that the dead in Christ rise first, and then they which are alive and well on the planet are changed to immortality and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. That's pretty powerful stuff. And it's incredible to see that you and I have the same genes and chromosomes that Jesus did, we're all from Adam as far as the physical body goes, and remarkably because we're born of the same Spirit--it's going to tell us that Christ is seated in the heavenlies, he raised him, he made him to sit there, **verse 23 says "he's head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."** Then in chapter 2 it's going to tell us that we are also already in heavenly places in Christ. What an incredible thing it will be to find out what that actually means. Because tomorrow you're going to feel like you're seated in a Chevy on the way to work. You're not going to feel like you're seated in heavenly places. You know, the amazing thing is this letter was written to those in Ephesus and [all those] in Christ, and so it's written to us in Philadelphia and in Christ, two addresses, two realms, we exist in both of them through this remarkable work of God on our behalf. Yes, we're in Philadelphia [or wherever you're reading this online], yes we're eeking out a living, trying to live with integrity. We're going to see in the last three chapters how we should live and conduct ourselves. And yet the first three chapters tell us of this incredible established fact of our existence in the heavenlies in and through Christ. [How does Christ dwell in us? Via, by the Holy Spirit which indwells us. God's Holy Spirit is everywhere, omnipresent, including heaven. This may partially answer this mystery.] To me it's an incredible thing.

Ephesians 2:1-5

"And you hath he quickened, 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 ["conduct"] 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. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)"

Introduction: "Our State Before We Came To Christ"

Chapter 2 begins by saying **"And you"** (It was great stuff until now.) **"hath he quickened"** is in italics, if you read it in the King James, which means that it's added by the translators to help us to understand what it's saying. But it has there "hath quickened", the phrase there, down in verse 5. So it isn't anything that isn't included in God's Word as part of the idea here. He begins in **Chapter 2** by saying **"And you hath he quickened"** or made alive **"who were dead in trespasses and sins."** Now it's going to describe our state before we came to Christ. If you're here this evening [or whenever, online] and you don't know Jesus personally, it may be a little hard for you to take, but this is your present condition. **"And you hath he made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins."** Now the idea is, this is spiritual death. Obviously you're sitting here tonight, you're not physically dead. There's only two people ever that have been born spiritually alive, that was Adam and Jesus Christ [there are differing interpretations on this, some don't believe Adam was born with the indwelling Holy Spirit in him--he hadn't partaken of the Tree of Life yet, and never did as long as he lived. Most definitely John the Baptist and Jesus Christ were born with the Holy Spirit already indwelling within them, and I believe Jeremiah was as well. Remember how Elizabeth (John's mother, Mary's cousin) said how her baby leaped within her when Mary (pregnant with Jesus) approached her? A secondary issue-but I do beg to differ, editor.] Everybody else who has been born physically is spiritually dead. Your children, as cute as they are when you see them, they're born spiritually dead. You, if you don't know Jesus Christ, are alive physically, but dead spiritually. That's why Jesus said **"to enter the kingdom you have to be born again"** (cf. **John 3:3-8**), you're born of water, but you also have to be born of the Spirit. This whole idea, again, you don't know Christ, you hear people talking about being born again, that's the idea. You're physically alive right now, you have a soul, you're conscious, you make decisions, you know

what's going on, you have an awareness [which the animals just don't have (read 1 Corinthians 2:11)]. But you're dead spiritually. And that is because you are out of fellowship with God. So it says here **“you who were dead in trespasses,”** and that's the way we were, dead people don't hear, they don't complain about the food. They don't see the movie, this, the screens, you know. We were dead in trespasses and sins. Now you can see how much we have participated or contributed to our salvation--we were dead in trespasses and sins [and also dead to any kind of spiritual understanding, real understanding of God's Word].

