

Chapter Two

When a chapter begins with “*and*,” it is not a true break, but an arbitrary one. There is no good reason to break the thought to which “*and*” ties it back. But what is that thought? A brief outline of the previous thoughts seems to indicate that these are the concluding thought of how we are to have the eyes of our hearts enlightened to know “*the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe?*” If that be the case then this is the final consideration of how to see the exceeding greatness of His mighty power. By remembering we were dead in our trespasses and God has now made us alive.

what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe,
according to the working of His mighty power

- 1 which He worked in Christ*
- 2 when He raised Him from the dead*
 - a seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*
 - b far above all principality and power and might and dominion,*
 - c and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.*
- 3 And He put all things under His feet,*
- 4 Gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body,*
 - a the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*
- 5 And you who were dead in your trespasses*
 - a In which you once walked*
 - i according to the prince of the power of the air,*
 - ii the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,*
 - iii among whom also we all once conducted ourselves*
 - iv in the lusts of our flesh,*
 - v fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,*
 - b were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*
- 6. But God, who is rich in mercy,*
 - a because of His great love with which He loved us,*
 - b even when we were dead in trespasses,*
- 7. made us alive together with Christ*

Hence, the second chapter can be looked upon as a continuation of both 1:3-14 and 1:15-23. It adds to the list of the spiritual blessings that are found in Christ. The term “*in Christ*” is used four times in the second chapter (2:6,7,10,13). By contrasting what these Ephesians had before they became Christians with what they now have, a vivid black on white picture is created and the honor of the blessings God has conferred upon all Christians is emphasized.

The second chapter opens with all the bleak, dismal, horrible facts of human existence. The sorrow, the heartache, the misery and horror of such an existence is clearly brought into perspective against the background of God saving grace, mercy and power.

1 And you *He made alive, who were dead*

As Paul moves to his next point, there are two sections. This is an additional spiritual blessing in Christ, but before it is revealed the hopeless state of all before they obey the gospel is fully described. It is the classic white on black. The first section giving the depths of blackness of our hopeless despair when we learn the truth. It is the same process every time the gospel is preached. The good news (gospel) is that God has resolved the problem, but we also learn that bad news that we have failed, died and eternal loss is waiting for us. Here the Holy Spirit begins with this. Although it is scriptural to move God’s part from verse five to here, it is not what the Holy Spirit did and there is no reason to change it. Later translations left it out to retain the actual wording.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, NASB
And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ESV

While there is nothing unscriptural about moving the verb and using it twice, it is not what the Holy Spirit said, and there really is no good reason to add it. Without that verb the first four verses of this chapter paint the bleak picture of those who are outside of Christ and not having received the power of God that brings salvation. If we leave it out, it still makes perfect sense. It simply lists one on top of each other the terrible state of those who have not yet obeyed the gospel, and their own state before they did.

1 And **YOU** who were dead in trespasses and sins,
2 in which you once walked
according to the course of this world,
according to the prince of the power of the air,
the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience

3 among whom also **WE** all once conducted ourselves
in the lusts of our flesh,
fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,
were by nature children of wrath, just as the others

The “you” is either the church at Ephesus or the Gentiles. Yet verse three makes it clear that all Christians, including the Gentiles, the Jews and all local churches are all under the same dismal circumstances.

Before God acted and made the way of escape, this was the terrible circumstances we all brought upon ourselves. Everyone is “*dead in trespasses and sins.*” The term “*dead*” means exactly the same thing in Greek as it does in English.

*For as **the body without the spirit is dead**, so faith without works is dead also. Jas. 2:26*

Yet that is not the meaning here. Whatever this death is, it is not physical death. If it was there would be no need for the gospel, because if physical death was the penalty for trespasses and sins, no one could be saved.

“*nekros... dead*, i.e. 1. prop. a. **one that has breathed his last, lifeless**:... hyperbolically and proleptically i.q. as if already dead, sure to die, destined inevitably to die... b. *deceased, departed, one whose soul is in Hades*... c. *destitute of life, without life, inanimate*... 2. trop. a. [spiritually dead i.e.] *destitute of a life that recognizes and is devoted to God, because given up to trespasses and sins; inactive as respects doing right*... b. *univ. destitute of force or power, inactive, inoperative*...” (Thayer, p. 424; 3498)

Even in the garden of Eden, God spoke of a death that would occur on the day they ate the fruit and another death when they died physically.

*17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.** ...5 So **all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.** Gen 2:17; 5:5*

The Holy Spirit actually spoke of four different deaths in the New Testament Scriptures. In all of them the basic root meaning is separation. When the spirit leaves the body, death has occurred.

1. Separation from God when we commit our first sin.

*but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*** Gen. 2:17

*Therefore, just as through **one man sin entered the world, and death through sin**, and thus **death spread to all men, because all sinned*** — Rom. 5:12

*I was alive once without the law, but **when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.*** 10 *And the commandment, which was to bring life, **I found to bring death.*** Rom. 7:9-10

*And you, **being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh**, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,* Col 2:13-14

2. Separation from sin at baptism

*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus **were baptized into His death?** 4 Therefore **we were buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if **we have been united together in the likeness of His death**, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that **our old man was crucified with Him**, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 **Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,** Rom 6:5-9*

This is a faithful saying: **For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him.** 2Tim. 2:11

3. Separation of the soul from the body at physical death.

"So it was that **the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.** 23 "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. (Lk. 16:22-23).

4. Separation from God(eternally), the second death.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.**" Rev 2:11

The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. **This is the second death.** And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:13).

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars **shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.**" Rev. 21:8

in trespasses and sins,

The words the Holy Spirit chose to describe sin look at it from many different perspective.

hamartia [266], *hamartéma* [265], *parakoé* [3876], *anomia* [458], *paranomia* [3892], *parabasis* [3847], *paraptōma* [3900], *agnoēma* [51], *hétthma* [2275]. ... **Sin... may be regarded under an infinite number of aspects**, and in all languages has been so regarded; and as the diagnosis of it belongs most of all to the Scriptures, nowhere else are we likely to find it contemplated on so many sides, set forth under such various images. It may be regarded as **the missing of a mark or aim**; it is then *hamartia* or *hamartéma*: **the overpassing or transgressing of a line**; it is then *parabasis*: **the disobedience to a voice**; in which case it is *parakoé*: **the falling where one should have stood upright**; this will be *paraptōma*: **ignorance of what one ought to have known**; this will be *agnoēma*: **diminishing of that which should have been rendered in full measure**, which is *hétthma*: **non-observance of a law**, which is *anomia* or *paranomia*: **a discord in the harmonies of God's universe**, when it is *plémmeleia*: and in other ways almost out of number...." Trench's Synonyms NT:3900)

the missing of a mark or aim;

the overpassing or transgressing of a line;

the disobedience to a voice;

the falling where one should have stood upright;

ignorance of what one ought to have known;

diminishing of what should have been rendered in full measure

non-observance of a law,

discord in the harmonies of God's universe,

Trespass is "*the falling where one should have stood upright.*" It is also "*falling by the wayside,*" "*transgressing the will of God* as a "*fault, lapse, and error.* Just as when one falls from a high cliff, or steps out into moving traffic they are killed, so also in the spiritual realm, falling and transgressing God's commands is the same it does in the material realm.

paráptōma, neuter noun from *parapíptō* (3895), **to fall by the wayside. Fault, lapse, error, mistake, wrongdoing.** ... *paraptōma*, what a person has done in **transgressing the will and law of God by some false step or failure - 'transgression, sin.'** ... 'who was handed over because of our transgressions' Rom 4:25; 'if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive your transgressions' Matt 6:15. ..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3900)

These two terms are joined to the sin, trespass and death in the garden of Eden. The Holy Spirit revealed that Adam sinned (9 times), transgressed (7 times) and refused to hear ending in disobedience (1 time). This resulted in the death of Adam and Eve and also of all men (6 times). When Jesus died on the cross, all of this was atoned, redeemed and paid for and the free gift was available to all.

12 Therefore, just as through one man **① SIN** entered the world, and **③ DEATH** through **① SIN**, and thus **③ DEATH** spread to all men, because all **① SINNED** — 13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but **① SIN** is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless **③ DEATH** reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not **① SINNED** according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the **② OFFENSE**. For if by the one man's **② OFFENSE** many **③ DIED**, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who **① SINNED**. For the judgment which came from one **② OFFENSE** resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many **② OFFENSES** resulted in justification. 17 For if by the one man's **② OFFENSE** **③ DEATH** reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore, as through one man's **② OFFENSE** judgment came to all men,

resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience (**PARAKOÉ - REFUSING TO HEAR**) many were made **1 SINNERS**, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. 20 Moreover the law entered that the **2 OFFENSE** might abound. But where **1 SIN** abounded, grace abounded much more, 21 so that as **1 SIN** reigned in **2 DEATH**, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom 5:12-21

Since the passage above teaches exactly the same thing here, it is certain this is not a physical death but a spiritual one. Yet, the fact that it is spiritual doesn't make it any less true. There is a spiritual death that Adam and Even endured after they ate.

Everyone was alive apart from the law before they reached the age where they knew right from wrong. At that time they are in an innocence similar to that of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit they died this death which Paul speaks of here. The death that led to their loss of fellowship with God and to their expulsion from the garden of Eden. This death is ever repeated by every member of the human race when they reach the age of knowing the difference between right and wrong and good and evil. The very moment that the soul gives in to the inner cravings of their fleshly desires they suffer the exact same fate.

The term "trespasses" is defined:

paraptoma... 1. prop. **a fall beside** or near something; but nowhere found in this sense. 2. trop. **a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness; a sin, misdeed...** (Thayer, p. 485; 3900)

paraptoma ... primarily "**a false step, a blunder**" (*para*, "aside," *pipto*, "to fall"), then "**a lapse from uprightness, a sin, a moral trespass, misdeed,**" is translated "fall" in Rom 11:11-12, of the sin and "downfall" of Israel in their refusal to acknowledge God's claims and His Christ; by reason of this the offer of salvation was made to Gentiles ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:3900)

Sin is the more general and much more used term. The word the Holy Spirit chose from the Greek language began with the idea of "*intellectual shortcoming*," and soon meant the one who is in "error" because he has "*no wisdom*." "*Aristotle also defines hamartia as a "missing of virtue, the desired goal, whether out of weakness, accident or defective knowledge" ... It is thus intellectual deficiency ...*" (Kittel, TDWNT NT:266)

In the NT, the term came to mean the missing of the mark and a failure to achieve a standard. Yet when brought into the Scriptures, since it brings immediate death, it is a terrible error and missing of the mark.

hamartia ... 1. **By far the most frequently used term for sin in the NT** (as in the LXX) is *hamartia*: there are **173 occurrences** ... 2. a) *hamartia* signifies primarily a failure to achieve a standard (whether culpable or unintentional) in the broadest sense, both as deed and as the nature of the deed. (Exegetical Dictionary NT:266)

hamartia... **a failing to hit the mark... a bad action, evil deed** ... In the N. T. always in an ethical sense, and 1. equiv. to ... *a sinning*, whether it occurs by omission or commission, in thought and feeling or in speech and action... 2. **that which is done wrong** committed or resultant *sin, an offence, a violation of the divine law in thought or in act*... 3. collectively, *the complex or aggregate of sins committed either by a single person or by many...* (Thayer, p. 31; 266)

Since all have sinned (*hamartano*) and the wages of sin (*hamartia*) is death, This is a terrible error that brings the gravest of consequences. This is what we had done to ourselves at the age of accountability, often before we were even aware of the error in judgement that led to miss the mark. This is what will make God's act of mercy in making us alive with Christ shine ever brighter.

