

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

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THE CHRISTIAN IN EPHESIANS

We shall consider now the believer in the book of Ephesians. We shall see what the believer is and how he acts.

Note how great is his position ("sit together in heavenly places in CHRIST") -- how grand are his enduements (the power of the SPIRIT of GOD) -- how good is his position ("in CHRIST" a place of comfort and safety) -- how glorious is his calling (called to be GOD's servant in a world of enemies) -- how glamorous are his achievements (the victories that he wins over self, his temper, his feelings, etc.) -- how gentle are his actions ("kind . . . tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as GOD for CHRIST's sake hath forgiven you") -- how gracious in his relationships even with the unsaved -- how genuine in his affections. How forceful in his defense against the rulers of the darkness of this age - his essential stand for truth. It is a wonderful thing to be a believer, to really believe what we believe and to doubt our doubts. What a blessed thing it is that GOD can call us believers.

Chapter 1. The Believer is redeemed by the precious blood.

Chapter 2. The Believer is saved by GOD's great and good grace.

Chapter 3. The Believer is related to GOD with proper relationship to the rest of the body.

Chapter 4. The Believer is taught.

Chapter 5. The Believer is in love with his LORD.

Chapter 6. The Believer is enlisted in the army and is ready for the business of GOD.

In Chapter 1:4 the Believer is **"in Christ."** Over and over again in this Book, we find the Believer **"in Christ."** What a wonderful place to be. The reason Paul could sing and shout while in prison or while riding a piece of driftwood around in the sea was because he was **"in Christ."** He had confidence and peace because he was living **"in Christ."** If we are in Him, no matter what our circumstances or condition, we are safe. Noah, safe in the ark, could sing in the storm. The frontiersman in the log hut, attacked by Indians, was at peace there **"in Christ."** It is a wonderful thing to be safe in Him.

In Chapter 2:5, the Believer's salvation is through CHRIST. He does not claim anything else. His goodness is the righteousness of CHRIST. His testimony is that he is saved alone by CHRIST.

In Chapter 3:17, his relationship is to CHRIST. He is a lover of CHRIST, a believer in CHRIST, a follower of CHRIST. His righteousness is from CHRIST. His faith is from CHRIST. CHRIST is his peace, joy, rest, salvation and forgiveness. What a wonderful relationship.

In Chapter 4:13, his education is by CHRIST. CHRIST teaches him. He gives some "prophets... evangelists... pastors and teachers." He learns from CHRIST, Who is the teacher in this chapter.

In Chapter 5:25, his love is from CHRIST. He revels in CHRIST's love as the bride revels in the love of her sweetheart. "CHRIST also loved the church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." GOD's church is without spot. Love takes the spots out. How blessed. CHRIST irons the wrinkles out and removes the blemishes from her.

In Chapter 6:6, his work is for CHRIST. He is a servant of CHRIST. He seeks the lost for CHRIST. There is nothing so precious, entrancing and interesting as soul winning, once you get into it.

In Chapter 1, the Believer is "in CHRIST." That is his place.

In Chapter 2, the Believer is in the world. That is his sphere of service.

In Chapter 3, the Believer is in the family for fellowship.

In Chapter 4, the Believer is in school learning the things of GOD. (Some of the LORD's people never get out of the first grade. If you have gone to church for ten years, you have heard an average of three sermons a week or 156 per year. In ten years you have heard 1560 sermons, so you should have a good knowledge of the Word.) Let me see if you can answer these ten simple questions.

1. Name two things that begin in Genesis that end in Revelation.
2. What is the general teaching of the Book of Ezekiel?
3. Name two of the five great judgments.
4. Name two of the five kinds of forgiveness.
5. What is the difference between justification and forgiveness?
6. Where do we read about the LORD's return?
7. Where do we read about the devil's origin and doom.
8. Where do we read about the virgin birth of CHRIST?
9. What are three things of the 33 things that happen to a person the moment he gets saved?
10. Where do we read about the final judgment of this world?