*We Walked, Meandered, Wandered Under The
Suppression Of This Fallen World's System*

Verses 2-3, “Wherein in time past you 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, among whom also we all had our conversation [Greek: "conduct", King James way of saying "conduct", "lifestyle"] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind [the biggest sex organ in a human is the mind]: and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” Now this is what it tells you about the existence that we had before we came to Christ and for those today who don't know him. It says that *‘you walked,’* now it's the Greek word that means “to meander” or “wander,” means “to walk without destination”--“to wander, meander.” That we were meandering according to the course of this world. Now, interesting words. Greek *“incord echata”* [not sure of spelling], that means “down,” we were held down, that we were meandering, and it was under the suppression of this fallen world's system. We really didn't have choices. In my generation we grew our hair long, wore bell-bottoms. I mean, late sixties, we thought we were "free", we thought we were making our own decisions, we were meandering, being fed on a menu by the prince of the power of the air, what we should look like, ideas of rebellion, you know, drop-out, freak-out, LSD, marijuana, blow your mind, flip-out, drop-out, whatever. It says, when we were in the world, we were meandering according to this world--and again, it uses the term **“the course of this world,”** is where we get the root word “weathervane.” It means to be blown without direction, according to the course of whatever the world was blowing our way.

*The Prince Of The Power Of The Air, Satan, **Energizes** The Children Of Disobedience, i.e. the World*

“And according to the prince of the power of the air,” Satan, and his influence, as he decides on styles, as he brings hems up this year, bellies out, more skin, less cloth. **“According to the prince of the power of the air, who now worketh”--energizo, energizes--“the children of disobedience.”** Now this is incredible. I want you to think about it, because you know, in **Ezekiel 28** it tells us there that Lucifer, Satan, in his pristine state, before he was fallen, **‘Thou Son of the Morning, Lucifer,’** was the head cherub. He's evidently of the order of the cherubim's. It seems that there are seraphim [Hebrew: *burner* (could it be like they're a spirit version of a rocket-powered angel-with after-burner's?--makes you wonder.)], there are angels that are different. Michael is "the", definite article, archangel, there's only one of what he is. Gabriel seems to be in charge of earth announcements, he's got some special work to do. But there's another strain of heavenly creature called cherubim, and it tells us in Ezekiel 28 that Satan was the head cherub, he was in charge of worship. [There may only be three cherubim, Lucifer (now Satan), Michael (who took Lucifer's archangel position when Lucifer fell), and Gabriel.] And that the timbrel and the pipe were founded in him (Lucifer) the day that he was created. Now it's interesting when they do a survey nation-wide among youth and they ask them *“What is the first thing you turn to when you have problems?”* And across the board they say *“Music.”* Drugs, alcohol where like 3rd, 4th and 5th, parents were in the 20s, rabbi's and pastor's were in the 40s. Music, what a powerful, powerful force. [The power of music is in the musical notes which are like the carrier waves in radio. The musical notes convey with power the lyrics--right straight into the brain, almost on a subconscious level.] And I don't think there's anything wrong with music in and of itself. Nothing is evil in and of itself. But what a powerful medium. You know, it's interesting, if you let your kids listen to worldly music--besides smacking yourself and pulling your beard like Nehemiah--you should check out the lyrics, listen to what they have to say, listen to the message that's being conveyed. And look, we can't be a bunch of old fogies. I mean if our kids come to us and say, *“Oh, the kids are saying this.”* Let's get it, let's sit down together. Let's read through the album cover, let's look at the lyrics. Let's talk about it. Let's see what they have to say. You don't just say *“No, take the album out and burn it, there's a*

demon in every album.” No, we don't want to be in *that camp*, you know. I mean--but it is incredible, incredible things they can do on an instrument. **Satan energizes the children of disobedience.** It's incredible, whether you're playing music, sometimes you're playing sports, there's a thing called “*the zone*” that you get in. I remember as a musician, and I'm a musician at heart, there were just certain nights, we'd be playing, **and everything would click.** I mean, the band would sound like a locomotive, it was better than drugs, it was better than sex, I mean it was a high for me that was better than anything in the world--everything just went, you know, it was amazing. And you never figured out what made it happen, or how. Athletes talk about that, being in the game, and all of a sudden “**getting in the zone,**” and every single thing clicks and goes perfectly right. And it's interesting because it says **Satan “energizes the children of disobedience.”** [He is called *the prince of the power of the air*. Before radio and TV we couldn't really have a concept of what that meant, but Satan has the power and uses his power to charge the very air with his bad attitudes much like the air on earth is filled with radio-waves from radio transmission towers, as the late Herbert Armstrong once commented.] He knows how to “*anoint*” as it were, for his purposes. Someone gave me an album of one of my favorite bands before I was a believer. And we were on the way to school with the kids and I put it in and played it for them. They listened to it one time and have been singing those songs ever since. I wish I could get them to learn Christian songs like that. That was the end of it. That's all they wanted to hear after that.