2 in which you once walked

Bad enough if this had only happened once, but the reality is far worse. It was in the midst of these trespasses and sins that we walked. The term is used 95 times in the NT. In the gospels and Acts literally for walking from place to place, but also as a figuratively way of speaking about one's lifestyle. Where one chooses to walk perfectly describes the course of one's life.

peripateō ... is used (a) **physically**, in the Synoptic Gospels (except Mark 7:5); always in the Acts except in 21:21; never in the Pauline Epistles, nor in those of John; (b) **figuratively**, "**signifying the whole round of the activities of the individual life, whether of the unregenerate, Eph 4:17, or of the believer, 1 Cor 7:17; Col 2:6**. It is applied to the observance of religious ordinances, Acts 21:21; Heb 13:9, marg., as well as to moral conduct. The

Christian is to walk **in newness of life**, Rom 6:4, **after the spirit**, 8:4, **in honesty**, 13:13, **by faith**, 2 Cor 5:7, **in good works**, Eph 2:10, **in love**, 5:2, **in wisdom**, Col 4:5, **in truth**, 2 John 4, **after the commandments of the Lord**, v. 6. And, **negatively, not after the flesh**, Rom 8:4; **not after the manner of men**, 1 Cor 3:3; **not in craftiness**, 2 Cor 4:2; **not by sight**, 5:7; **not in the vanity of the mind**, Eph 4:17; **not disorderly**, 2 Thess 3:6." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4043)

Their lifestyle included these trespasses and sins as a part of this lifestyle. The Ephesians, along with the entire human race once conducted themselves and regulated their lives by a standard of trespasses and sins.

according to the course of this world,

This wasn't something they were fighting against or trying to remove themselves from. They were living in harmony with and in conformity to it. They fit right in because it was the standard and norm they lived by and up to.

katá; prep. governing the gen. and acc. with **the primary meaning of down. Down from, down upon, down in.** ... Metaphorically, as **expressing the relation in which one thing stands towards another**, thus also everywhere implying manner. Spoken of: (1) **Accordance, conformity, e.g., (a) Of a norm, rule, standard of comparison meaning according to, conformable to, after: "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matt 9:29); "do not do according to their works" (a.t. [Matt 23:3]); "according to the tradition of the elders" (Mark 7:5); "according to the law" (Luke 2:22,39); "according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56); ..."**(Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2596)

The course of this world is an interesting concept complicated by the fact that it sums up the creation from its beginning to end and the space in which it consists. What God created, He created in the beginning and it will continue until the end. What God created in this space of time is the *kosmos* where we live. The created universe is the *kosmos* and the time that moves from generation to generation bringing change yet continuity to it is the *aion*.

kosmos [2889], *aiōn* [165]. ... **the difference between *kosmos* ... the world contemplated under aspects of space, and *aiōn* the same contemplated under aspects of time;** ... *kosmos* ... has a history of much interest ... Suidas traces four successive significations through which it passed: ... **Originally signifying 'ornament,'** and obtaining this meaning once in the N. T. (1 Peter 3:3), where we render it 'adorning,' ... **from this it passed to that of order, or arrangement** ('*lucidus ordo*'), or beauty as springing out of these; ... **Pythagoras is recorded as the first who transferred *kosmos* to the sum total of the material universe** desiring thereby to express his sense of the beauty and order which are everywhere to be traced therein: ... Plato (*Tim.* 28 b), who yet employs it also in the larger and what we might call more ideal sense, as embracing and including within itself, and in the bonds of one communion and fellowship heaven and earth and gods and men ... **From this signification of *kosmos* as the material universe, which is frequent in Scripture (Matt 13:35; John 18:5; 21:25; Acts 17:4; Rom 1:20), followed that of *kosmos* as that external framework of things in which man lives and moves, which exists for him and of which he constitutes the moral centre** ... *aiōn* is more probably connected with ... to breathe. **Like *kosmos*, it has a primary and physical, and then, superinduced on this, a secondary and ethical, sense. In its primary, it signifies time, short or long, in its unbroken duration;** ... essentially **time as the condition under which all created things exist, and the measure of their existence; signifying time, it comes presently to signify all which exists in the world under conditions of time;** ... **the course and current of this world's affairs. But this course and current being full of sin, it is nothing wonderful** ... acquires presently, like *kosmos*, an unfavorable meaning. sinners walk *kata ton aiōnos tou kosmou toutou* (Eph 2:2), too weakly translated in our Version, as in those preceding, **"according to the course of this world."** **This last is a particularly instructive passage, for in it both words occur together; ... We speak of 'the times,' attaching to the word an ethical signification; or, still more to the point, 'the age,' 'the spirit or genius of the age,' ... All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world,** which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but which constitute a most real and effective power, being the moral, or immoral, atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale,—all this is included in the *aiōn*... (Trench's Synonyms NT:2889)

Hence the course (*aion*) is the time or period in which this world (*kosmos*) exists within. While the eternal age where God dwells will not tolerate such gross selfishness, unrighteousness and ungodliness, this age relishes and thoroughly enjoys it. God keeps it in check by things like the flood and the rise and fall of nations, but always it returns to it.

"*aion*... 1. age ... a human lifetime ... life itself... 2. an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity... **the aggregate of things contained in time**... 3. ... most of the New Testament writers distinguish... this age... the time before the appointed return ... of Christ... **the period of instability, weakness, impiety, wickedness, calamity, misery**,...

Hence the things of "this age" are mentioned in the N. T. with censure... **men controlled by the thoughts and pursuits of this present time...** the devil, who rules the thoughts and deeds of the men of this age..." (Thayer, p. 18; 165).

As generations come and go the things of this present age simply pass on from one to the next. Paul uses this term in much the same way in Galatians.

who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, Gal. 1:4

When Paul adds to the term "course" the term "of this world" he simply strengthens the thought of the third meaning in the definition above. "World" is defined:

"kosmos... 1. ...an apt and harmonious arrangement or constitution, order... 3. the world, i.e. the universe... 4. the circle of the earth, the earth... 5. the inhabitants of the world... particularly the inhabitants of the earth, men, the human race... 6. **the ungodly multitude; the whole mass of men alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ...** 7. **worldly affairs; the aggregate of things earthly; the whole circle of earthly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, etc., which, although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God and are obstacles to the cause of Christ...**" (Thayer p 356-357; 2889)

The world as described in this passage is the world John described.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1Jn. 2:15-17

And the tongue is a fire, a world kosmos of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; (genesis) and it is set on fire by hell. James 3:6-7

according to the prince of the power of the air,

Once again, *kata* is used to stress the conformity and harmony with which this world and age conforms itself to the desires and plans of Satan.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (Eph. 6:11-12).

*Now is the judgment of this world; **now the ruler of this world will be cast out.** Jn. 12:31*

*I will no longer talk much with you, for **the ruler of this world is coming**, and he has nothing in Me. Jn. 14:30 of judgment, **because the ruler of this world is judged.** Jn. 16:11*

*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds **the god of this age has blinded**, 2Cor. 4:3-4*

Satan, and the power that he wields is an often discussed theme in the New Testament. From the verse above, and the ones quoted below, it is clear that Satan can operate by himself or by means of the powerful army of evil spirits who are under his control.

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to **be tempted by the devil.** Mt. 4:1*

*"And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, **Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.** Mk. 4:15*

*And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, **Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.** Lk. 22:31*

*And supper being ended, **the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him,** Jn. 13:2*

*But Peter said, "Ananias, **why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?** Acts 5:3*

*"to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and **from the power of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' Acts 26:18*

***lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.** 2Cor. 2:11*

*Be sober, be vigilant; because **your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion**, seeking whom he may devour. 1Pet. 5:8*

***He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.** For this purpose the Son of God was*

manifested, that **He might destroy the works of the devil.** 1Jn. 3:8

You are of **your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do.** He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because **there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.** Jn. 8:44-45

It is sad yet fitting that the one responsible for all of this being in the world is here charged with it. The entire course of this world has been set by Satan. Yet only with the willing participation of the ungodly masses who prefer to make him their Father instead of God.

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Rev 20:10

The powers of the air has perplexed many. It has no an easy solution. Perhaps the following scripture will help shed some light on it.

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. 11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. 12 "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! **Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.**" (Rev. 12:9-11).

the spirit who now works

This may be a continuation of the previous thought and by a synonym for Satan, or it may be the attitude of rebellion and disposition of evil and wickedness which now fills this age. The definition of the term will allow either. Please review the definition and the comments on this term in its use in Eph 1:17.

Here from the context it appears to simply refer to the general attitude and disposition that characterizes the age and world in which they lived.

in the sons of disobedience,

The term "sons of disobedience" is a concept the Greeks and Hebrews were familiar and which we need to be educated upon. It is based on a statement found in Genesis.

12 the **herb that yields seed according to its kind, ... 21 every winged bird according to its kind ... 24 "Let the earth bring forth the living creatures according to its kind ... 25 God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind.** Gen 1:1-31

Everything produces according to its kind. Regardless of the parents, the children will be like them in every respect. John used it in this way as did Jesus.

Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, **"Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"** Lk. 3:7-8

Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Mt. 23:33

James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, **"Sons of Thunder";** Mk. 3:17

When we wish to say that someone is the worst example of whatever attribute or characteristic we simply put a few adjectives in front of it. He is "really" disobedient, or "truly" disobedient makes it a superlative in English. The worst we can come up with is something like: , "He is the "epitome" of disobedience. The Hebrews and the Greeks had a different means of saying the same thing. They would call them a "son of," "child of" or "offspring of" whatever characteristic they wanted to emphasize. When we read such terms as a "son of light", "offspring of vipers", "child of God", "son of disobedience" or "children of wrath" it conveys as strongly as their language could the true length to which that characteristic could be pushed.

"Disobedience perfectly describes those in the age, especially those who do not obey the gospel. They are unpersuadable. Obstinate, refusing and withholding belief regardless of the proofs.

apeitheo apeitheia... lit., "the condition of being unpersuadable" (a, negative, *peitho*, "to persuade"), denotes "obstinacy, obstinate rejection of the will of God"; hence, "disobedience"; ... "*peitho* and *pisteuo*, 'to trust,' are closely related etymologically; the difference in meaning is that the former implies the obedience that is produced by the latter, cf. Heb 3:18-19, where **the disobedience of the Israelites is said to be the evidence of their unbelief** Faith is of the heart, invisible to men; obedience is of the conduct and may be observed...." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:543; 544)

These then are the epitome of obstinate rebellion against the divine will of God. Truly it would take great power and be a wonderful blessing to move such people from this quality of character to that of a loving submissive servant.

He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. 11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 1Jn. 5:10-11

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." Acts 17:30-31

Even with all this they refuse to be persuaded.

3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves

The universal nature of this rebellion is brought out in the book of Romans. This was expected of the Gentiles who had been given up and left to walk in their own ways with none returning. But that the entire nation of Israel from the giving of the law to the coming of Christ is a powerful commentary on the power of sin and the powerlessness of the flesh.

*For we have previously **charged both Jews and Greeks** that they are **all under sin**. 10 As it is written: "**There is none righteous, no, not one**; 11 **There is none who understands**; **There is none who seeks after God**. 12 **They have all turned aside**; **They have together become unprofitable**; **There is none who does good, no, not one.**" ... 18 "**There is no fear of God before their eyes.**" Rom. 3:9-18*

This is the pool that all Christians must be drawn from. There is no one who can look back on their life before becoming a Christian with any sense of pride or entitlement. Israel had done no better than the Gentiles. Paul and all the righteous from Israel had nothing to boast about either. They may have been a little better prepared, but they needed the blood of Christ just as the Gentiles.

*"pas,... I. adjectivally, and 1. with anarthrous nouns; a. **any, every one** (sc. of the class denoted by the noun annexed to pas);... **all or any of the class** indicated... b. *any and every, of every kind*, ... 2. with nouns which have the article, **all the, the whole**,... **with a Plural, all (the totality of the persons of things designated by the noun)** ... *always, perpetually, ... in every condition, or in every matter, ... in everything, in every way, on every side, in every particular or relation,...*" (Thayer, p. 491-493; 3956).*

There just aren't any exceptions. Without the gospel of Jesus Christ and the power it contains (Rom 1:16) no one could be saved. The mode of conduct captured with the term that means manner of life or turning hither and thither. Where they walked, we walked. The mode of life they engaged in, we engaged in.

anastrophe to turn up, to move about. A turning about. In the NT, **mode of life, conduct, behavior, deportment** (Gal. 1:13; Eph. 4:22; 1Tim. 4:12; James 3:13; 1 Peter 2:7; 3:11); **life, as made up of actions** (Heb. 13:7; 1 Peter 1:15)...." (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:391)

It is important to remember that in the eyes of God, the Holy Spirit made it clear, even one such moment of leaving the right path forever leaves us off of that path.

*For whoever shall **keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all**. 11 For He who said, "**Do not commit adultery**," also said, "**Do not murder**." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. Jas. 2:10-12*

This is also true of the types of sins. For many the ones they commit do not seem as evil and wicked as the ones others are committing. For example one who only sins in his or her mind may not consider themselves as guilty as those who commit the act, but Jesus tore away that sophistry.

*"**What comes out of a man, that defiles a man**. 21 **For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man.**" Mk. 7:20-23*

in the lusts of our flesh,

The conduct of all was the boundary (*en - within the midst of a whole*) of the lusts of the flesh. Lust is a strong craving and desire. It can be used for good things, because all emotions are in the image and likeness of God, but some like this one must be carefully controlled. Most lusts, cravings and desires tend toward the evil misuse of the fleshly desires. Again, all fleshly desires can be lawful, but the forbidden always adds an enticement and a sense of excitement that lawful fulfillment doesn't bring.

epithumia, NT:1939) denotes “strong desire” of any kind, the various kinds being frequently specified by some adjective (see below). The word is used of a good desire in Luke 22:15; Phil 1:23, and 1 Thess 2:17 only. Everywhere else it has a bad sense. In Rom 6:12 the injunction against letting sin reign in our mortal body to obey the “lust” thereof, refers to those evil desires which are ready to express themselves in bodily activity. They are equally the “lusts” of the flesh, Rom 13:14; Gal 5:16,24; Eph 2:3; 2 Peter 2:18; 1 John 2:16, a phrase which describes the emotions of the soul, the natural tendency towards things evil. Such “lusts” are not necessarily base and immoral, they may be refined in character, but are evil if inconsistent with the will of God. (Vine's NT:1939)

All understanding of lust must be kept within the context of the flesh because it is within the fleshly body of man that cravings and desires originate within the body of flesh. When God created us, he gave our souls the ability to use the flesh to fulfill all of its desires and plans. Everything our spirit seeks to accomplish in this material world is done through the fleshly body. Depending on the goal, flesh is our ally or our enemy. It is used in many different ways in the Scripture, but when flesh is joined to lust, both become evil and corrupt.

