

Background Passage:

Ephesians 1

Lesson Passage:

Ephesians 1:1-14

Focal Verse:

Ephesians 1:13

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise

Biblical Truth:

The mystery of the Gospel is that God's children are sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Lesson Outline:

Knowing the will of God allows access to the mystery of the Gospel. Christians have confidence that they are part of:

1. The Redeemed v 7-10
2. The Adopted v11-12
3. The Sealed v 13-14

Just like a trip with a destination, we print the map and figure the time. We make a predestination road trip schedule. However, many times the predestined schedule, which is our will, changes due to circumstances. Choosing these circumstances changes the predestined plan.

*Are we allowing the circumstances of our life to get in the way of God's perfect will and derail us from peace and life with our Father?

The Mystery Revealed

March 7

Background & Introduction

Ephesians theme is to reveal five mysteries of the Christian life which are available for all mankind through the Cross of Jesus Christ. We will discover His: calling, grace, peace, unity, and power in the coming weeks.

Paul opens his salutation to all the Christians who are faithful in Christ Jesus.

The Key Mystery - (Ephesians 3:4-7) = *By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.*

The theme is **not** to debate whether God elects certain people into salvation and others He does not. However, since the salutation of the letter is so volatile to the church, let's BRIEFLY discuss it from the Biblical point of view. Be driven by Biblical Theology rather than human philosophy.

***READ Ephesians 1:1-6.**

Paul encourages us to KNOW the WILL of God.

*So what does the Bible say about the will of God? v. 5

-1 Timothy 2:4 = ...Who (God) desires **all** men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

-John 3:16 = For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes** in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

-John 3:17 = For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that **the world** might be saved through Him.

-Matthew 18:14 = So it is **not** the will of your Father who is in heaven that **one** of these little ones **perish**.

God's will is for all humans to be saved. He has elected and predestined us all to be His children.

The human being has the choice as Jesus Christ explains in His sermon:

Jesus says in His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:13-14 =

Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it. How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.

Jesus Christ states that there is a seeking on behalf of the lost to find the way to Christ as there is a calling by the God to His will.

Yes, God has predestined for His will to come to pass. His will is that all mankind choose Him for salvation through Jesus Christ. This is available to everyone.

Yes, man must seek the Son in order to gain exclusive access to Heaven for eternity.

There is a predestination on behalf of God and volition on behalf of the sinner.

More on this can be found at: <http://www.sbclife.org/articles/2006/04/sla8.asp>

ILLUSTRATE:

The redeemed are dependent on God for all. All that we have—wisdom, the pardon of sin, deliverance, acceptance in God’s favor, grace, holiness, true comfort and happiness, eternal life and glory—we have from God by a Mediator; and this Mediator is God. God not only gives us the Mediator, and accepts His mediation, and of His power and grace bestows the things purchased by the Mediator, but He is the Mediator. Our blessings are what we have by purchase; and the purchase is made of God; the blessings are purchased of Him; and not only so, but God is the purchaser. Yes, God is both the purchaser and the price; for Christ, who is God, purchased these blessings by offering Himself as the price of our salvation.

Jonathan Edwards
Closer Walk, July, 1988,
p. 15

APPLICATION:

*Are you living in freedom from sin?

Pray and ask God to help you claim His redemption since you have been purchased by the KING! Forever set free from guilt and the stain of sin.

The Mystery Revealed

March 7

**Three truths launch the text of Ephesians.
These are discovered in vv. 7-14.**

Christians have confidence that they are part of:

1. The Redeemed vv.7-10

The redeemed are followers of Christ Jesus who have accepted His forgiveness and His Lordship for their lives. One can only be redeemed because of the redemption price of Christ Jesus on the Cross.

Redemption - (*apolutrosis*) used ten times in the New Testament literally meaning to be purchased from the slave market of sin, totally set free, never to be sold again.¹

The purchase price for our freedom was Jesus Christ’s blood on the cross. A lost person is a slave to sin. Once redeemed, the Christian can live in the fullness of the Spirit knowing that in the day of redemption, they are eternally secure.
(*Ephesians 4:30*)

Grace - (*charis*) favor on the part of the giver, thanks on the part of the receiver. The scarlet thread running throughout the Bible is the story of God’s unmerited love and redemptive action on behalf of His children.²

When a person works an eight-hour day and receives a fair day’s pay for his time, that is a wage. When a person competes with an opponent and receives a trophy for his performance, that is a prize. When a person receives appropriate recognition for his long service or high achievements, that is an award. But when a person is not capable of earning a wage, can win no prize, and deserves no award—yet receives such a gift anyway—that is a good picture of God’s unmerited favor. This is what we mean when we talk about the grace of God.
G.W. Knight

*Where do we find this kind of redeeming rich grace?

The Cross of Christ!

How real is the Cross of Christ in your life today?

This is the only reason why a person can live in freedom knowing God’s grace for eternal peace.