*Satan, The father Of This World, Is Full Of Wrath & Fills
His Children, The World With Wrath*

Amazing, it says, “**While we were unbelievers, being suppressed by the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, who energizes the children of disobedience,**” and he says, “**among whom also we all had our conduct or our manner of living (King James uses *conversation*) in times past, and it was in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires or the will of the flesh and of the mind, and were"--notice this--"by nature children of wrath even as others.” (verse 3) By nature. One of the reasons a dog acts like a dog is a dog's nature. It's not a mystery. When you get a puppy I don't know what you think it's going to be when it grows up, but it always grows up to be a dog,**

and you're kind of surprised. [laughter] **And it says human beings without Christ are by nature 'children of wrath'** [by nature like the spiritual father of this evil world, Satan, who is full of wrath, and broadcasts that attitude worldwide.] And we were like that. And it says **'we lived in the will and the desires and the lusts of our flesh and of our mind'** because again, man created as a [combination of] body and spirit, on a plane [way] above the animal's existence. [cf. 1st Corinthians 2:11. There is a "spirit *in* man" that gives man an intellect and mental faculties, a mental output far superior to the animals. Maybe we've been able to teach a monkey or ape basic American Sign Language (very, very basic), but that same monkey or ape cannot comprehend literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry, write music, symphonies, create and build cities, cars, trains, computers, aircraft. The output of the basic human brain is so far above the smartest of the animals brains of equivalent size and quality that they differ exponentially. A famous brain scientist, Dr. Kuhn, said there must be a non-physical component to the human brain that grants this awesome power of human intellect and intelligence beyond that of the animals. This "human" spirit is called in the Bible the "spirit of man" in three or four different places (cf. 1st Corinthians 2:11; Romans 8:16 Ecclesiastes 3:21). i.e. man was created even mentally in the image of God, mankind, unlike the animal kingdom is a race of "creators."] Again, man is created in Genesis as spirit, soul and body on a plane above the animal system. God three times in that first chapter uses the word "bara" that means in Hebrew "made something from nothing", once when he created the heavens and the earth. And then it tells us that "he formed", not created, the plants, so forth, out of that. But then it tells us that when he created the animals, the fish, the whales, that he created, "bara", something from nothing again, and he created them "a living soul". He formed their bodies from the dust of the ground, but then it was time, because it wasn't just a plan anymore, to give it a higher realm of existence, and God created consciousness, life, and placed it in. [Solomon in Ecclesiastes says there's a spirit in both man and animals, but the difference is in what happens when each dies, the spirit in the animals goes downward and the spirit in man (with no distinction between good and evil) goes upward to God. The difference between animal brain output and the output of man's brain is what is so amazing. The spirit in man, of man, gives the human brain an intellect, understanding and output exponentially greater than even the smartest animal brain. There are no Newton's, Einstein's or Stephen Hawking's of the animal kingdom.] Then it says, when he created man, again it uses "bara" for the third time, **"created something from nothing"** ["bara" can mean "something from nothing," but also has been used to mean created in the sense of