“*sarx*,... 1. prop. *flesh* (the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both men and beasts... 2. i.q. *the body*, not designating it, however, as a skillful combination of related parts... but signifying the material or substance of the living body... a. ... life on earth, which is passed in the body (flesh)... b. used of natural or physical origin, generation, relationship... c. **the sensuous nature of man, ‘the animal nature with cravings that incite to sin’**: ...3. *a living creature* (because possessed of a body of flesh)... *human nature, the soul included*... 4. ***sarx*, when either expressly or tacitly opposed to *pneuma (tou theou)* has an ethical sense and denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God; accordingly it includes whatever in the soul is weak, low, debased, tending to ungodliness and vice...**” (Thayer, p. 569-571; 4561)

There is no right and wrong in the flesh. The flesh wants satisfaction and the more satisfaction, the greater the flesh desires, craves and lusts for it. The law created an intensified passion in the flesh. That is the basic concept of the flesh as it is used in the Scripture.

For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. Rom. 7:5

I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Rom. 7:21-24

Because the fleshly mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom. 8:7-8

If we look at all the Scriptures dealing with the “lusts of the flesh” we get a clearer picture of the terrible nature of what it means to be conducting ourselves in them. If that is all there is to life, and that is all there is to life to those who are in this world, it is bleak, corrupt and defiled.

Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. Rom. 13:13-14

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. Gal. 5:16-17

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal. 5:19-21

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 1Pet.

2:11

he **no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men**, but for the will of God. 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing **the will of the Gentiles** — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 1Pet. 4:2-4

For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, **they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness**, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. 19 While **they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.** 2Pet, 2:18-20

For all that is in the world — **the lust of the flesh**, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is **not of the Father but is of the world**. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1Jn. 2:16-17

fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,

"Fulfilling" is another way of looking at the things we create and produce.

"*poieo*... I. **to make** ... 1. ... a. with the names of the things made, **to produce, construct, form, fashion**, etc. ... **to create produce**: of God, as the **author** of all things... b. joined to nouns denoting a state or condition, it signifies **to be the author or, to cause** ... II **to do** ... i.e. to follow some method in expressing by deeds the feelings and thoughts of the mind... *poieo* signifies **to carry out, to execute**..." (Thayer, p. 524-527; NT:4160)

After the mind conceives it, the flesh makes and produces.

Woe to those who **devise iniquity, And work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, Because it is in the power of their hand.** Mic 2:1

Desire is a different concept than lust. This is a settled decision that is not always based on lusts and cravings, but in the deeper parts of our being what we will, plan and intend.

thelema -atos will (noun) ... **thelema occurs in the NT 62 times, ... thelema can represent both (objectively) what is willed and (subjectively) the act of willing.** ... In most NT occurrences of *thelema* God's will is spoken of. Twice it is used of the will of the exalted Christ (Acts 21:14; Eph 5:17), once of that of the devil (2 Tim 2:26), and **12 times of human will, most often in contrast to God's will.** (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2307)

Both the will and the lusts all reside in the mind. This is the place where we think, plan and make decisions. It is our intellect and place where all conscious thought occurs.

diánoia, fem. noun from *dianoóomai* ... **to agitate in mind, which is from *diá* (1223), denoting separation, and *noéō* (3539), to think over. Understanding, intellect, intellectual faculty, thought, mind.** (I) By metonymy the mind, thoughts, intellect, i.e., the thinking faculty..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1271)

These things are not always wrong in other passages but in the context here they are evil and wicked leading us to become children of wrath in the sight of God.

and were by nature

"By nature" has created a controversy in the minds of some. Those who see this as something fixed and unchangeable attribute to God our state of "*total depravity*." Although it is the nature of a horse to run and breathe air, it is the nature of a fish to swim and breath under water because God created them that way. This is only one way the term is used.

"*phusis*... a. *the nature of things, the force, laws, order, or nature*; as opp. to what is monstrous, abnormal, perverse... that which is contrary to nature's laws... b. **birth, physical origin**... , we so far as our origin is considered, i. e. by birth, are Jews, Gal 2:15 ... c. **a mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature**... , by (our depraved) nature we were exposed to the wrath of God, Eph 2:3 ... d. **the sum of innate properties and powers by which one person differs from others**, distinctive native peculiarities, natural characteristics... the ability, art, skill, of men, the qualities which are proper to their nature and necessarily emanate from it, James 3:7 (the holiness distinctive of the divine nature is specially referred to), 2 Peter 1:4 ..." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon NT: 5449)

This is a "*nature*" of "*learned behavior*." "*A mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature.*" This is the only way it can be understood because no one is born "*a child of wrath*."

But sin, taking opportunity by **the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire.** For apart from the law sin was dead. 9 **I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and**

I died. 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. 11 For **sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.** Rom 7:8-12

Sin is a learned behavior, but done often enough it becomes part of our nature. God makes it very clear that it can't be inherited or passed down from father to son.

*Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; **The soul who sins shall die.** ... 19 The **soul who sins shall die.** The son **shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son.** The **righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.** Ezek. 18:4*

Those who teach otherwise ignore the complete unfairness of the system that have devised. For a child to be born into wrath not having done anything good or bad, is not something we would expect God to do and unless we are compelled to accept that conclusion, it is a stretch to even consider it. There are passages such as this one that "seem" to teach this, but with the passages above, God is vindicated and the false teacher condemned.

children of wrath, just as the others.

The concept of the phrase "*children of*" goes back to the creation. Every act of creation beginning with grass and vegetation, then to fish and birds, animals and every creeping thing produces after its kind. Whatever the child, it resembles always not just resembles its parents but is exactly like its parents. Hence when John and Jesus call the Pharisees offspring of vipers, He is expressing their complete resemblance in character. Here it is wrath. God's wrath is the after its kind that perfectly fits these individuals of whom we were once in fellowship.

This is the best man could produce. It was a hopeless mess and man had no hope to fix or resolve it. Only God with all His wisdom, power, love and mercy could devise such a plan and we should all praise and adore Him for doing so.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy,

After painting the dismal conditions we were living in due to our own devises, the Holy Spirit now moves to God's side. First His emotions and then His deeds. It was mercy and love in God's heart that found the solution. But this is not enough. It was rich mercy and great love that brought about the conditions for God to act. It is difficult for guilty children of wrath to conceive of this kind of mercy and love. So undeserved that at times many still feel they are unworthy of it. Yet like many things, worth and value are in the eyes of the beholder. The creature may not always see his value, but the Creator knows.

Although we have and do feel the emotions of mercy and love, ours is a mere shadow of what God's image should have made us. We have to carefully consider the uses in Scripture to see the fulness of this emotion. The definitions center on one thing. The emotions that are created when we see someone in need. Ours is often based on selfish considerations of how we feel about the nature of the affliction. If they brought it on themselves, man tends to feel less or even no pity and compassion, and consequently less or no mercy.

Jesus doesn't tell us what motivated the good Samaritan, or why the priest and the Levite left him there.

*fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, **leaving him half dead.** 31 Now by chance **a certain priest** came down that road. And when **he saw him, he passed by on the other side.** 32 Likewise **a Levite**, when he arrived at the place, **came and looked, and passed by on the other side.** 33 But **a certain Samaritan**, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when **he saw him, he had compassion.** Lk. 10:30-33*

They all saw the same thing. But two felt nothing. No pity, compassion, sympathy or empathy. This is the problem with human mercy. It is variable and based on feelings that often have nothing to do with the circumstances themselves.

*"In Greek, *eleos*(mercy) is a *pathos*(strong emotion), ...the **emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else.** ... in the face of the unfortunate this emotion is an *eleein* which includes the elements of both awe and mercy... in this sense of mercy, sympathy is very common. (Kittel*

The emotion that comes when we see affliction for man is the first and most important step because without it, we will not act.

eleos [NT:1656], *oiktirmos* [NT:3628] Both words **denote sympathy, fellow-feeling with misery, mercy, compassion.** ***eleos* [NT:1656]**, however, manifests itself **chiefly in acts rather than words**, while ***oiktirmos* [NT:3628] is used rather of the inward feeling of compassion which abides in the heart.** A criminal might ask for *eleos* [NT:1656], mercy, from his judge; but hopeless suffering may be the object of *oiktirmos* [NT:3628], compassion. (Berry's Synonyms, NT:3628)

God acted because of pity and that pity led to mercy which is half mercy and have action. We can pity and do nothing, but if we show mercy we have pity and we do something.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. Ps. 103:11-14

The Holy Spirit qualifies God' mercy as being rich and abundant. It was greater than our need and so He did all that was necessary out of rich pity and abounding desire to do something about it.

"*plousios... rich*; a. prop. **wealthy, abounding in material resources...** b. metaph. and univ. **abounding, abundantly supplied...** of the thing in which one abounds..." (Thayer, p. 519; 4145)

The depth of mercy to which God is moved as he looks upon mankind in their plight abounds in wealth. It overflows in His heart. Thus since mercy differs from pity and compassion in action, both are under consideration. Compassion, pity, sympathy, and empathy are feelings within the heart that no one can see, but the Holy Spirit who knows the deep things of God can see it. He wants us to know that this pity and compassion is far greater than we can imagine.

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. 9 He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. 10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. ... 17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, 18 To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them. Ps. 103:8-14,17-18

This pity and compassion is attested to in the Scriptures as being of the highest quality. Yet one can also judge God's mercy by the act of sacrifice that it prompted. God's mercy sent Jesus to the cross. God's mercy purchased our salvation with the death of his own Son. How much mercy is there in the pity and compassion that would bring about such an act of sacrifice to help another? Truly it is wealthy.

because of His great love with which He loved us,

The basic meaning of the preposition "*because*" is the ground, basis and reason that the great mercy occurred. These deep feelings of pity and compassion came because of and for the reason of love.

"*dia...* B. with the accusative ... II. of the **Ground or Reason on account of which anything is or is not done; by reason of, because of...** 1. of the reason for which a thing is done, or of the efficient reason, when for greater perspicuity it may be rendered **by...** 2. of the reason or cause on account of which anything is or is done, or ought to be done; **on account of, because of ...**" (Thayer, 132-135; 1223)

Once again the Holy Spirit is not content to just say love, because after seeing it in God's heart over this situation, it needed an adjective to intensify and develop its scope. This term speaks of abundance, but not just abundance, but intensity and force. It is great, abundant, plenteous, but it is also strong intense and large.

"*polus...* *much* used a. **Of multitude, number, many numerous, great... abundant, plenteous...** b. with nouns denoting an action an emotion, a state, which can be said to have as it were **measure, weight, force, intensity, size, continuance, or repetition, much** l. q. **great, strong, intense, large...** c. **of time much, long...** d. Neut. sing. *Polu, much*, substantively, l. q. many things... *much*, adverbially, of the mode and degree of an action..." (Thayer, p. 529; 4183)

Whether God's love be looked upon as being measured, weighed, or sized up, whether that love be gauged for intensity and force, or looked to for continuance or repetition over and over again in the life of one who needs it, the adjective above assures us that in measurement and weight it is large, in intensity and force it is strong, and in continuance it goes on and on and on.

This is the divine love introduced by the Holy Spirit to the human race by the act of Jesus leaving heaven and coming to this earth to die for man. This love can only be measured by that. We can only gauge God's love by the things it prompted Him to do.

*A new commandment I give to you, that **you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.** Jn. 13:34*

*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.** Jn. 3:16-17*

*But **God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 10 For if when **we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.** Rom. 5:8-11*

Since no human definition will help us, all we can do is draw it from these and other Scriptures. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was the greatest demonstration the world has ever seen of the love of God. The great, intense and magnificent love of God. It has to be contemplated and meditated upon, but Paul simply puts it forth here as the reason for our redemption and the gift of every spiritual blessing in Christ.

5 even when we were dead in trespasses,

The Holy Spirit returns to the words which began this revelation. These are the bleak and tragic circumstances we all created. There is no way to blame this entirely on Adam and Eve.

*Therefore, just as **through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned** — Rom. 5:2*

They allowed sin to enter the world, but each of us has proven that we would have had the same difficulties if we had faced the same temptation they did. They illustrated the terrible damage of sin. This is where "dead in trespasses" began.

*but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**" Gen. 2:17*

God made it clear that no one bears the guilt of another. Each soul comes from God and belongs to Him. The man who sins will die just as Adam and Even died.

*"Behold, **all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die.** ... 20 The soul who sins shall die. The **son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.** Ezek 18:4; 20*

This is exactly how Paul said he died.

***I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.** 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. 11 For **sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.** Rom 7:9-11*

Each one of them and each one of us is dead in trespasses for exactly the same reason as Adam and Eve. We all (2) walked in the course of this world (3) doing the will of Satan. That (4) evil attitude we see in the world used to be our attitude. (5) We all conducted ourselves like this and no amount of time living under the gospel can change that! We allowed (6) the lusts of the flesh and mind to control us and (7) and fulfill their desires. (8) By our own actions children of wrath like everyone else. Such is our dark and dismal past.