John Stott gives three specific achievements of the Cross of Christ for humanity:

-The Salvation of Sinners

Propitiation, Redemption, Justification, Reconciliation

-The Revelation of God

His glory, His justice, His love, His wisdom, His power

-The Conquest of Evil

Victory of Christ, The Book of Revelation revealed

Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to your Cross I cling;
Naked, come to you for dress; Helpless, look to you for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly; Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

Augustus Toplady, *Rock of Ages*

ILLUSTRATION:

My Father is rich in
houses and lands
He holdeth the wealth of
the world in His hands!
Of rubies and diamonds,
of silver and gold,
His coffers are full, He
has riches untold.
My Father's own Son,
the Saviour of men,
Once wandered on earth
as the poorest of them;
But now He is reigning
forever on high,
And will give me a home
in heaven by and by.
I once was an outcast,
stranger on earth,
A sinner by choice, and
an alien by birth;
But I've been adopted,
my name's written down,
An heir to a mansion, a
robe and a crown.
I'm a child of the King,
a child of the King;
With Jesus my Saviour,
I'm a child of the King.
Harriet E. Buell

DISCUSSION:

- 1) What credentials do you have that qualifies you to be an heir?
- 2) What is holding you hostage on this side of the Heavenly Kingdom?
- 3) What motivation do you have in your glorifying God?

The Mystery Revealed

March 7

Christians have confidence that they are part of:

2. The Adopted vv. 11-12

Christians have obtained an inheritance because God adopted us through Jesus Christ Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

Christians are heirs to the King, the Royalty of God, His Children!!!
Peter discusses three specific actions displayed by God's children.

READ = 1 Peter 2:9-12

The Royalty of God, His adopted children:

1) Live to Proclaim the Inheritance Because: v 9 – 10

-We are a royal priesthood, His chosen people! *Hebrews 7:24 – 25*

-We are called out of darkness into light! *Matthew 5:14-16*

-We are now a people group!

Not American, Spanish, Canadian, Iranian — rather, CHRISTIAN!

2) Live in Freedom Through: v 11

-An Eternal Perspective *Hebrews 11:13*

Sojourners – a brief stay (now)

Pilgrims – a holy journey (eternity)

-Guilt-free living *Galatians 5:19-21*

3) Live to Glorify the King through v 12

-Honorable conduct evident in good works *Matthew 5:16*

What are some of the good works that should come naturally to Christians?
(Matt 6)

-time helping others

-prayer for others

-sacrificing for others

-storing up treasure for others

-freedom from anxiety and godless pressure

The motivation is not to be seen and rewarded by men.

The motivation is receiving a high five from God!

READ = Romans 8:12-17

WE ARE CHILDREN OF THE KING!!!

Let's start acting like it.

Eternal Life**God Loves You!**

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Now let's examine that sentence

1) For God so loved the world...

God created this world

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

God created You

For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb.

Psalms 139:13

2) that He gave His one and only Son...

God gave Jesus for our**Sacrifice**

This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4:10

3) that whoever believes in Him Jesus proved that He was God in flesh

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

John 20:30 & 31

4) shall not perish

Hell is a place for those who reject God

Fear Him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell.

Luke 12:5

5) but have eternal life.

God wants a relationship with You

I (Jesus) have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10

Christians have confidence that they are part of:**3. The Sealed vv. 13-14**

There are two steps to the mystery of the Christian walk.

In order to accept the will of the Father, and live in His inheritance, one must take two steps:

1) **Listen** to the message of Truth

The message of truth is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Answering the question...how can I have eternal life?

(see left margin)

*CHRISTIAN = if the lost are to listen, are you speaking up?

2) **Believe** the message of Truth

What is God's plan for eternal life?

-Admit to God that You are a sinner

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:8 & 9

-Confess that Jesus is God's Son

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

- Believe that God raised Jesus from the dead so you can have eternal life

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9

***When did you **listen and believe** in the message of truth?

The Christian is sealed with the Holy Spirit. God's own spirit comes to indwell the believer and secures and preserves his eternal salvation. *John MacArthur.*

God places His seal on us, binding us to His ownership and authorship.

What does this mean for the Christian?

The grace of God was given to each one a different measure according to His gift.

The gift is the special power granted that enables the Christian to properly serve others and glorify God so that some will be saved. This is the Christian walk.

(Ephesians 4:7-16)

The mystery that has been revealed through Jesus Christ is the fact that since the Cross, people can have a real, spirit-filled life with God.

*What evidence do you have that the spirit of God is alive and working in your life?

-love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23)

Conclusion:

The mystery that Christ came to seal us with the Holy Spirit of promise is amazing. This promise allows us to live and breath in freedom knowing that, temporarily on earth, we can live for Him and love others by His power, and eternally, we will be with Him in Heaven.

This fact of the Gospel is the launching point for the letter to the Ephesians church.

The next five weeks will reveal five mysteries Paul writes about in attempting to walk in the spirit-filled life. Then he transitions the text to unpacking those mysteries and gives practical application to each mystery.

The letter must be understood by the recipients in the context of the first 14 verses. This is for Christians, who are redeemed and adopted to live their life in freedom knowing that God is their Father purposing for His children to reach the world through walking in obedience to His will.

Christian, you are in the family of God!!!

Matthew 12:46-50

⁴⁶While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. ⁴⁷Someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You." ⁴⁸But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" ⁴⁹And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! ⁵⁰**For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.**"

***Have you done His will?

1 James Strong. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 629.

2 William Martin. *Layman's Bible*. (Nashville: Southwestern Company, 1968), 294-295.

Background Passage:

Ephesians 1

Lesson Passage:

Ephesians 1:15-22

Focal Verses:

Ephesians 1:18-19a

¹⁸*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.*

Biblical Truth:

When we seek God for an enlightened heart, He grants us an illumined path which reveals His fullness of life lived in His power.