refashioning, reforming as well]. He created man a living spirit. So the plants and the terra firma, the earth are made out of the elements that God put in the ground [so are we, we just have this "spirit of man" in our brains, giving us human mind power, human intellect]. When he made the animals he had to make, body from the earth, consciousness, a creation, a soul, a consciousness. When he made man, he made man--body from the earth, soul, consciousness--and then one step higher--spirit in fellowship with the living God, God conscious, God-centered. [What he is saying is that the "spirit in man", the human spirit, was made to be able to unite, form a union, with the Holy Spirit of God, cf. Romans 8:16; 1st Corinthians 2:11-16.] When man, he died spiritually [I contend Adam and Eve were never "alive" spiritually for they hadn't yet partaken of the "Tree of Life", which was a manifestation of God's Holy Spirit.] And the dominating force then was the flesh [under Satan's influence, for **who** was there in the Garden of Eden with them besides God?--the serpent, Satan disguised as a serpent]. [Adam and Eve never had a spiritual union with God by receiving the Holy Spirit, they never partook of the Tree of Life. They partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil before they could chose a Holy Spirit led life.] And human beings that do not know Christ, not born-again, live according to the desires of the flesh and the mind [under Satan's powerful influence broadcast into the air] until they're born-again this is what he says, ***'And you, who were dead in trespasses and sins hath God quickened (made alive), but in times past, he said, you were meandering, without purpose in life, without direction. There was no purpose to your life, your own self-grandiose ideas, dreamed up purposes for your life, you had no real purpose for life. And he says 'It was according to the course, the wind, of this world, and according to the prince of the power of the air, who now energizes the children of disobedience [and has been doing so since the time of Adam and Eve], among whom also we all had our lifestyle in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and we were by nature children of wrath, even as others.'***

"But God..."

Verses 4-6, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath

quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” “But God.” You see, that's the whole point of these first three chapters--“But God”--we were going to hell--***we were by nature children of wrath. We were dead in trespasses and sins--we had no way to awake ourselves from being in trespasses and sins--we had no way to save ourselves--we had no way to escape our situation--but God.*** The A.C.L.U. looks like they're taking things by the handle now, running things, they're shutting the Scripture out of school, they're saying no more prayer--but God. The nations of the world are dreaming of N.A.F.T.A. and free trade associations, one world order, we're going to organize everything, and tyranny's going to come, the anti-christ is going to come on the scene, millions [the Bible shows billions] of people are going to die--but God. You know, here we are, we're his children, in this world that's about to blow apart with tremendous suffering, and we have no way to escape this planet--but God. I like this phrase, it fits everything I think, ***‘but God’ means forget about everything we've said so far because God is on the scene.*** He just arrived, and we're not by nature damned anymore, we're not going to hell anymore, we're not meandering anymore, we're not living without purpose anymore. All of those things are cancelled because of God. That's where he's got us in these first three chapters. **“But God, who is rich in mercy.”** Now it's kind of a parenthesis. If you look down in verse 5, see where it says **“hath quickened us together with Christ”**? Let me read it to you. **“But God, who is rich in mercy hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved).”** But he puts this interesting parenthesis in. **“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins,”** If you're here tonight, and you're a Christian, and you're [feeling] condemned, would you please read that to yourself. Do you understand what I'm trying to say to you? **“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when you were dead in trespasses and sins,”** His love was extended to you before you knew him. He loved you even when you were his enemy. **“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.”** He loved the world **“that whoever believed in Him would have eternal life and not perish.”** Why should he not love you now that you're his son or his daughter? Aren't we ridiculous sometimes? And again, I'm convinced it's because we have no barometer to measure God's love, there's no barometer ***BIG ENOUGH***, there's no scale to measure it on, there isn't anything that we can compare it with. You either have to receive it and believe it, or forget about it. Because again, if God is who he says he is, God is Holy. That makes him different from everything. Again, there's the Creator and the creation, that's all