(1) dead in trespasses and sins,	(5) among whom also we all once conducted ourselves
(2) you once walked according to the course of this world	(6) in the lusts of our flesh
(3) according to the prince of the power of the air,	(7) fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,
(4) the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,	(8) were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Now the Spirit reveals the wonderful gift of grace, mercy and love that God has given the entire human race and how those in Ephesus had been given that gift. It all started in God's character. He is (1) rich in mercy and great in love. Although (2) we were dead and beyond hope, (3) God made us alive together with Christ and (5) raised us up together and we now sit together. (7) In the ages that will follow this one, God will reveal more and more how exceedingly rich His grace was to us, (8) in His kindness in Christ Jesus. (9) our salvation is based entirely in God's grace who made it possible for faith to bring it. (10) there is nothing in ourselves to base this one because it is the gift of God. No one can say that faith was such an amazing attribute that we worked for it ourselves. (11) Even our faith is a gift from God coming from the same gospel. Thus there is only room for humility and gratitude and no room for boasting.

(1) God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love	(7) in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace
(2) even when we were dead in trespasses,	(8) in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus
(3) made us alive together with Christ	(9) For by grace you have been saved through faith,
(4) (by grace you have been saved),	(10) and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
(5) 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together	(11) not of works, lest anyone should boast.
(6) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,	

How could God love and feel compassion to such "enemies?" How could He sacrifice so deeply for those who not only had no concern for him but who actively felt hostility toward him? These are questions to ponder for their answer gives to the hope of our calling the wonderful quality of giving it the expectation that even the lowest of the low can still receive it.

*For when **we were still without strength**, in due time **Christ died for the ungodly**. ... 8 But **God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**. 9 Much more then, having **now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him**. 10 For if **when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life**. Rom 5:6-11*

All the evil consequences of verse 1-3 were removed with a brush of God's mighty omnipotent hand. The wonderful spiritual blessing lies waiting for all with enough faith to submit to him thus manifesting that they truly want his mercy and grace.

made us alive together with Christ

Just as God has revealed exactly when we died and became dead in our trespasses, He has also revealed exactly when we were made alive.

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that **whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life**. 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**. Jn. 3:14-16*

*but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and **that believing you may have life in His name**. Jn. 20:31*

*When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then **God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life**." Acts 11:18*

*And this is the testimony: that **God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son**. 12 **He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life**. 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that **you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God**. 1Jn. 5:11-13*

It is made clear in these passage that our eternal life begins the moment our faith in Jesus has led us to repentance and baptism. "Made us alive together" is a single term in the Greek. It is not a term found outside of Scripture because it has never happened outside of Scripture.

suzōpoiēō, from sún (4862), together with, and zōpoiēō (2227), to make alive, quicken. To make alive or quicken with, as being raised from death to life with Christ; (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4806)

Because this is the first of three times Paul will combine a verb with *sun,*” he is emphasizing the closeness of these things we have done along with and in fellowship with Christ. All the great things God has done to save us all came through Christ and all that great things that God has done with us have also been done through Christ. It is only because of our relationship with Jesus that these things could have been done. That is how he began the book and will continue with that them until the end of the book. God has “*blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.*”

This is where it all started. God made us alive together with Christ, He raised us up together with Christ and made us sit together (fellowship) with Christ.

This passage so closely resembles two other passages that also speak of that moment when we were made alive. All three of them are talking about the same event and the same moment. The moment we joined Him in His death, burial and resurrection.

Each passage shares words that are not used anywhere else in the NT. Since the other passage are clearly identified with baptism and there is no other time in prior to our conversion that these things can occur, they are all speaking of the same event. Each Christian must do all of these.

(1) Crucified together	(4) Raised together
(2) Buried together	(5) Spring up together
(3) Made alive together	(6) Sit together

They are only done in baptism.

*made us **alive together** with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and **raised us up together**, and **made us sit together** in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. 2:*

***buried with Him** in baptism, in which **you also were raised with Him** through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has **made alive together with Him**, having forgiven you all trespasses, Col. 2:11-13.*

*Therefore we were **buried with Him** through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been **united together** in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was **crucified with Him**, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. Rom. 6:3-4*

Colossians
(1) <i>suntháptō</i> from <i>sún</i> (4862), together with , and <i>itháptō</i> (2290), to bury. To bury with someone . NT:4916
(2) <i>sunegeirō</i> , from <i>sún</i> (4862), together , and <i>egeirō</i> (1453), to raise. To raise together . NT:4891
(3) <i>suzōpoieō</i> from <i>sún</i> (4862), together with , and <i>zōpoiēō</i> (2227), make alive , quicken. make alive with NT:4806
Romans:
(1) <i>suntháptō</i> from <i>sún</i> (4862), together with , and <i>itháptō</i> (2290), to bury. To bury with someone . NT:4916
<i>sumphútos</i> from <i>sún</i> (4862), together , and <i>phúō</i> (5453) spring up from <i>sumphúō</i> (4855), to grow together . 4584
<i>sustaurōō</i> from <i>sún</i> (4862), together with , and parenthesis (4717), to crucify . To crucify together with,
Ephesians
(3) <i>suzōpoieō</i> from <i>sún</i> (4862), together with , and <i>zōpoiēō</i> (2227), make alive , quicken. make alive with NT:4806
(2) <i>sunegeirō</i> , from <i>sún</i> (4862), together , and <i>egeirō</i> (1453), to raise . To raise together . NT:4891
<i>sugkathízō</i> from <i>sún</i> (4862), with , and <i>kathízō</i> (2523), to set or sit. cause to sit down with , seat with NT:4776

It begins with faith, but out of gratitude for that faith and a recognition of what we were before we heard the gospel we repent in sorrow and joyfully confess that Jesus is Lord. None of these are works of merit to earn, they are works that God has asked for and faith joyfully gives them. But not until the act of baptism does everything come to completion. In each of these things we see the grace of God. Giving impossible things beyond our power with such simple things like faith repentance, confession and baptism.

(by grace you have been saved),

This is such an important part of our salvation that the Holy Spirit adds it in parentheses, even in the midst of still revealing what this grace has brought to us. To be made alive together with Christ after being dead in our trespasses is such an amazing act of grace that it needed to be mentioned here and then repeated in its proper place. Grace from God to man has two distinct stages. The first is the gracious kindness and goodwill in the heart of God. God, because of His love and mercy had a strong desire to show us favor.

The second stage of grace is on the part of the recipient. In this case, how could man have even conceive of the depth of his plight. At the same time he is hearing it (from the gospel) he is also learning of God's favor and gracious gift. This creates a sense of awe that such a great favor could have been bestowed. This leads to gratitude and a strong sense of obligation and indebtedness.

*“charis... grace; Latin gratia: I. **outward grace or favour** (as we say *well* or *ill favoured*), *grace, loveliness*, Hom., etc.; II. *grace or favour felt*, whether on the part of the Doer or the Receiver: 1. **on the part of the Doer, grace, graciousness, kindness, goodwill, ... for or towards one, ...** 2. **on the part of the Receiver, the sense of favour received, thankfulness, thanks, gratitude, ... for a thing, ... to acknowledge a sense of favour, feel grateful, ... to feel gratitude to one for a thing, ...** (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT: 5485)*

Grace bestows favor to one who desperately needs it, but has nothing about them that would make them worthy to receive it. God's good will must stoop far lower and give a favor far higher than anything man can conceive.

Consequently, when a Christian seeks to comprehend the idea of being saved by God's grace, they must first recognize that this grace was not only a favor offered to them that they do not and could never deserve, but that it was a favor offered in lovingkindness and with good will on God's part. God loves us, He wanted to help us and longed to save us. The grace and mercy He offers come from a heart of pity, compassion and mercy.

*For **as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him. Ps. 103:11-14***

God rescued us from the dangers and destruction which our previous lifestyle was leading us to. He saved us from perishing, he healed and restored us to spiritual health.

*sozo occurs **fifty-four times** in the Gospels ... Of the instances where sozo is used, **fourteen relate to deliverance from disease or demon possession...** in **twenty instances, the inference is to the rescue of physical life from some impending peril or instant death ... the remaining twenty times, the reference is to spiritual salvation...**” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4982)*

All of this is involved in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is one of the many spiritual blessings found in Christ and exhibits the power of God.

6 and raised us up together,

The two parallel passages in Romans and Colossians make it very clear that when one is baptized they are not only buried with Him, but also raised with him. The Holy Spirit connected our being made alive with our being raised up with Him.

*Therefore **we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom. 6:4***

buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. Col. 2:12

Since our being raised up with him is only connected in the New Testament with baptism, it is clear that the Holy Spirit is speaking of the new birth where we are born again of water and the Spirit. In that water, we enter Christ and in that entrance we die with Him, having been buried with Him, and subsequently being raised with Him.

*sunegeirō **awaken together, cause to rise up together** ... Ephesians and Colossians use this compound verb of **believers' participation, effected by God, in Christ's resurrection.** Eph 2:6: and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ... Rom 6:4 ff. **understands the new life of believers***

under grace as participation in the reality of Christ's resurrection. ... Similarly Col 2:12: In which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2891)

While the term "*raised egeiro*" is used many times in the gospels and the book of Acts to describe Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Only here and in colossians do we enter into fellowship and joint participation with that resurrection. Just as Jesus arose from the dead and was recalled back to life, even so are we.

The Holy Spirit links Christ's resurrection with our baptism. What we saw in Christ's resurrection, God sees in our baptism. The spiritual blessing of being restored to spiritual life after being spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins. God's rich mercy and abundant grace brought this about.

We have been raised together with Christ in a way very similar to when two people rise from a chair at the same time. When a Christian is buried in the waters of baptism he is being buried spiritually with Christ, when a Christian is raised up from the waters of baptism he is being spiritually raised with Christ. He is then in Christ, has all spiritual blessings one of which is spiritual life.

and made us sit together in the heavenly places

It is not difficult to understand the words "*sit together*." What is complex is understanding how we are doing this and what significance it has that we know it. Since it is placed with "*alive together*" and "*raised together*," it all occurs at the same moment. This is simply another ways of expressing that we are in Christ. Just as Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God we are sitting together with Him. There isn't much more to look at as far as how to understand this. Since we are alive together and sitting together with Him, the best way to see this is fellowship.

Because we have been made alive, we now live not only in this age, but our citizenship and our life also exists in the spiritual realm. We exist in both realms.

*For **OUR CITIZENSHIP IS** in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. Phil. 3:20-21*

*Let us therefore **draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace**, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help (us) in time of need. Heb. 4:16*

*But **YOU HAVE COME** to Mount Zion and to the **city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. Heb. 12:22-24***

in Christ Jesus,

Again, Paul continues to emphasize where all these blessings have been placed. If one is in Christ he has every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. One of these blessings is the right to be spiritually alive and to sit with Christ in the heavenly places.

7 that in the ages to come

There was an important purpose that transcends the simple fact of our salvation. With "*hina* — the purpose and end are revealed. It was "*to the intent that; to the end that, in order that...*" these things were done. "The ages to come" refer to all the immensity and longevity of eternity. The term "ages" is defined:

aiōn ... In its primary, it signifies time, short or long, in its unbroken duration; ... essentially time as the condition under which all created things exist, and the measure of their existence; signifying time, ..." (Trench's Synonyms NT:2889)

aiōn ... (l) Age, an indefinitely long period or lapse of time, perpetuity, ever, forever, eternity. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:165)

Whether there is one age after another, or whether the plural is simply given as an emphasis for eternity is impossible for us to understand or describe. The only ages we are aware of right now

is the present age in which we live and the one promised after this life is over when we receive a new heavens and new earth. Perhaps there will be subsequent ages, perhaps not. Whatever is to come, we will be there. In these ages to come God had a purpose and intent for us which we could only do if He saved us in the manner spoken above. Now that we are saved by God's grace, we ought to meditate on why He did it and what He had in mind.

He might show the exceeding riches of His grace

There is something God wanted to show and reveal to us that would have been impossible if He had not done these things. At this point in our walk with Christ, we have a dim understanding of what God has done for us. Paul already spoke three times of God's intent that as we better understood these things we would better praise Him.

predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, **according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace**, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. Eph. 1:5-6

the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, **12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.** Eph. 1:11-12

until the redemption of the purchased possession, **to the praise of His glory.** Eph. 1:14-15

But looking at things from this side of eternity cannot give us the vista of what we will see on the other side. God wanted to demonstrate and reveal something that could not have otherwise been done. This act of Jesus' death on the cross will appear ever more glorious and amazing in the ages to come.

"*endeiknuni*: **to point out**, ... in the N. T. **only in Middle... to show one's self in something, show something in one's self...** 1. **to show, demonstrate, prove**, whether by arguments or by acts... 2. **to manifest, display, put forth...**" (Thayer, p. 213; 1731)

"*endeiknuni*: ... **show, prove, demonstrate** ... In the NT **only the middle appears**; all 11 NT occurrences are in the Epistles, and all have an accusative object Rom 2:15: they **demonstrate that the work of the law** (i.e., the deeds demanded by the law) is written ... 9:17: **my power**; v. 22: **the wrath (of God)**; Eph 2:7: **the wealth of his grace**; 1 Tim 1:16: **his complete patience**; ..." Exegetical Dictionary NT:1732)

Often a gift can only be understood in the context of its value and usefulness. We might give a child a precious gift, but having never used it and not understanding the fulness of its value, he might not have the gratitude and appreciation that will come over time as he understands more and more fully the sacrifice that was made and the great blessings it has brought to him.