Lesson Outline:

An Enlightened Heart shows the Christian how to:

1. Live in God's Will
2. Live in God's Riches
3. Live in God's Power

His Calling Revealed

March 14

In the second half Ephesians 1, Paul is asking the Lord for three specific revelations for the people in the fellowship of the church in order act wisely in their everyday walk with Christ.

He used the terms having "An Enlightened Heart" showing that in order for Christians to experience God's fullness for their lives, must walk in His ways with an open heart to receive His light for the path to tread.

The term in the Greek is *photizo* meaning to give light to, to shine, to brighten up. (root: *phos* > *phosphorus* = the morning star, day star)

ILLUSTRATE:

Walking in the dark and the light comes on. You only look silly for a second while you gain your bearings, put your hands down, and see the goal.

or

Making decisions in the dark can lead to some regrettable consequences. Back in the days before electricity, a tightfisted old farmer was taking his hired man to task for carrying a lighted lantern when he went to call on his best girl. "Why," he exclaimed, "when I went a-courtin' I never carried one of them things. I always went in the dark." "Yes," the hired man said wryly, "and look what you got!"

bible.org/illustration

Many times Christians are stumbling along outside of the spirit of wisdom and knowledge, striving for the prize, only to find that on their own the prize is unattainable due to the fact that their vision is dark. At this point, one has a decision to make: Either keep stumbling, or turn to the Lord through His Scripture and His Family to have God turn on the light in the heart in order to see clearly the path to trod.

The first step of having this enlightened heart is to walk in the spirit of wisdom and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

See:

-Exodus 31:1-11 and 35:30-36:1 = the artisans

-2 Chronicles 1:8-13 = Solomon

Three facts about walking in wisdom and knowledge:

1-God always prescribes work within the scope of His plan. He never tasks Christians to do something outside of His revealed plan for the church and eternity.

2-God always confirms in other Christians the skill/gift He has bestowed on an individual who has been tasked to accomplish His will. Confirmation comes through a host of godly counsel.

3-God grants wisdom and knowledge to His children when they seek it.

As the Christian seeks God to reveal His path through Scripture, prayer, and godly counsel, he is ready for three powerful keys to living in the path God intends for them to walk.

READ Ephesians 1:15-23

APPLICATION:

God's will is for His children to live in the hope of His calling. This is when true peace occurs for the Christian.

ILLUSTRATION:

*God's Eternal Will
Matthew 11:25-30
 ...²⁸"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest...."

*God's Daily Will
Philippians 2:12-18
 ...¹³for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure....¹⁷But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all...

DISCUSSION:

Are you following the will of God in your life?

1. Are you a Christian?
2. Are you using the skill/aptitude He gave you in order to serve others? (this is not just at church, this is all the time, even your job)

OR

are you chasing a personal dream thinking God is looking on at the peripheral?

Know God wants **all** of YOU!

An enlightened heart shows the Christian how to:

1. Live in God's Will v. 18a

(God's will is living in the hope of His calling for His children)

*God's eternal will = so that all people will come to know Him as personal Savior.
*-1 Timothy 2:4 = ...Who (God) desires **all** men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

*-John 3:16 = For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes** in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

*-John 3:17 = For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that **the world might be saved through Him.***

*-Matthew 18:14 = So it is **not** the will of your Father who is in heaven that **one** of these little ones **perish.***

*God's daily will = so that Christians would seek Him and see that God has purposed a special plan for all of His children since the foundation of Creation.

-Psalm 139:13-16 = ¹³For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; ¹⁶Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.

God knows you and has known you since the foundation of Creation. His will is for you to live out your life in the strengths that He grants so that you are at perfect peace and contentment with the Father.

Q = Since a person is a new creation when they are saved, do their personality strengths change or vary upon salvation? (2 Cor. 5:17)

Answer =

Through creation, birth, life, and salvation, God desires to preserve the fundamentals of nature in non-living and living beings, not change the beings themselves. In *A Theology for the Church*, Dr. Aiken states, "God and his creatures work together to accomplish God's sovereign purposes in his world. Already in the creation account in Genesis, one observes divine agency working together with creation to accomplish the Lord's work (Gen. 1:11-12)."

There is a supernatural blessing of God placed on all individuals, and that nature can only be seen in full through the sanctified living of a Christian. The strengths an individual is born with do not change in foundation, they only change in function. Strengths move from the flesh state to the spirit merging with the gifts of the spirit to do the work of God on this globe. The new creation of the believer is in context with the epistles of Paul as the phrase being "in Christ" always means "in union with Christ." Christians do not lose their natural born strengths, Jesus Christ partners with them and does a new work with what He has already placed in the person at conception. The Gospel of Mark makes very clear that God partners with the spirit-filled believer to do His work and that is Kingdom work.

Be content with how God designed you and use it for His glory!