that exists, in time and space and every dimension, those are the only two things that are [and even "time and space" are a part of the physical creation--Newton, Einstein and Hawking], the creator and the creation. You're part of the creation. God's not part of it. There's the creator and there's creation, that's what makes him Holy, he's separate. There is God and that which is not God, those two things. Well what that means, is God's love is also different from all love in the creation plane we understand. And when we hear that he loves us without any conditions, we immediately put that -- *'well does he love me more than my mother does? Does he love me more than my father loves me?'*--we immediately try to put that on barometers and scales. You do not have the barometer to measure the love of God on. The only barometer we have to measure it on is a cross [cf. John 3:16], with his Son nailed to it. There will never be a greater demonstration or example of his love towards you, and you have to receive his love today "by faith," because you can't measure it or figure it out, or deserve it, because it's holy, it's from another realm, it comes without any earthly conditions that people have. Even with family members that you're going to love, they're going to love you much better when you show love toward them. They love you much better when you let them come over to your built-in pool [or a summer house on the beach, been through that one, they loved me up until the time I had to sell it]. You know, isn't it amazing how many friends you get when you buy a pick-up truck? I mean, in this world, love is measured in incredible ways, and yet here is a love that comes to us not because we are lovable. And every love that you understand is elicited by something. You loved your wife when you got engaged to her, when you dated her, there was "something" in her that drew love from you--which meant that there was something in her that would also benefit you. There was a relationship there. You love your kids because they are you're kids, they elicit your love, they draw your love, there's something in them that takes it and deserves it. There was nothing in us that elicited God's love. He gave it because of who he is and how his love is. It is given unconditionally. Look what it says here. **"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath he quickened--made alive--together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)."** Now that's the secret, grace. What is it? You know, it's different from mercy. Again, imagine your serial-killers that we hear about in the media, being sentenced to prison and receiving the death penalty. And if the governor of the state changes that and gives that prisoner life instead of death, that's mercy, because he's not getting what he deserves. But grace is when the governor drives down to the prison with adoption papers in his hand, terminates the death sentence, takes that serial-killer out of prison, changes his last name, writes him into his will, gives

him a car and even a new set of clothes and a 3 million dollar a year job, takes him home, opens the refrigerator and says, *"Help yourself"* takes him up to the closet and says, *"Here's your new clothes"*--you know, grace is getting what you don't deserve. Mercy is not getting what you do deserve. Grace is getting what you don't deserve. So you're saved by grace, so get over it. Again, people say *"I'm not worthy, I don't deserve it"*--Right, that's grace--you finally got it! You got something you didn't deserve! That's grace, that's how we're saved! We're saved by getting what we don't deserve. You got it? We're saved by getting what we're not worthy of. ***That's Good News, "gospel" in King James language, that's the "But God."*** We were hopeless, we were lost--but God. Now you think "But God" is something you say to him. When you're forgiven, you're washed, you're cleansed, and you're saying *"But God, I don't feel worthy, I thought a dirty thought, I wanted to punch my boss, I must not be saved, I need to go forward to another altar call [or for some, "get re-baptized"]"*. And then the Scripture says, ***"No, you're justified, you're sanctified, you're glorified,"*** you read it, and the Holy Spirit tries to tell it to you--and you say ***"But God."*** ***"But God"*** is what happened, it's not something you say. We're saved by grace, we're saved by getting what we don't deserve. It's not just mercy, yeah it's mercy, we don't get smoked tonight. But grace is getting what we don't deserve, and that's what happened in all of our lives. That's what he's establishing in these early chapters, we were meandering, wandering according to the course of this world, without hope in the world, the Bible says, dead in trespasses and sins, nothing in us drawn to God. It says ***"no man seeks God, we've all gone astray."*** You hear people say "Well I was seeking God." [and some were, but that's really the Holy Spirit drawing you toward God--it wasn't you.] You weren't doing nothing. I'll tell you what you were doing, you were following the lust of your heart, your flesh and your mind, that's what you were doing. And your heart is desperately wicked, you're incurable [cf. Jeremiah 17:9]. I know exactly the condition you were in because you're made of the same stuff I'm made of. ***"But God."*** ***When people say "Tell me your testimony." You should say "But God."*** I was drafted, I didn't enlist. He came and scooped me up. It's kind of like 'Candid Camera', when you least expect it, you're elected, it's your lucky day. ***'It was on his end the work was accomplished and wrought out 'before the worlds were formed.'*** ***Next week we'll pick up there, 'saved by grace, through faith, and that's [the faith] not of yourselves, lest any man should boast.'*** You know, God knows that even if the faith--*"Oh I got saved by believing."* Well we knew you'd find something to brag about. So God says, ***"No, you're saved by grace, through faith and that's not of yourself either."*** Let's cut it off right there

“lest any man should boast.” He knows exactly how we are. Great place to stop, great place to pick up. [transcript of a connective expository sermon on Ephesians 1:15-23 and Ephesians 2:1-5, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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This world is made up of “the children of wrath,” **energized** by Satan, the prince of the power of the air. World history reflects this reality. For a few examples, see <https://unityinchrist.com/ezra/ezra1.html> and <https://unityinchrist.com/topical%studies/America-ModernRomans1.htm>