How can we possibly fully understand the greatness of His grace until we have passed through the judgment day and witnessed those who did not receive it? How can we understand the value of this grace until we are given our new spiritual body and living in our new spiritual home?

In the ages to come we will see its "*exceeding riches*." These are two massive superlatives. They are used of things that are truly beyond our ability to take in or comprehend. "*Exceeding*" is used of things that "*exceed extraordinarily*" and are "*supreme*."

hyperballō ... f: **a degree which exceeds extraordinarily a point on an implied or overt scale of extent - 'extraordinary, extreme, supreme, far more, much greater, to a far greater degree.'** 'the extraordinary greatness of his grace' Eph 2:7. In this expression in Eph 2:7, both *hyperballō* and *ploutos* (78.15) serve as expressions of degree; ... *hyperballō* indicates an implied comparison, while *ploutos* suggests not only a high degree of something, but also value. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5235)

The Holy Spirit then speaks of riches and wealth. Yet the riches of the grace of God exceed what we can ever comprehend, yet many answers can be found in His Word and we should seek to learn as much as possible. The more we understand about the wealth of the grace that has been given to us the better able we will be to thank and appreciate Him for it. "*Riches*" actually adds on to this. This is an abundance and plenitude. The highest point on any scale. The richest and most abundant.

"*ploutos*,... **riches, wealth**; a. prop. and absol. *abundance of external possessions*... b. univ. *fullness, abundance, plenitude* ..." (Thayer, p. 519; 4149)

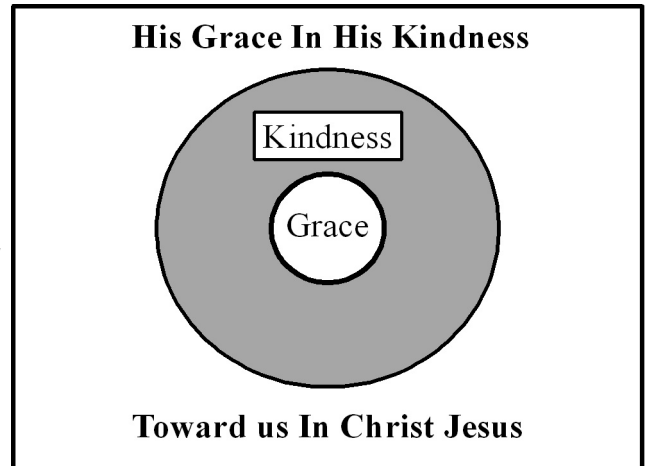
ploutos ... **a high point on any scale and having the implication of value as well as abundance - 'great,**

abundant, abundantly, greatly, extremely.' ..." (Lou & Nida, from Greek-English Lexicon NT:4149)

So the value of the grace of God is already the highest point on the scale. It is abundant both in value and in abundance. But this doesn't really capture it. It is far more! It is a wealth and abundance that exceeds extraordinarily above what one would normally consider wealth. It exceeds our ability to comprehend. Yet it will lead to "to the praise of the glory of His grace." When this age comes to an end and the next age begins, we will learn more and more fully what a loving act of gracious giving, along with the amazing value that it actually holds.

of His grace in His kindness toward us

By placing "en" between "grace," and "kindness" this grace is found in the midst of His kindness. This is very similar to 2:4 where His rich mercy came through (dia) His great love. His great mercy (feelings of pity and compassion with a desire to help) were created through His great love (benevolent concern for the needs of others). So now His grace (unmerited favor) is found "in the interior of, within the limits of," His kindness. Possibly this kindness is even "assisted and became the means" for His grace.



"en...a preposition taking the dative after it;... Eng. **in, on, at, with, by among**. I LOCALLY; 1. **of Place proper**; a. **in the interior of some whole; within the limits of some space**... 5. used of that with which a person is **surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted, or acts**... d. **of the instrument or means by or with which anything is accomplished**, owing to the influence of the Hebr. prep... much more common in the sacred writ. than in the prof... where we say **with, by means of, by(through)**..." (Thayer, p. 209-212; 1722)

Since these two words are working in tandem, it is important to use their broad definitions to help narrow down the exact meaning here. This is especially true when we are now made to understand that the gospel was designed to show them to us, but that their fulness will not be gained until this age is done. Yet that doesn't keep us from studying, comparing and seeking to grasp them as far as possible while here in this life.

First, we want to get a survey of the lay of the land. These two qualities are set forth not only in the midst of the rich mercy and great love, but also of salvation by faith and the gift of God.

<u>In The Ages To Come</u>	
Rich mercy through (dia) great love	By grace through (dia) faith you have been saved
Exceeding riches of grace in (en) kindness	Not out of (ek) yourselves the gift of God.

This passage is especially helpful because there are two different meanings for grace depending on the context. The first is the giving of the grace and the second the receiving of the grace. Since it is connected with kindness here and with the gift of God in the next verse, both sides of grace are set forth together.

*He might show the **exceeding riches of HIS GRACE IN HIS KINDNESS TOWARD US** in Christ Jesus. 8 For **BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED through faith**, and that not of yourselves; it is **THE GIFT OF GOD**, Eph. 2:7-9*

"His grace in His kindness" expresses His emotions as the giver of the grace. "grace — the gift of God" captures the emotions we feel as we realize this value of the gift we could never deserve or earn.

A composite of the definitions and how "grace" was used prior to its selection by the Holy Spirit helps us get a broad spectrum of the color and texture of this amazing word. In the midst of the

kindness of God, this word means “*graciousness, kindness, goodwill toward one.*” “*the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds, graciousness, loving-kindness, goodwill,*” “*demonstrations of a ruler’s favor,*” and “*gracious disposition.*”

“*charis... grace; Latin gratia: I. outward grace or favour (as we say well or ill favoured), grace, loveliness, Hom., etc.; II. grace or favour felt, whether on the part of the Doer or the Receiver: 1. on the part of the Doer, grace, graciousness, kindness, goodwill, ... for or towards one, ... 2. on the part of the Receiver, the sense of favour received, thankfulness, thanks, gratitude, ... for a thing, ... to acknowledge a sense of favour, feel grateful, ... to feel gratitude to one for a thing, ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT: 5485)*

charis has various uses, (a) **objective, that which bestows or occasions pleasure, delight, or causes favorable regard;** it is applied, e. g., **to beauty, or gracefulness of person,** Luke 2:40; act, 2 Cor 8:6, **or speech,** Luke 4:22; RV, “**words of grace**” (KJV, “gracious words”); Col 4:6; (b) **subjective, (1) on the part of the bestower, the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds, graciousness, loving-kindness, goodwill ... especially with reference to the divine favor or “grace,” ... there is stress on its freeness and universality, its spontaneous character, as in the case of God’s redemptive mercy, and the pleasure or joy He designs for the recipient; thus it is set in contrast with debt, Rom 4:4,16, with works, 11:6, and with law, John 1:17; ... (2) on the part of the receiver, a sense of the favor bestowed, a feeling of gratitude, e. g., Rom 6:17 (“thanks”); in this respect it sometimes signifies “to be thankful,” e. g., Luke 17:9 (“doth he thank the servant?” lit., “hath he thanks to”); 1 Tim 1:12; ... (Vine’s Expository Dictionary, NT:5485)**

charis The basis of the usage is the relation to *chairō* ... *charis* is **what delights ...** It may be a **state causing joy or an act accompanying it ... It is joyous being, “charm,” understood not in terms of the beautiful but of the element of the delightful in the beautiful, ... it is the happy state, the “favour” of fortune, ... can be a mood or emotion, e.g., “sympathy,”** (© 374, 22 ff.) plus its expression in gestures and deeds, “kindness, ... **As kindness charis is an act that causes pleasure ... from the standpt. of the recipient ... “thanks,”** ... There is play on the two senses of **gift and thanks in Soph.** ... *charis* is a fixed term for demonstrations of a ruler’s favour, often used in inscriptions: ... Mostly we have the plural in the concrete sense of “gift,” ... In the singular, *charis* can also mean “gracious disposition,” ... A special use is for the showing of grace in court. ... (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:5485)

charis ... **connected with charin is first of all that property in a thing which causes it to give joy to the hearers or beholders of it,...** and then, seeing that to a Greek there was nothing so joy-inspiring as grace or beauty, it implied the presence of this, ... **charis after a while came to signify not necessarily the grace or beauty of a thing, as a quality appertaining to it; but the gracious or beautiful thing, act, thought, speech, or person it might be, itself**—the grace embodying and uttering itself, where there was room or call for this, in gracious outcomings toward such as might be its objects; **not any longer ‘favour’ in the sense of beauty, but ‘the favour’;** (Trench’s Synonyms NT:5485)

When we look at this “*graciousness, kindness, and goodwill, friendly disposition, loving-kindness and favor*” through the lens of kindness, it becomes all the more vibrant and powerful. But kindness in the language the Holy Spirit expressed the things of God to those whose eye could not see and ears could not hear and it never could have entered into the hearts of men. The Holy Spirit revealed them, not in man’s wisdom but which the Holy Spirit teaches. He chose the words in Greek, so we must look at the words if we can in Greek.

But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ... 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1Cor. 2:9-10; 13-14

Kindness in English is a single dimension word. “*friendly, generous, considerate, helpful and caring.*” In comparison, the Greek definition is three dimensional. It has a much broader spectrum of emotions and attitudes than simple kindness. When trying to understand the character of God, this becomes much more complex. This is a term of “*kindness,*” “*friendliness,*” and “*mildness,*” and of being “*good and pleasant.*” It is “*kindness,*” but it is also “*goodness*” “*gentleness,*” “*benignity*” and “*sweetness.*” These synonyms open up God’s character and attitude toward us.

chrestotes... In profane Gk. the noun, ... is used only to characterize person, and along the lines of the adj., it means a. “**honesty,**” “**respectability,**” “**worthiness.**” ... It then means b. “**kindness,**” “**friendliness,**” “**mildness,**” whether publicly or privately. The ruler’s mildness... In private life it denotes marital love when used with *philostorgia*... The New Testament... b. It is used only in the Pauline corpus. Here it means the same thing as the Adj., and like it **denotes God’s gracious attitude and acts toward sinners,** both before Christ... and also in and through Christ... “Kittel, Vol 9, P. 489-492; 5544).

chrestos primarily signifies “fit for use, able to be used” (akin to *chraomai*, “to use”), hence, “good, virtuous, mild, pleasant” (in contrast to what is hard, harsh, sharp, bitter). It is said (a) of the character of God as “kind, gracious,” Luke 6:35; 1 Peter 2:3; “good,” Rom 2:4, where the neuter of the adjective is used as a noun, “the goodness” (cf. the corresponding noun *chrestotes*, “goodness,” in the same verse); of the yoke of Christ, Matt 11:30, “easy” (a suitable rendering would be “kindly”); (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:5543)

chrestotes... a beautiful word, as it is the expression of a beautiful grace The A. V. renders it ‘good’ (Rom 3:12); ‘kindness’ (2 Cor 6:6; Eph 2:7; Col 3:12; Titus 3:4); ‘gentleness’ (Gal 5:22). The Rheims, which has for it ‘benignity,’ a great improvement on ‘gentleness’ (Gal 5:22), ‘sweetness’ (2 Cor 6:6), has seized more successfully the central notion of the word. ... So far from being this mere grace of word and countenance, it is one pervading and penetrating the whole nature, mellowing there all which would have been harsh and austere; thus wine is *chréstos*, which has been mellowed with age (Luke 5:39); Christ’s yoke is *chréstos*, as having nothing harsh or galling about it (Matt 11:30). ...” (Trench, Synonyms, NT:5544)

chrestotes... in the LXX is used only of God and designates his kind and merciful disposition or actions (including the resulting gifts of fortune and redemption); In the NT, too, *chrestotes* refers to goodness (the character trait or virtue manifesting itself in a kind disposition and behavior toward others) in its various nuances (uprightness, mildness, kindness, graciousness, etc.). ... occurs 3 times in Rom 11:22, “Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.” ... Eph 2:7 directly associates *chréstotés* with God’s *charis*... In the five-member catalog of virtues in Col 3:12 *chréstotés* appears after *splangchna oiktirmou* (“heartfelt compassion”) and before *tapeinophrosuné* (“humility”), *prautes* (“meekness”), and *makrothumia* (“forbearance”). This sequence might be explained as follows: “Heartfelt compassion” refers to what for Christian behavior is the decisive, fundamental disposition: The view of antiquity was that the *splangchna* were the seat of emotions and feelings ... The four terms that follow refer, then, to the resulting external behavior. *chréstotés* stands at the center, (Exegetical Dictionary NT:5544)

It’s use in Scripture, the definitions above, and the words used in connection with it help round out our understanding of this word. It is used with *forbearance longsuffering*, and *love with God*.

Or do you despise the riches of His goodness (kindness), forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness (kindness) of God leads you to repentance? Rom. 2:4-5

Therefore consider the goodness (kindness) and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness (kindness), if you continue in His goodness (kindness). Otherwise you also will be cut off. Rom. 11:22-23

But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:4-6

It is used with “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and tender mercy, humility, meekness, bearing with and forgiving.”