ILLUSTRATE:

Heavens Grocery Store
I was walking down life's
pathway Not so very long ago
When I looked up and saw a
sign, Heaven's Grocery Store.
I got a little closer And the
door swung open wide.
The next thing I knew I was
standing there inside.
I saw a host of angels.
They were standing
everywhere. One handed me a
basket and said,
"My child, now shop with
care."
Everything a Christian needed
Was in that Grocery Store,
And what you couldn't carry
out You could come back next
day for more.
Well, first I got some patience,
Love is in the same row.
Further down was
understanding. You need
those everywhere you go.
I got a box or two of wisdom
And a bar or two of faith.
You couldn't miss the Holy
Ghost He was all over the
place.
I didn't forget salvation
For salvation, that was free.
I wanted to get enough of that
To save both you and me.
There was meekness,
longsuffering and gentleness
I saw these at a glance.
I knew I'd better get some I
would never have a better
chance.
I stopped to get some courage
To help me run life's race.
Then my basket was getting
full And I remembered I
needed grace.
Then I started for the counter
To pay my grocery bill
I thought I had most
everything to do the Father's
will.
And I saw prayer,
I just had to put that in.
I knew when I stepped outside
the door,
I'd run right into sin.

The riches of God is free
for those who call Him
Father.

His Calling Revealed

March 14

An enlightened heart shows the Christian how to:

2. Live in God's Riches v. 18b

Let's answer the question:

What are the riches of His glory for us?

Before Heaven...John 15:26 - 16:15

26. When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me 13-15. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. ¹⁴"He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. ¹⁵"All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.

The Helper, the Holy Spirit has come.

The Spirit of God reveals that all the things of God are now of the follower.

As the Christian walks on this earth, God reveals through His spirit all the blessings and joy the believer is bestowed. The key is having eyes and a heart to see the blessings God has right in front of us.

ILLUSTRATE = see poem in margin for an example of God's free gifts for those who shop at His store.

In Glory...Revelation 21

vv. 3-5..."Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, ⁴and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." ⁵And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new "...

Knowing the eternal worship place for the Christian is key to living in the fullness of His rich inheritance.

With so many positive riches...

Why would some look to this as a negative?

Possibly because of the last verse in Revelation chapter 21. Verse 27 states that, "*nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*"

The reality is that many have family and loved ones excluded from this eternal residence and grief or guilt blinds them to see the fact that they are part of God's family.

This is when we must proclaim verse 4 of this same chapter.

God is incomprehensible. Heaven is incomprehensible.

Great is the incomprehensibility of God!

Job 37:5 = ⁵ *God thunders marvelously with His voice; He does great things which we cannot comprehend.*

DISCUSSION:

Are you tapping into all of God's riches this side of Glory?

What is keeping you from the hope of His glory eternally?

Are you striving for the gifts to be evident in your life?

- prophecy
- service
- teaching
- exhorting
- preaching
- leading
- giving
- mercy
- healing
- wisdom
- tongues

All for the purpose of equipping the saints together for the work of His ministry

The Work of the Spirit

John 14:16-31

¹⁶"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. ¹⁸"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you....

¹⁸"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you....

²⁶"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

v. 16 = Helper/Comforter
v. 16 = Eternal Security
v. 17 = Personal Advocate
v. 26 = Teacher

His Calling Revealed

March 14

An enlightened heart shows the Christian how to:

3. Live in God's Power v. 19a

The gift of the Holy Spirit is given so that the Christian can walk with God through His spirit. Christ dwells in Christians through faith.

Ephesians 3:17-19 = ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— ¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

There are three key texts we find specific to spiritual gifts and their working in order to unify the church so that God will be glorified:

Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; Ephesians 4:7-16.

These are the gifts of the Spirit of God which can be bestowed on an individual whose heart is right with God and motives are pure.

*Why is it that God uses mission trips to stretch people so? Many times we see a person ministering in a way they never imagined possible when faced with total dependence on God's strength and not their own aptitude.

The Scripture is very clear that the gift of the Spirit is multifaceted and comes with specific gifts for specific times and purposes to all that seek Him.

Four points to acquiring Spiritual Gifts in the Christian's Life¹

1. Ask specifically for the gifts without doubting.
(1 Cor. 14:13 and James 1:5)
2. Have the right motives. Gifts are only for edification of others, not self.
(1 Cor. 14:1 & 12)
3. Seek opportunities to exercise the gifts God has granted.
(1 Cor. 14)
4. Continue to be satisfied using the gifts already granted, and actively use them.
(Luke 19:16-17, 20-23 and 1 Cor. 3)

The teaching on the Holy Spirit is a difficult one because it is a topic that man can't place his hands around. God moves and works differently in every situation.

DISCUSS:

Has God ever moved through you in a way that was unexplainable and the result were supernatural?

The Spirit works quietly yet oh so powerfully...

Author Jamie Buckingham once visited a dam on the Columbia River. He'd always thought that the water spilling over the top provided the power, not realizing that it was just froth, and that deep within, turbines and generators transformed the power of tons and tons of water to electricity—quietly, without notice; not like the flashy froth on top.

¹ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 1029.

Conclusion:

Focus on verse 19b-23.

These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

²⁰*which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*

²¹*far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*

²²*And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

The Message...

All this energy comes from Christ; God raised him from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule. And not just for the time being, but forever. He is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. At the center of all this, Christ rules the church. The church, you see, is not peripheral to the world; the world is peripheral to the church. The church is Christ's body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence.