The church should be GOD's school. We should really learn something there. We should know what we believe and why we believe it.

In Chapter 5, the Believer is in the church learning how to behave and how to treat the members of the body.

In Chapter 6, the Believer is in a battle, learning how to use the shield. The shield is for protection from the enemy. The devil wrecks many a Christian life because the believer does not

know how to use the shield. Somebody says something about the Christian that hurts his feelings, or somebody fails to say something to him that would help and encourage him. He gets his feelings hurt, becomes discouraged, and decides to quit. The LORD does not want us to be like the cockroach that comes out at night and crawls around using his long feelers on the front and if he touches anything, he immediately disappears. We should not be easily offended and quit the service of the King. The LORD wants us to have the shield of faith and to keep going strong for Him.

One of the BEST thumbnail sketches that I have ever read concerning the question: "What is a Christian?" Read on!

In this precious Book of Ephesians, we find that the Believer is to be as tender-hearted as a bride and as tough as a soldier. He is to be a happy Christian, singing and making melody in his heart. He is saved to serve, to be of some use to GOD and to his fellowman, not to be a wallflower or vase. A real believer is one who dwells in CHRIST and CHRIST dwells in him. He is to be a student of the Word, learning and knowing how to act as a Christian. He is to be polished, refined, beautiful in character, long-suffering and patient. All the loving graces that Heaven can give are to be the portion of the Believer in the Book of Ephesians.

In this Book we learn about the Believer's character, conduct, confession, confidence, concept and conflict.

In character, he is a saint and has GOD's righteousness in him. He is faithful in CHRIST JESUS and on the job all the time. He does not live like a frog, jumping from place to place, making one big jump and then sitting for a long time. The Believer is redeemed, purchased, forgiven, made nigh by the blood. He has the life of GOD in him. He has received GOD's righteousness and appropriated His mercy. He is reconciled to GOD. The life of a Christian is in him. That is the character of the believing saint, born of the SPIRIT, as given in this book of Ephesians.

In conduct, he is holy within and blameless without. He has good thoughts toward GOD. He is patient and kind. He gives liberally and freely of the best that he has of time, talent and money. He is rooted in love, not in hate. He is kind and tender-hearted, easily affected by the needs, sorrows and troubles of others. He has some tears for those who are in grief and sorrow. He is forgiving. He does not let the sun go down on his wrath. He gets rid of the trouble. He imitates GOD. In Chapter 5, he wants to be as near like GOD as possible both in the way he acts and in what he does and what he says. He walks in the light because he has the LIGHT, CHRIST JESUS.

In confession, he sings because his heart is free. Burdens, sorrows, trouble will come, but he can sing, "Buried in the deepest sea . . ." He confesses that he loves the service of his LORD. He prays and confesses that he has needs that no one can meet but GOD. He acknowledges that he is not self-sufficient, so he prays. He knows that no effort of his own can avail, so he prays. He is not able to guide or trust his own footsteps, so he confesses his need of help. He confesses that he has an expectation from GOD, expecting Him to do something for him.

In confidence, he says, "Thank you, LORD, I have what I asked for." Instead of saying, "LORD,

won't you . . ." he says, "LORD, thank you." "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us" (I John 5:14).

His concept is that grace is his. He need not ask for it. He has it. He loves it and delights in it and his heart is filled with ecstasy. The Father and the SON both send benedictions to him. GOD's thoughts toward the believer are love and kindness and he is not afraid of his Father. He knows that the SPIRIT has sealed him. He realizes that the Church is GOD's dwelling place, that he is among the saints of GOD and that GOD is there. He rejoices in this and his burdens roll away and he enjoys living because he is living for GOD. Oh, what a concept!

His conflict is against the world, the flesh and the devil. Love is to be pre-eminent. False doctrines are to be avoided. Works of darkness are to be disdained. He is to put on "the whole armor of GOD" that he may "withstand the wiles of the devil." He is to put off the old man and let the new man in CHRIST JESUS have dominion.

~ end of chapter 4 ~

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