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Gal. 5:22-24

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another Col. 3:12-13

God’s grace stems from this kindness. Together they form the foundation of the amazing things we will learn about God as the eternal ages unfold.

in Christ Jesus.

This is all tied back to Eph 1:3 where “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places is found in the interior of and within (*en*) Christ. Again, The Holy Spirit manifests the importance of our relationship with Christ. Since Jesus made it possible, we can have nothing with the close relationship God created for us to have with Him in the church which is His body.

8 For by grace you have been saved

As the Holy Spirit sums up the extreme extraordinary greatness of the wealth, plenitude and abundance of His grace that will become ever clearer as the ages pass, every word is important. The term “for” is the fourth most common conjunction (1042 times) in the NT. It is used to give the reason for a previous statement or further explain it.

For this reason, these two passages must be taken together. It is the grace in the midst of kindness

that brought the gift of salvation.

“gar is the fourth most common conjunction in the NT (after kai, de, and hoti). ... It appears 1,042 times in the NT. ... generally indicates a causal relation between two statements, whereby the second statement gives a reason for or explains the first.” (Exegetical Dictionary NT:1063)

The entire scope of our salvation and everything that it brings to us is all based on His grace in His kindness. As we learn more and more about this gift of salvation, ever more will we learn to praise, glorify and honor Him for doing this.

Salvation infers two things. We are lost, in danger and facing a grave peril. We were not simply going to miss out on heaven and eternal life which would have been a great tragedy, but much worse. Jesus came to save us from what He described as darkness, fire, torment, worms, weeping, gnashing of teeth.

*Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and **cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**'* Mt. 22:13

*And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be **cast into hell fire** — 48 where **'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'*** Mk. 9:47-48

*The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And **being in torments in Hades**, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.* Lk. 16:22-23

*Then He will also say to those on the left hand, **'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:*** Mt. 25:41

*And **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*** Rev. 20:10

The free gift undeserved, the offer of pardon upon no other basis than the good will of the one in position to show mercy or condemn. Our position as brought out in 1-3 left no room or logical reason for God to offer pardon. We were rebels, sinners, trespassers. We were dead, we walked the broad path of the age, we were epitome of disobedience, and the epitome of the type of being God pours out his wrath on. Of our own freewill we fulfilled the desires of the flesh and of the mind. What could we do to deserve or earn God's pardon and the creation of the gospel with the great sacrifice of Jesus?

Yet salvation has another side. Not only does it infer escape from the terrible nature of the loss, but also the wonderful blessings of salvation. Through God's grace we now have eternal life, a new resurrected spiritual body and a new heavens and earth with a city whose builder and maker is God. How can we fathom all of these things while still in this life and only vaguely aware of all that it entails?

In connection with this gift, we now look at grace from the perspective of the one who is receiving it. The sense of the favor bestowed, the sense of gratitude and thanksgiving. We have been given a gift we do not deserve, could never earn and only have because of the gracious kindness of God. This is the starting point from which He *“might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”*

To call this **ASTONISHING! BEYOND BELIEF! ASTOUNDING! AMAZING! MARVELLOUS! WONDERFUL!** hardly captures the reality of what God has already done. Yet He did this and it is done! There is no way to doubt the power of the grace and mercy of God as we see it all around us. God saved us! There can be no qualifications to this statement.

*For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But **God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 Much more then, **having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.*** Rom. 5:6-9

*He who **did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*** Rom. 8:32

through faith,

Prepositions form the heart of the relationships between words. When The Spirit placed “eis”

between repent and be baptized and salvation he revealed the relationship was one of entrance into. When He places “*dia*” between salvation and faith, He was revealing their relationship, defining and revealing the exact role of faith. It is important to know the definition of the preposition Paul uses here. While it is a complex preposition with many variations, there is no doubt here that it means “agency or means. Faith is the instrument, the manner and the way through which salvation is received.

“*dia*.. .A. with the *genitive*: **through**... III. of **the Means or Instrument by which anything is effected**; because what is done by means of a person or thing seems to pass as it were through the same... 2. of **the instrument used to accomplish a thing**; or **the instrumental cause in the stricter sense**:... *by the service, the intervention of, by means of, with the help of*... 3. with the gen. of a thing *dia* is used to denote the manner in which a thing is done, or the formal cause...” (Thayer, 132-135; 1223)

dia, preposition governing Genitive and Accusative ... **radical sense, through**. A. With genitive I. of **Place or Space**: 1. of motion **in a line, through, right through**, ... 2. of motion **through a space**, but **not in a line, all through, over**, ... 3. of **Intervals of Space**, II. of **Time**: 1. **throughout, during**, ... **all day long, ... continually, for a short time**, ... 2. of the **interval between two points of Time**, ... **after** a long time, **after** a time, *chronos dia chronou* **time after time**, ... 3. of **successive Intervals**, ... III. **Causal, through, by** 1. **of the Agent**, by the mouth of messengers, ... 2. **of the Instrument or Means**, ... 3. **of the Manner or Way**, in haste, hastily, IV. to **express conditions or states**, to be in a state of quiet, to be tranquil, to be at war with one, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT 1223)

When Jesus cried it is finished, His work on earth was completed. After He returned to heaven He built the church and sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth. With the close of the first century, the gospel plan of salvation was complete and needed nothing further. It was once for all delivered. Faith doesn't add anything to this. It only opens and gives access to the power of salvation that exists within.

God gives salvation by grace only to those who meet His stringent conditions of faith. God can offer salvation as a gift which is beyond price, in any manner He chose. We can't change the conditions He has set forth. Multitudes of people today redefine faith to fit their own ideas.

But God has already defined the quality of faith. It must be a faith like Abraham's (Rom. 4). It must fit all the parameters of Heb 11, following the examples of the faith of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and all the prophets.

James tells us it must be a working faith, Paul tells us it must be a love of the truth faith, Jesus tells us it is a narrow and straitened faith of one who does the will of His Father and in this way building itself upon the rock.

Faith is not an easy condition many have watered it down to mean today. It takes effort and constant supervision on our part to keep it pure and strong, but for those who fulfill this condition, the power has worked and they are saved.

and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

With another preposition another relationship between these words of revelation is revealed. This time it is a preposition of source and origin. The fundamental meaning is that of exiting out from somewhere or something.

ek, a **preposition** governing the genitive. Also, it denotes **exit or emission out of, as separation from, something with which there has been close connection**; ... **from out of, out from, forth from, from**, it is used ... I. of place, and 1. universally, **of the place from which; from a surrounding or enclosing place, from the interior of**: ... 5. **of the condition or state out of which one comes or is brought**: ... 6. of any kind of separation or dissolution of connection with a thing or person ... II **of the origin, source, cause**; ... 5... **is used of the cause** (whether thing or person) by which the act expressed by the accompanying verb is aided, sustained, effected... ” (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:1537)

But there are some questions. The demonstrative pronoun “*that*” “*refers to what precedes, referring to the substance of the previous discourse.*

touto... **the neuter touto a. Refers to what precedes... for this very cause... for this reason... it refers to the substance of the preceding discourse...** b. **it prepares the reader or hearer and renders him attentive to what follows, which thus gets special weight...** *dia touto*. . .” (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:3778)

But there are two points in the previous discourse. It can be salvation or it can be faith.

*Salvation is not out of yourselves it is a gift of God
Faith is not out of yourself it is the gift of God.*

Grammatically, it can be either. Doctrinally it could also be either. While some would like to proclaim that faith is what they must produce, when we dig a little deeper to determine where faith comes from we find that it comes by hearing the word of God.

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Rom 10:17

While everyone understand that we must hear and produce the faith is anyone really ready to say that their faith is totally what they produced? There is no doubt that we must hear and believe, but their is also no doubt that God gave us everything necessary to believe.

*If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is **the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. 10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself**; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son 1Jn. 5:9-10*

In no way can we say our faith or our salvation is of ourselves. To say that would ignore all that Paul just said and all that is said in other passages.

We did not plan this in eternity, we did give the proofs that make it so believable through prophecy and miracles, we did not give the precious and exceeding great promises that are so motivational in keeping our faith strong. All these were gifts of God.

There is nothing wrong with accepting that every facet of our salvation is a gift of God and something we should glorify and honor Him for. All should consider their faith and trust in God is another of His gifts of grace. That was in our praise for such a gift, we can work ever harder to bring it into harmony with all God wants from our faith.

Truly it a gift that must be worked for (through study, and effort to hear and properly comprehend), but not something that has been merited or earned. Without the gospel, without Christ, without miracles, signs and wonders, who could believe? Objectively and subjectively faith is a special gift of God.

Yet as with all conditional promises, the result is the gift we didn't deserve, but all our efforts and toil must be put forth to meet the conditions. But if the gift is far greater than the work done to receive it, even the work is a product of grace. This is what Paul affirmed about Abraham.

*For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**" 4 Now **to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.** 5 **But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,** 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: 7 "**Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered;** 8 **Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.**" Rom. 4:2-8*

We too have righteousness imputed and reckoned to us by faith, but this doesn't make faith a part of earning righteousness. Making the faith possible through the Scriptures and giving to faith the power through the blood of Jesus is all grace. Only our yielding up of our will is truly all we can bring. Everything else is a gift from God that we are using.

Eph. 2:9-14

In The Ages To Come

Rich mercy through (*dia*) great love

Exceeding riches of grace in (*en*) kindness

Not out of works,

By grace through (*dia*) faith you have been saved

Not out of (*ek*) yourselves the gift of God.

In order that no one can boast

9 not of works,

Once again the preposition (*ek*) reveals the relationship between grace - faith - works. But this time it is a negation. It is **not** out of works. Works is not the source or origin or salvation.

There are few subjects that have generated more controversy than the relationship between grace, faith, and works. The passage itself is clear enough. The source of our salvation is not of works. Works includes anything man can produce by labor and toil. His efforts, his accomplishments, possessions, things produced, and deeds.

ergon ... mind your own business, 1. in II. mostly of deeds of war, to engage in battle, ... 2. of works of industry, tilled lands, fields, farms, Hom.; the tilled lands of Ithaca, then, generally, property, wealth, possessions, ... b. of women's work, weaving, c. of other occupations, fishing, as a way of life, Od.; ... also of all kinds of works, such as mines, iron-works, ... 3. a hard piece of work, a hard task, ... 4. a deed, action, often, ... deed, not word, ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:2041)

"ergon... 1. business, employment, that with which anyone is occupied... 2. any product whatever, any thing accomplished by hand, art, industry, mind... 3. an act, deed, thing done: ..." (Thayer, p. 248; 2041)

The works we produced were listed above. By our efforts the only things we produced were:

were dead in trespasses and sins, conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, were by nature children of wrath	the sons of disobedience, fulfilling desires of the flesh and mind
---	---

Since the wages of a single sin is death, there was nothing we could bring to God. We were completely destitute.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 6:23

"There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." ... 19 every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Rom 3:10-12; 19-20

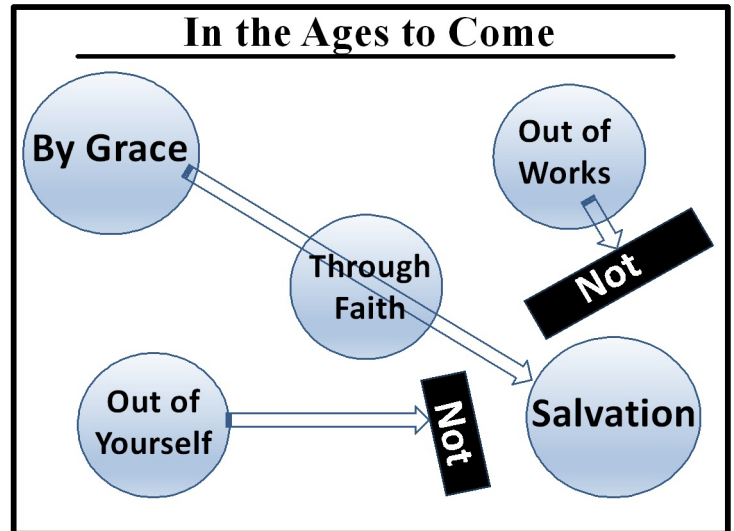
This is the state of mankind stated over and over again in different ways and by different figures. There was no possible way mankind could please God by their own works and efforts. All were dead in their trespasses and sins.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned Rom. 5:10

Man was helpless and hopeless. No amount of work could save us from the works of sin we had already produced. God has pronounced this over and over again.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith APART FROM THE DEEDS OF THE LAW. Rom. 3:27-29

4 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the



ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, Rom. 4:1-6

Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. Rom. 11:5-6

*knowing that a man is **NOT JUSTIFIED BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW** but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be **justified by faith in Christ and NOT BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW**; for **BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW NO FLESH SHALL BE JUSTIFIED.** Gal. 2:16*

*For **AS MANY AS ARE OF THE WORKS OF THE LAW ARE UNDER THE CURSE**; for it is written, "**Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.**" 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet **the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them."** Gal. 3:10-12*

*who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, **not according to our works**, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, 2Tim. 1:9-10*

God can't make it any clearer than this. Man is not saved by works! But what type of works is NOT saved by? The works described above are works of merit, wages earned, and works of the Law. There is not salvation outside of grace and faith!