When we ask the Father for wisdom and knowledge He grants us an enlightened heart to live for Him. This living is in His will, His riches, and His power.

Christian ...start living in His fullness!!!

Background Passage:

Ephesians 2

Lesson Passage:

Ephesians 2:1-13

Focal Verse:

Ephesians 2:8-10

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Biblical Truth:

God grace in this world has been at work for eternity and will continue to be lived out by the pure work of His children who acknowledge that grace is the only sustaining power for life.

Lesson Outline:

Three Stages of Every Christian's Life:

1. Lifeless Stage vv. 1-3
2. Life Stage vv. 4-9
3. Thrive Stage v. 10

His Grace Revealed

March 21

Background to Ephesians 2

Paul transitions the letter to the churches of Ephesus from introductory material in chapter one to opening the eyes of the Christian and the Church (Chapter 2) before diving into the heart and purpose of the letter (Chapter 3). Chapter two moves the reader from an understanding of individual Christianity to corporate community. Today we are going to study how God's grace finds individuals in their sin and rescues them in order to grow them into what God intends all humankind to be. The butterfly is a beautiful, interesting, and purposeful insect. It goes through a metamorphosis from an egg, moving through two more stages, the larva, and pupa, before becoming its intended end, a reproducing adult. The butterfly moves from a lifeless form to a purposeful meaning — pollinating flowers, fruits, and vegetables — before it lays more eggs, for the process to start again in the next generation of insects, completing its life-cycle.

The Christian life is a mystery to those who do not claim Jesus Christ as their Lord. Grace is that mystery element that comes to grasp when one realizes that they have not morphed into what the Creator desires. The human life is likened to that of the butterfly. God designed humankind to be so much more than space-fillers on planet earth. His design is that humankind come to realize the life-cycle process of their soul — From dead to life to fulfilled eternal life.

Grace has no point of conception. God's grace has been in place from the foundation of Creation and will continue to be at work for eternity.

1 Peter 5:10 = *¹⁰After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

Grace is one of the communicable (transmissible) attributes of God.

Define God's Grace = God's goodness towards those who deserve only punishment even to death.

Today we are going to see three stages of the life-cycle God intends for all mankind to experience, in order to develop into the being He desires.

Three Stages of Every Christian's Life:

1. Lifeless Stage vv. 1-3
2. Life Stage vv. 4-9
3. Thrive Stage v. 10

And Can It Be

And can it be that I should
gain An interest in the Savior's
blood?

Died He for me, who caused
His pain—For me, who Him
to death pursued?

Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst
die for me?

Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst
die for me?

He left His Father's throne
above So free, so infinite His
grace—Emptied Himself of all
but love, And bled for Adam's
helpless race:

'Tis mercy all, immense and
free, For O my God, it found
out me!

'Tis mercy all, immense and
free, For O my God, it found
out me!

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's
night; Thine eye diffused a
quickenig ray— I woke, the
dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart
was free, I rose, went forth,
and followed Thee.

My chains fell off, my heart
was free, I rose, went forth,
and followed Thee.

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness
divine, Bold I approach the
eternal throne, And claim the
crown, through Christ my
own.

Bold I approach the eternal
throne, And claim the crown,
through Christ my own.

Charles Wesley

His Grace Revealed

March 21

Stage 1 = Lifeless vv.1-3

READ = Ephesians 2:1-3

One can only be made alive when they admit they are dead in trespasses and sins against God.

The admission is the first step of the Christian's life; receiving the grace of God.

***If you are a Christian, you are no longer in the lifeless stage. That was a period in your life that has gone away. For a new work has begun in you.

ILLUSTRATION:

God's Grace at Work in the Sinner

Genesis 3:1-24 = The grace of God toward Adam and Eve

*God could have killed Adam and Eve for their disobedience; rather, He gave them a chance to expand the population of the world.

Genesis 4:1-17 = The grace of God toward Cain

*God could have struck down Cain upon killing His child; rather, He gave him a chance to continue his own family tree

Genesis 6:1-22 = The grace of God toward Noah

*God could have wiped out the entire world due to sin; rather, He rescued one man, a sinner by nature, to repopulate the race of mankind.

Exodus 2:11-3:10 = The grace of God toward Moses

*God could have written Moses off as a murderer; rather, He allowed him to lead His children out of bondage.

2 Samuel 11:1-27 & Psalm 51 = The grace of God toward David

*God could have stripped the throne from David; rather, He continued His plan through his relationship with Bathsheba, a stolen bride, to give a great king to the nation of Israel (Solomon) and continue the lineage toward the birth of Jesus Christ.

Acts 9:1-19 = The grace of God toward Paul

*God could have struck down Saul on the road to persecution; rather, He called Him to Himself for His work on the Road to Damascus.

DISCUSS:

How about you?

Can you remember a time when you walked without Jesus Christ, yet realized that in your walking, God's grace was still at work, even in the midst of Satan's rule on your life?

In order for a Christian to accept the grace of God, there must be an acknowledgement of their lifeless state.

This is the mystery of grace: that God would cover us with His grace until we ask to receive His grace through the Cross and Resurrection of Christ Jesus.