The door is forever closed after the first sin. We cannot be saved by our own efforts! The moment we accept this truth, we are halfway to understanding how we are saved.

The problem is simple, but man has made it complex. God uses the exact same word for the efforts and products He wants us to produce after we have received His grace as He did for the efforts and products we produced before we received His grace. The first are "works of faith" and the second "works of merit." It's as simple as the Holy Spirit reveals it through James.

*What does it profit, my brethren, **if someone says he HAS FAITH BUT DOES NOT HAVE WORKS? Can faith save him?** 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also **FAITH BY ITSELF, IF IT DOES NOT HAVE WORKS, IS DEAD.** 18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." **Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.** 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, **that FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD?** 21 Was not **Abraham our father justified by works** when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that **A MAN IS JUSTIFIED BY WORKS, AND NOT BY FAITH ONLY.** 25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? 26 **For AS THE BODY WITHOUT THE SPIRIT IS DEAD, SO FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD ALSO.** Jas. 2:14-26*

After we accept that works of merit and wages has been ruled out. After we have grasped that man is saved by faith and not by works of the Law. We must talk about this faith. It is the quality of faith that James is speaking about, not works of merit and wages.

It is actually so simple. Hebrews 11 expresses it clearly. By faith ... each of the characters listed did something! It was what they did that gave their faith meaning. Without works of faith, what is faith? If faith doesn't motivate one to work then it is a dead faith. The problem is not in the works. The problem is in the faith. Every passage that speaks of works for the Christian are always works of faith and every passage that speaks of works before becoming a Christian are works with wages, works that come only from ourselves.

Paul makes this clear to Titus. He says it all:

1. It is not by works of righteousness that we have done.
2. According to His mercy He saved us
3. Having been justified by His grace.
4. Those who have believed must be careful to maintain good works.

***not by works of righteousness which we have done**, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus*

Christ our Savior, 7 that **having been justified by His grace** we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm **constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.** These things are good and profitable to men. Titus 3:5-8

He also made it clear here in Ephesians

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. by grace you have been saved through faith | 5. created in Christ Jesus for good works, |
| 2. that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, | 6. which God prepared beforehand |
| 3. not of works, lest anyone should boast. | 7. that we should walk in them. |
| 4. For we are His workmanship, | |

There are multitudes of passages that speak of the works God expects us to do after we become a Christian. They are not works of merit and God will not give wages for them. But they are works of faith that make faith strong and powerful enough to save us. It isn't the quality of the works. It is the fact that whatever you hand finds to do you do it with all your might. True faith doesn't say, I want to work to be saved. True faith says I am saved by faith and I want to work. Even when we have done everything possible, we are still only unprofitable servants and those with true faith know that.

Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. 10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.' Lk. 17:9-10

This is why we dare not proclaim that our faith is a work. It is only our duty, and even the lowering of our duty. It will always be a gift because it must be coupled with the bloody sacrifice of Jesus on the cross to pay for the debt. Even if God asked us for a work such as our own death it would not pay for even one sin. God asks for faith. Gives us the means to get it and then proclaims that those who make that effort will be saved.

lest anyone should boast.

This is the critical indicator that allows us to see ourselves clearly. Lest is made up of (*hina* — *to the intent that; to the end that, in order that of the purpose or end*) and *mé* (*denying the thought that it might happen*). This should never ever happen! If anyone feels the slightest desire to boast or have any sense of self-esteem based on what we have done, then we cross this line. It is not to remove human effort, it is not to stop the labor and toil which Christians want to expend in the labor for their Lord. It is not to deny the plain statements of James that a man must have works if his faith is to save him.

God doesn't want anyone to feel that he/she in any way has done something that would allow them to feel they earned it. Not even in the slightest way should it be possible for them to *"take pride in what they have accomplished."* There should be no *"high degree of confidence."* There is nothing in ourselves. Not faith, not works, it is all a gift.

*"kauchaomai : to express an unusually high degree of confidence in someone or something being exceptionally noteworthy - 'to boast.' ... 'whoever boasts must boast of the Lord' 1 Cor 1:31. 'your boasting is not right' 1 Cor 5:6. 'all such boasting is wrong' James 4:16. ... 'that is why we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God' 2 Thess 1:4. 'this is how it is with the tongue: small as it is, it can boast about great things' James 3:5. **Whether in any particular context the boasting is legitimate or not depends upon what is boasted about.** In a number of languages, however, quite different terms are employed, depending upon the differing degrees of justification for such boasting. (Lou & Nida Greek-English Lexicon NT 2744)*

There is no reason with or without a proper understanding of the gospel in which a person could find one reason in which he might boast. The entire focus of the gospel beginning to end is that of salvation by the grace mercy and kindness of God. Let all beware! Let the fate of the Pharisee become ours.

*9 Also He spoke this parable to some who **trusted in themselves that they were righteous**, and despised others: 10 *"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 *"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men-- extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 "I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess. 13 *"And****

the tax collector, **standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!"** 14 "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Lk. 18:9-14).

Every day, as we confess our sins of commission and of omission, we are reminded that we can never be saved by what we have done. Paul always attributed all of the works he had done after he became a Christian to God's grace. When looking at himself, he only saw the chief of sinners, saved by grace and working hard because of that grace.

*For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But **by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.** 1Cor. 15:9-10*

*And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 **And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.** 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, **that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.** 1Tim. 1:12-15*

10 For we are His workmanship,

With another "gar" he gives the reason and cause of a foregoing statement. This is another reason why we could never boast and why in the ages to come the glory and praise to God for what He has done will become more and more evident to us.

We are His workmanship. From every perspective this is the truth. He created our bodies and our souls. He created our world and our lives and what we do with it. After we sinned, He made us a new creation, making us alive and giving us the gospel to believe in and giving to faith the power to bring salvation to us. This word is only used twice in the NT and always of the results of God's creative power.

poiéma, neuter noun from *poiéo* (4160), **to make. Something made, a work, workpiece, workmanship** (Rom 1:20)... Eph 2:10; Figuratively in Eph 2:10; Sept.: Ps 143:5 Eccl 3:11; Isa 29:16. It **denotes the result of work, what is produced** as contrasted to *poiésis* which is the act of making, the doing itself and not that which is made. He who does the making is *poiétés* (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4161)

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, Rom. 1:20-21

We are a work of God. This is a play on words. We are not saved by our works, but we are a work of God. We were made by Him. The only other place in the entire NT where this term is used is in Romans 1:20 where it refers to the things that God created in the physical universe. A tree, a star, or a mountain are examples of the things that God has made. Paul now explains that every Christian is like that. Each of us is a special creation of God.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.** 2Cor. 5:17-18*

Our faith makes it possible for us to become His workmanship. That is all.

created in Christ Jesus

While in English we use create and created for anything that man and God have created. In English we can easily say that man has created many masterpieces. In Scripture, this word is exclusively used of God's activity in creation. It is "*always an act of God whether in the natural creation*" or "*in the spiritual creation.*"

ktizō ... **to make or create something which has not existed before - 'to create, creation'** (in the NT, used **exclusively of God's activity in creation**). ... (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2936)

ktizō used among the Greeks to mean the founding of a place, a city or colony, **signifies, in Scripture, "to create," always of the act of God, whether (a) in the natural creation**, Mark 13:19; Rom 1:25 ... 1 Cor 11:9; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16; 1 Tim 4:3; Rev 4:11; 10:6, **or (b) in the spiritual creation**, Eph 2:10,15; 4:24; Col 3:10. (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:2936)

ktizō (NT:2936) create, establish, *ktisis* (NT:2937) creation, creature, that which is created, *ktisma* (NT:2938)

creature, that which is created *ktistés* (NT:2939) creator ... *ktizō* create, establish ... appears 15 times in the NT, ... 19 occurrences of *ktisis*, *ktisma* appears only in 1 Tim 4:4; James 1:18; Rev 5:13; 8:9. *ktistés* in 1 Peter 4:19. ... **All the words of the group refer to God as Creator or to his creation and creatures.** ... The word group is used in the NT in speaking of (a) the Creator, (b) the creation, (c) the new creation, and (d) the individual creature (being). (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2936)

Hence being “*created in Christ Jesus*” was intended by the Holy Spirit to be understood as a creative act of God. We struggle with this concept. We don’t want to take it further than it was intended, but we do not want to make it less than it is. The best solution is to take into context everything that was said and understand this as the new creation. With the material creation as our template, what can we understand about being created in Christ Jesus?

First, in the context of this chapter we have to understand this “*created in Christ Jesus*” to include “*making us alive*,” “*raising us up together*” and “*making us to sit together in the heavenly places*.” It would also include “*create in Himself one new man*.”

made us alive together with Christ ... 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph 2:5-7

to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, Eph. 2:15

put on the new man which was created according to God, Eph. 4:24

When we add in other passages that also speak of this moment when we were created in Christ Jesus, we get even more. We were “*circumcised with a circumcision made without hands*,” “*putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*,” and “*the circumcision of Christ*.” When “*buried with Him in baptism*,” “*we were raised with Him*,” “*being dead in your trespasses and sins He made us alive together with him*.”

In Him, you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, Col. 2:11-13

Finally, the creation in Christ Jesus makes us “*a new creation*.” As the new tabernacle where we serve God is not of this creation, we are now “*the firstfruits of His creatures*.”

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2Cor. 5:17

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. Gal. 6:15

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Heb. 9:11

Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. Jas. 1:18

It is impossible for us to fully understand how far to carry this facts. But they are facts, and we have to be careful to consider how great the transition the new birth actually has brought about.

Whatever we understand by being created in Christ Jesus, as new creatures, we have been created for good works.

for good works, which God prepared beforehand

As noted above, we are not saved by works, we are saved by grace. Once saved, God has prepared the good works. Nothing is left to us. We do not even choose the good works. All good works are recorded in the pages of the NT. If they are not there, then they are not among the good works God prepared for us to do.

The condition of a sinner when he hears the gospel is recorded in the first few verses. We were dead in sin, living in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. God felt pity and mercy and by grace saved us. But we could not be trusted to set our own path. Nothing has changed it has never been nor will it ever be that man can direct his own steps.

O Lord, I know **the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.** Jer. 10:23

All the good works done in the church and individually have been prepared beforehand. It is all part of God's eternal purpose prepared from the beginning of the ages. Even the good works reflect His manifold wisdom.

*make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which **from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph. 3:9-12***

God determined and prepared exactly what these the good works would be.

hetoimazo "to prepare, make ready," is used (I) absolutely, e. g., Mark 14:15; Luke 9:52; (II), with an object, e. g., (a) of those things which are ordained (1) by God, such as future positions of authority, Matt 20:23; the coming Kingdom, 25:34; salvation personified in Christ, Luke 2:31; future blessings, 1 Cor 2:9; a city, Heb 11:16; a place of refuge for the Jewish remnant, Rev 12:6; Divine judgments on the world, Rev 8:6; 9:7,15; 16:12; eternal fire, for the Devil and his angels, Matt 25:41; (2) by Christ: a place in Heaven for His followers, John 14:2,3; ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:2090)

proetoimazo "to prepare beforehand" (pro, "before," and No. 1), is used of good works which God "afore prepared," for fulfillment by believers, Eph 2:10, RV (KJV, "hath before ordained," marg., "prepared"); of "vessels of mercy," as "afore prepared" by God "unto glory," Rom 9:23. ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary , NT:4282)

that we should walk in them.

The purpose and end are now revealed. *"That (hina) is used to reveal "the intent, the end, and the purpose."* God knows what the good works are, He planned them in eternity and revealed them in the fulness of time. They have been revealed to us in the Scriptures for the purpose of our walking in them. It is interesting that Jesus would call this path we are to walk in a narrow and difficult one.

*"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and **broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. Mt. 7:13-14***

Evidently, not everyone will be content to walk in the good works God prepared beforehand. Some will create their own good works and not remain in the ones God prepared. There are no good works for the faithful disciple to walk in except those which God prepared beforehand.

*Thus says the Lord: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But **they said, 'We will not walk in it.'**" Jer. 6:16*

Only in the pages of Scripture can the man of God be thoroughly furnished for every good work.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17

The conclusion is inescapable. If it is a good work it must be found in the scriptures. If it cannot be found there, then it cannot be a good work. No matter how much good "we" might think it could do if God did not reveal it then he did not so deem it. Saul thought he was doing a good work by bringing the cattle and king of the Amalekites back instead of destroying them. God did not view it that way, he considered it an act of rebellion. This is multiplied again and again in the scriptures. Only those who in total submission to God, with humility and meekness, seeking only for his glory by doing things his way are going to fulfill their purpose of being created in Christ Jesus.