Charles Wesley penned a poem of great significance when it comes to understanding the grace of God for mankind, "And Can It Be."

This stage is broken down with many key Greek terms in italics. Use this outline of vv. 4-9 to grasp just how much grace is a free gift of God through Jesus Christ which allows us to have complete fellowship on His level, not the world's.

"I got off at the train depot one day as a tramp. For a year I had begged on the streets. Badly in need of food, I touched a man on the shoulder and said, "Mister, please give me a dime." As soon as I saw his face, I recognized my aging father. "Don't you know me?" I asked. Throwing his arms around me, he cried, "Oh, my son, I have found you at last! All I have is yours!" Think of it -- I was a tramp who begged for 10 cents from a man I didn't know was my father, when for 18 years he had been looking for me to give me all he possessed!"

Many Christians wander through the world, not knowing what they have "in Christ." They think they are penniless but really have vast spiritual wealth promised to them by their Father.

Grady Scott

Stage 2 = Life vv. 4-9

READ = Ephesians 2:4-9

A paraphrase of Paul's text...

But God made us alive together with Christ by grace through faith.

A breakdown of the text...

But God

Being rich in mercy = *elos* the free gift for the forgiveness of sins and the comfort of the Father to lessen the guilt and shame related to a sinful state.
BE SET FREE BY CHRIST

Because of His great love which He loved us = *agape* the attitude of the love of God toward His own Son.
BE LOVED BY CHRIST

Even when we were dead in our transgressions = *paraptoma* to fall away
BE CONVICTED BY CHRIST

Made us alive together with Christ = *suzoopoieo* made to be able to respond immediately to spiritual stimuli, this is God's doing through His grace.
BE SAVED BY CHRIST

And raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus = *epouranios* pertaining to the Heavenly state of God
BE INHERITED BY CHRIST

So that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. = *endeiknumi* God's ability to prove His power in an individual through love
BE EMPOWERED BY CHRIST

For by grace you have been saved through faith = *pistis* the conviction of the truth
BE SAVED BY CHRIST THROUGH YOUR OWN CONVICTION

And that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God = *doron* to give freely
BE EXCITED BY CHRIST THROUGH HIS FREE GIFT

Not as a result of works, so that no one may boast = *ergon* to toil
BE EXCUSED BY CHRIST THROUGH HIS WORK, NOT YOURS

DISCUSS:

Are you still thinking about things of the world and how your worries of today are actually gone tomorrow? Take hold of God's promise of inheritance, affection, and fellowship as we enter His heavenly places each moment of every day.

God Gives Us ABUNDANT Life!!!

How should our grace be displayed?

Matthew 6:1-4

¹"Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

²"So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

³**But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,**

⁴so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

Right Works...Acts 11

Encouragement...

²³Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord.

Evangelism...

²⁴for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord.

Equipping...

²⁶and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

His Grace Revealed

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Stage 3 = Thrive v. 10

READ = Ephesians 2:10

Grace is one of the communicable (transmissible) attributes of God. God intends for us to acquire His grace for living and share His grace with others. (Ephesians Chapters 3 & 4)

For we are His workmanship = WOW! We are designed and made individually by God's own hands

WHY?

For good works = God prepared our path to walk for good works to glorify Him

HOW?

Walk in them = Christians are designed and encouraged to live out the grace of God in their life through works.

Preaching the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus exclaims (recorded in Matthew 6:1-4), "when doing works, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." Jesus expects us to give. Grace is granted to the Christian in order to give.

We find great examples of works and not so great examples of works in Scripture:
-Wrong Works = Matthew 23:13-36 — The works of the Pharisees so that men and women would praise them.

-Right Works = Acts 11:19-30 — Barnabas witnessed God's grace at Antioch

Grace yields action! We can see the grace of God in the lives of the Christians at Antioch.

APPLICATION:

Three specific actions were displayed through God's grace:

1 = Encouragement v. 23

2 = Evangelism v. 24

3 = Equipping v. 26

Christians can thrive when they begin to live in the grace of God, His communicable power that helps one see people the way God sees people; loving, savable learners.

DISCUSSION:

Are you actively encouraging someone today?

Are you actively bringing people closer to the Lord today?

Are you actively teaching the Scriptures to someone today?

If not, take confidence in knowing that the power of God's grace lives in you, and He will give you the tools necessary for living in such a way that you thrive.

Conclusion:

When you read the last three verses of the text, it can easily be broken down to say this...

You were separate from Christ, but now you have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

The grace of God is only evidenced by the blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross.

Yes we were walking about in the flesh with uncircumcised hearts.

Yes we were not of God's clan

Yes we did not have His covenant relationship

Yes we did not have hope because there was no eternal life

Yes we were wandering in the wilderness a far distance from God's throne

BUT NOW...

We are saved through the faith by the grace of Jesus Christ on the Cross.

Take a hold of His life-cycle for your life.

Move beyond life and begin to thrive, changing this world one person at a time.

Background Passage:

Ephesians 2

Lesson Passage:

Ephesians 2:14-22

Focal Verses:

Ephesians 17&18

¹⁷*And he came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; ¹⁸for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.*

Biblical Truth:

Peace is established through the Gospel of Jesus Christ for and through the believer.

Lesson Outline:

The Mystery of Peace is understood through the:

1. Formation of Peace
2. Function of Peace
3. Family of Peace

His Peace Revealed

March 28

Peace = *eirene* the harmonized relationship between God and man, accomplished through the Gospel.

The Gospel is that God came to this earth as a man named Jesus Christ. Lived a perfect life, fulfilling prophecy, died on a cross for the sins of humankind, raised from death on the third day a new creation, ascended to Heaven, and will one day come to take His children home to Heaven for eternity.

Peace is accomplished through this Gospel.

The angel in Luke 2:14 proclaimed:

Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.

He is pleased with those who answer His will of accepting the Gospel personally for salvation.

Matthew Henry's commentary on the passage:

Jesus Christ made peace by the sacrifice of himself; in every sense Christ was their Peace, the author, centre, and substance of their being at peace with God, and of their union with the Jewish believers in one church. Through the person, sacrifice, and mediation of Christ, sinners are allowed to draw near to God as a Father, and are brought with acceptance into his presence, with their worship and services, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, as one with the Father and the Son. Christ purchased leave for us to come to God; and the Spirit gives a heart to come, and strength to come, and then grace to serve God acceptably.

Peace is not a feeling.

Peace is not something you can work for.

Peace is a fruit of God's spirit granted to the Christian when he/she accepts Jesus as Lord. This peace provides the way for salvation for all humankind as well as the empowerment for Christians to share their faith with all humankind.

Today, we find that peace is the essential element that allows the lost to be found. This is a mystery of the Gospel message.

In order to grasp this mystery, Paul helps the church understand three areas of peace essential for the work of Christ in the church.

***READ Ephesians 2:14-22.**

What is it that unites us?

Primarily, it is the saving work of Christ that unites us. Secondly, it is the essential doctrines that define orthodoxy. We have, as a common heritage, the blood of Christ that has been shed for the forgiveness of our sins. True Christians serve the true and living God, and we know Jesus in a personal and intimate way (1 Cor. 1:9). We have been redeemed by God himself. Furthermore, we have the body of Scriptures which tell us the essentials of the faith and deviating from these essentials means to be outside the camp of Christ. It is the essential doctrines that we must know and unite in.

Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry

DISCUSSION:

Are we being held captive to the enmity of tradition and culture?

Are we still trying to live under the Law by works, not reaching and teaching so that the lost will see the Light?

Peace is already at work in the world. It is the Christian's job to see the world with the eyes of Jesus, with the Gospel of Peace.

The Mystery of Peace is understood through the:

1) Formation of Peace vv. 14-16

Formation refers to the process of something being created or developed.

Paul explains that there is only one reason peace exists. The equation that helps us see the formation of peace is as follows:

$$\text{PEACE} = \text{Jesus Christ on the Cross} + \text{the New Covenant (Jer 31:31-34)}$$

Jesus Christ merged the Jews and Gentiles through the Cross, abolishing the deeds of the Law.

Paul uses the actual visual description of a dividing wall which separated Jews from Gentiles in the Temple. This wall was a social, religious, and spiritual separation.

The fifteen hundreds were a time of religious war. The battles were not about right or wrong more than they were about tradition and politics.

Today, the religious wars are everywhere. Peace is removed from this earth due to the undercurrent of the diversities of faith.

Christians know the truth and the peace that comes through it as it sets all humankind free. The truth of Jesus Christ being the God of salvation and peace is the fact that many throughout history have quarreled over.

The peace we discuss today however is not about the peace that should be between Christians and the world; rather, the peace that does exist between Christ and the world as well as Christian to Christian.

*Christ and the world....Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations!

ILLUSTRATE = Peter and Cornelius, Acts 10:9-16, 28

²⁸And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean.

*Christian to Christian = Paul to the churches, 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

¹⁰Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. ¹¹For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. ¹²Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."...

We must understand that denominations will not matter in Heaven. The Kingdom of God is made up of all types of people from every race, culture, class, and nation. The enmity that exists still has been defeated through the Cross of Christ. The Gospel of Peace is for all humankind.

Peace is established only through the Cross of Jesus Christ.

His Peace Revealed

Those who are far away:

Matthew 28:18-20
 The Great Commission
¹⁸And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
¹⁹"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
²⁰teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Those who are near:

Matthew 13:53-58
⁵³When Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there. ⁵⁴He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers? ⁵⁵"Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶"And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" ⁵⁷And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." ⁵⁸And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

The Mystery of Peace is understood through the:

2) Function of Peace vv. 17-18

The function, or role, of peace is so that we are able to preach (bring) the Good News to all humankind in one spirit, the power of God living through us.

To whom does Jesus want us to preach peace?

-Those who are far away = any people group, anywhere
 Jesus commands us to preach the Good News to all types of people.
 *Matthew 28:18-20

-Those who are near = those who are relatives and in the same culture even when it is tough
 *Matthew 13:53-58

Peace is the key element that empowers Christians to be able to share the Good News. This was a supernatural battle that took place on the Cross. The veil in the Temple was ripped, the altar split, and peace was formed. This peace is a fruit of the Holy Spirit working through the Christian (Gal 5:22) so that he or she can walk in it and shine for Christ.

ILLUSTRATE = It is a lot easier to attract flies with honey than with vinegar. When Christians walk in peace with God and the world, they are more likely to possess something a lost person might want. Peace is that overflow of the spirit that oozes from the Christian living out God's daily plan.

DISCUSSION:

When aggravated at the restaurant that gave the wrong order, ask yourself, "how do I respond with the fragrance of peace and make this order right so that the server will want the same spirit I have?"

Is there someone you may need to apologize to who will not hear the Gospel because of the lack of peace you shared at some point in your relationship?

Are there family members who you avoid because of the anticipation of their scoffing at the message of peace? Jesus was omniscient and knew the reaction He would receive, yet still preached the message of peace with His family.

Pray and ask the Father to give you a **spirit of peace** that reconciles broken relationships so that peace can be the agent of knocking on the heart of the lost.

His Peace Revealed

The Kingdom is made up of Christians who are being closely knit together. Sometimes with this knitting comes disagreements, uncomfortable situations, cultural differences, etc. which lead to broken relationships; the absence of peace. Jesus discusses how we should be a people of peace in Matthew 18:15-35.

The German philosopher Schopenhauer compared the human race to a bunch of porcupines huddling together on a cold winter's night. He said, 'The colder it gets outside, the more we huddle together for warmth; but the closer we get to one another, the more we hurt one another with our sharp quills. And in the lonely night of earth's winter eventually we begin to drift apart and wander out on our own and freeze to death in our loneliness.' Christ has given us an alternative, to forgive each other for the pokes we receive. That allows us to stay together and stay warm.

Wayne Brouwer, Holland, Michigan, quoted in Leadership, p. 68

DISCUSSION:

Is the Peace of God running through your veins or are you poking your brothers and sisters with your quills?

**The Mystery of Peace is understood through the:
3) Family of Peace vv. 19-22**

Have you ever been an alien?

In Ephesians 4:18 and Colossians 1:21 the Bible discusses three conditions of the unbeliever when it comes to alienation. Lost people are aliens...

- 1 From the Commonwealth of Israel
- 2 From the Life of God
- 3 From God Himself

Jesus Christ allows the alien to become citizens. We were all once aliens from the commonwealth, life, and God's presence. Now we can have peace that we have become citizens of His Kingdom through the Cross of Christ.

When laying out a block structure, the mason will place a corner first as the standard or rule for the rest of the structure. This corner is the cornerstone on which the building is built.

Paul and Peter use this illustration for what Jesus Christ is to the foundation of the church. Through this foundation of meshing the Jew and the Greek, the church can be free to accept all types of people for the Kingdom's sake. God's household of faith is now made up of all the people groups of the world.

When a person comes to know Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior they add to the structure that is being built. Each Christian is a rock being fit together on the Rock to form a family, a living temple. No longer are we bound to the rocks of this earth and a Temple built with human hands. Now, because of the peace of Christ on the Cross, Christians are fellow citizens with God's household.

1 Peter 2:6-7

⁶For this is contained in Scripture:

"BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

⁷This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone."

As we live our life through the peace of God, preaching the peace of God, and established by the peace of God, we must understand the giants upon which we are built. These are not the giants of humanism in the 12th Century recorded by John of Salisbury quoting Barnard of Chartres (*we are like dwarf's on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they*). These are the giants of the Kingdom from the beginning of creation; Jesus being the Chief, the apostles and prophets on His shoulders, and you, seeing further and deeper than ever because of the great legacy that our family — the Kingdom family — provides.

This understanding of family heritage provided by the formation and function of peace encourages participation in the family.

*How are you participating in the Kingdom family today?

George Shultz, when Secretary of State during the Reagan administration, kept a large globe in his office. When newly appointed ambassadors had an interview with him and when ambassadors returning from their posts for their first visit with him were leaving his office, Shultz would test them. He would say, "You have to go over the globe and prove to me that you can identify your country." They would go over, spin the globe, and put their finger on the country to which they were sent—unerringly.

When Shultz's old friend and former Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield was appointed ambassador to Japan, even he was put to the test. This time, however, Ambassador Mansfield spun the globe and put his hand on the United States. He said: "That's my country."

On June 27, 1993, Shultz related this to Brian Lamb on C-Span's "Booknotes." Said the secretary: "I've told that story, subsequently, to all the ambassadors going out. 'Never forget you're over there in that country, but **your** country is the United States. You're there to represent **us**. Take care of our interests and never forget it, and you're representing the best country in the world.' "

As Christians, we are to remember that we are *in* the world ... but not *of* the world. Our **citizenship** is elsewhere ... and so our priorities must be derived from elsewhere as well.

Source: Dr. Wallace Alcorn. From the files of *Leadership*

The Mystery of Peace is understood through the:

1. Formation of Peace - the formula is that Jesus Christ died on the Cross, establishing the New Covenant with His children. This is peace.
2. Function of Peace - the function of peace is that it provides the way to preach the Good News to the world. Christians are able to fulfill the Great Commission with the power of peace that God grants through Jesus Christ.
3. Family of Peace - the family of peace is far reaching outside of one generation or cultural group. Yet the foundation of the family is linked back to John 1:1-5,

¹*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* ²*He was in the beginning with God.* ³*All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.* ⁴*In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.* ⁵*The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*

Jesus is the cornerstone, has been and forever will be. He is the peace on earth good will toward men.