Eph 2:11-12

11 Therefore remember

As He moves from one subject to the next, the Holy Spirit revealed the results and the inferences that ought to be drawn. Their wickedness was fully developed in that section, but the distinction between the Jew and the Gentile had not. Before revealing that Jesus' death of the cross removed all these differences and restored to the Gentiles the invitation to become the children of God, He ties it directly to what was said in the previous section. This conjunction He used could literally be

translated “*through or by means of which things*” Thus it is only because of the above acts of God that these things were made possible. This is in addition to the truths of the previous passage, but still connected to them.

dió; conjunction **from *diá* (1223), for, and the neuter relative pron. *ho* from *hós* (3739), which. For which, wherefore, therefore ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1352)**

“*dió, dioper, relatively emphatic markers of result, usually denoting the fact that the inference is self-evident - 'therefore, for this reason, for this very reason, so then.* 'therefore, that field was called Field of Blood' Matt 27:8; ... 'for this reason the holy child will be called the Son of God' Luke 1:35. ... 'therefore, if meat causes offense to my fellow believer, I will never eat meat' 1 Cor 8:13; ...” (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:1352)

Before God made each disciple alive, everyone (Jew and Gentile) were dead in trespasses and sins. The comparison is made clear by comparing them. Both sides are dismal and insurmountable. They must never forget either.

dead in trespasses and sins
the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience
in lusts of our flesh
fulfilling the desires of the flesh and mind
were by nature children of wrath, just as the others

you, once Gentiles in the flesh
called Uncircumcision by what is called Circumcision
at that time you were without Christ,
being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel
strangers from the covenants of promise,
having no hope and without God in the world.

In the imperative mode, this is a command from the Lord. We must not forget such things. They must be in the forefront of our minds so we can remain mindful of them.

mnémoneúō, from *mnáomai* (3415), to **remember, call to mind, bear in mind**. To exercise memory, be mindful of, remember. ... to **use the faculty of memory given by God and to keep in one's mind people, things, and circumstances**, because memory is the basis of learning and prevention of the dangers of life (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3421)

Although they had been blessed for several years with the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the memory of life without Christ must still be brought to mind, and Paul here bids them do so. To recall these facts, and return them to one's mind will be very helpful for Paul's purpose in bringing further glory to God.

Of equal importance, these are the things that will keep them from forgetting the results of the cleansing of our last sins.

For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 2Pet. 1:9

The fact that all were lost and in dire circumstances and now we are saved with great blessings must not never be forgotten lest the gratitude fail and the joy of our salvation become quenched.

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Ps. 51:10

that you, once Gentiles in the flesh--

Paul now addresses only the Gentiles in the congregation. He does not completely leave out the Jews, for he alludes to their failures also, but his obvious main purpose is to speak to the Gentiles concerning how much they have to be thankful for. There was a time in the past when they were “*at one time*” Gentiles in the flesh.

“*pote*... an enclitic particle... 1. *once*. I. e. **at some time or other, formerly, aforesome**... a. **of the past**...Rom 7:9 ... b. of the **future**... 2. *ever, ...*” (Thayer, p. 533; 4218)

poté; indef. and enclitic adv. When, whenever. ... (I) **At some time, one time or another, once, used both of time past and future**. Of the **past it means once, formerly** (John 9:13, "one who was **blind at one time**" ... Rom 7:9, "**at one time without law**" [a.t.]; see 11:30; Gal 1:13,23; Eph 2:2,3, 11, 13; 5:8; Phil 4:10, "that now at the last," meaning now at length; Col 1:21, "**you who were at one time**" [a.t.]; 3:7; Titus 3:3; Philem 11; 1 Peter 2:10; 3:5,20; 2 Peter 1:21). Of the **future, meaning once, one day, at last** (Luke 22:32; Rom 1:10). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 4218)

This should bring to their minds the terrible circumstances. One can only shudder when they think of all the terrible consequences of being a Gentile.

You know that **you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led** 1Cor. 12:2

For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and **how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,** 1Th. 1:9-10

This was the case even before the Mosaic age. God promised Abraham He would make of Him a great nation, and left the rest of mankind to grope and find Him (Naaman, Nebuchadnezzar) or to live their lives in darkness and wickedness.

For those outside of Israel and with no knowledge of the distinction God had made, this term simply meant a nation or the nations.

ethnos ... a **number of people accustomed to live together**, a company, body of men, ... 2. after Homer, a **nation, people**, ... the nations, Gentiles, i.e. all but Jews and Christians. ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:1484)

Jesus used the term many times to describe all other nations except the Jesus nation. The Holy Spirit put this into perspective, while Israel had been greatly blessed, the rest of the nations (Gentiles) were not.

who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen. Rom 9:4-5

It is important to understand that Israel had not taken advantage of the great blessings God had given to them. In Romans 2-3, Paul speaks very plainly about the hypocrisy and failures of Israel. But though they didn't take advantage of them, they had them. They were God's chosen people and the Gentiles were not.

who are called Uncircumcision

With the call of Abraham and the subsequent selection of his offspring to become the great nation which would bless all others, God gave the Gentiles up (Rom. 1), left to themselves with few interventions from God from that call until the coming of Christ.

They were called the uncircumcised both by God and by the people of Israel. As a matter of fact, it was God who gave this ordinance for that very purpose. Those who were uncircumcised had no relationship with God because prior to the coming of the Christ, circumcision was essential to be in a covenant relationship with God. All who were uncircumcised had been given up by God.

*And God said to Abraham: "As for you, **you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.** 10 "This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: **Every male child among you shall be circumcised;** 11 "and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and **it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.** 12 "He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. 13 "He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 "**And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.**" (Gen. 17:9-14).*

The more the Gentiles learned about this Old Covenant distinction, the greater their appreciation of what they had been given in Christ would be. Paul will go on to build the case of how bad it was to be an uncircumcised Gentile during the Old Testament period in the next few verses. Being out of covenant relationship with God carried some severe penalties.

by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands--

Although this distinction still held true, at this point in the revelation of God the distinction was now only a fleshly one. The rest of it was had been taken away by the removal of the Old Covenant. Circumcision had been meant to be much more than this the empty shell and doctrinal controversy it had become. He reminded the Jews of this in Romans, even while the law was in place most of Israel only had it in the flesh made by hands.

*For **circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.** 26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous*

requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? 27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? 28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God. (Rom. 2:25-32).

Yet this distinction was not made by man, It was God how made the decision to give the the children of Abraham the covenant of circumcision to allow them to draw near to Him. These Gentiles never had that.

It seems clear that the same thing was spoken in the parallel book of Colossians. Here it is a circumcision made in the flesh by hands and there It is a circumcision made without hands and puts off the body of sins of the flesh and not simply a physical piece of flesh.

In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses Col. 2:11-14

12 that at that time you were without Christ,

In this book, time is broken up by their obedience to the gospel. There is “at that time” and “but now in Christ.” Of the two words for time that could have been used, this is the word for “seasons” as time as such (*chronos*) is broken up into parts. Thus time from beginning to end is *chronos*. Time as broken into different parts is *kairos*.

chronos [5550], *kairos* [2540]. ... **Several times in the N. T.** but always in the plural, ***chronoi* and *kairoi* are found together** (Acts 1:7; 1 Thess 5:1); ***chronos* is time, contemplated simply as such; the succession of moments** (Matt 25:19; Rev 10:6; Heb 4:7); ... ***kairos*, derived from *keiro*, as ‘tempus’ from ‘temno,’ is time as it brings forth its several births; thus *kairos* ... ‘the seasons’ (*kairoi*) are the joints or articulations in these times, the critical epoch-making periods fore-ordained of God ...** (Trench’s Synonyms, NT:2540)

Before the gospel call came into their lives, they were still the uncircumcision and had no relationship with God or with Christ. They were not yet in Christ, but they were “without Christ” Their was a vast separation between them and Christ.

chōris **separated, far from, apart from, without** ... 1. Only John 20:7 ... uses this word as an adverb. The **handkerchief lay separately**. Otherwise *chōris* is used as an **improper preposition**... 41 NT occurrences, ... With genitive of the person *chōris* means **without, separated from: "Without connection to me you can do nothing"** (John 15:5); ... b) With gen. of the thing, that which one does not need or use: **without a foundation** (Luke 6:49); **"not without parables" = "only with the aid of parables"** (Mark 4:34; Matt 13:34)...**without grumbling** (Phil 2:14); **without anger** (1 Tim 2:8; 5:21); **without your consent** (Philem 14)... Without the presence of: **Without the Spirit the body is dead, as is faith without works** (James 2:26); ... (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:5565)

This complete separation from Christ was based on the same thing that had led to Israel being case away soon after Isaiah’s book was written. Their sin had separated them.

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear. Isa. 59:1-2

At that epoch in their lives, every spiritual blessing that comes by being in Christ was not yet theirs. All that God had done in reconciling the world and inviting them back was all done in reference to Christ. They did not have Christ so they were not yet reconciled.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 2Cor. 5:17-21

Everything that Christ brought they did not have. He was not their high priest, they did not have access to His blood, He was not their Mediator or their savior.

being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel

An alien is one who has no part of lot in a matter. This is not the nice word for stranger, pilgrim and alien that are later used to describe our own alienation from this world because of our close connection with God. This is a sinister word

apallotriōō, from apó (575), from, and allotriōō (n.f.), to alienate. To estrange, alienate entirely (Eph 2:12; 4:18; Col 1:21). It denotes the state prior to man's reconciliation to God. ...

apallotriōō, estrange, exclude, alienate ... In the NT only the perfect passive participle is used, always in reference to (Gentile) existence prior to salvation. ... the Gentiles are described as "alienated from the commonwealth of Israel" Eph 4:18 describes them as "alienated from the life of God," Col 1:21 as estranged (from God), alongside ..." Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament NT:526)

This is an alienation that excludes, estranges and alienates entirely. It is associated with futility, darkened understanding, ignorance, and blindness of heart. It is only used in Ephesians and Colossians of those who are both alienated and enemies in their minds.

*This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should **no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;** Eph. 4:17-19*

*And you, who **once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled 22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight Col. 1:21-22***

Most of us can shudder and remember that we too were in this condition while living in the world. God commands us to remember so we can praise and be grateful for the price paid to bring us salvation.

Since commonwealth is a term seldom used today, the definition and use in Scripture is important. It is only use twice in the NT. Here and in the conversation Paul had with the commander in Jerusalem.

*Then the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, **are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes."** 28 The commander answered, "**With a large sum I obtained this citizenship.**" And Paul said, "**But I was born a citizen.**" 29 Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, Acts 22:27-29*

Being a part of a commonwealth brought all the rights and privileges of citizenship. In the conversation above, the commonwealth was Rome and the rights of citizenship brought great respect.

politeía ... the condition and rights of a citizen, citizenship, Latin civitas, ... 2. the life of a citizen, civic life, Dem. ... 3. as a concrete, the body of citizens, Arist. ... II. the life and business of a statesman, government, administration, ... in a collective sense, the measures of a government, III. civil polity, the condition or constitution of a state, ... a form of government, ... 2. a republic, commonwealth, Xen., etc. (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon, NT:4174)

Being a citizen of Israel brought even greater rights and privileges. Being a citizen of Israel meant you were born into the rights of being a child to receive all the blessings to Abraham. For the men it meant being circumcised the eighth day and entering into covenant with God and growing up to learn all the laws and ordinances of God. The Jews had many wonderful blessings during all the dark centuries from Abraham to Christ. They had the oracles of God, they had the true worship, they had the laws which made wise, they had the tools to faith and to faithful service. The Gentiles were aliens to all that.

1 What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. Rom. 3:1-2.

The uncircumcised Gentiles had none of these things. They were alienated from all this because they were not citizens of God's great kingdom. The loss which this implied was great and it was a blessed thing indeed that they now had full citizenship God's kingdom.

and strangers from the covenants of promise,

The term "*stranger*" is used of those who are foreign and out of place. They were foreigners. Enemies of Israel and pagans practicing a religion that was contrary to God. They had not been considered and had no part at all the covenants.

xenos (*zenos*) **foreign; out of place; unusual**; subst.: **foreigner**; guest; host... **occurs 14 times in the NT**, ... The word represents **two distinct meanings**; in the NT the meaning **foreign predominates** (11 times), **once it means host** (Rom 16:23), and **twice it is used in conjunction with a synonym for "foreign" and can there mean foreigner as well as guest** (Eph 2:19; Heb 11:13). 2. **Antiquity initially held a hostile posture toward foreigners ("barbarians")**, which was gradually displaced by the developing rights of foreigners and strangers. **For Israel, foreign peoples were regarded as enemies, a disposition based on historical experiences** (cf. Deut 20:14-18, etc.), and **pagans, since they practiced foreign religions that all too quickly led astray** (cf. Jer 5:19). (Exegetical Dictionary NT:3581)

While Israel was God's kingdom and those who belonged were all in covenant with God. The uncircumcised Gentiles were not. "*the adoption*," "*the glory*," "*the covenants*," "*the giving of the law*," "*the service of God*," and "*the promises*" all belonged to Israel.

who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; Rom. 9:4

The covenants are listed in Galatians as the covenant of the promise that was confirmed before by God in Christ. The second was the law of Moses given by God on Mt Sinai.

15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. Gal 3:15-18

For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, Gal 4:24-25

Is the gospel of Christ a third covenant or just an extension of the covenant promise given to Abraham. Yet either way they were strangers even to the New Covenant.

By using it in the plural, he clearly was not referring exclusively to the New Covenant. God had made many covenants with His people. He would give them the land of Canaan. If they kept His laws, He would bless them with great material blessings. He would put none of the diseases they had seen in Egypt. They would be blessed in every way. A second covenant was a covenant of curses, but that is not under consideration here.

Not only did the Gentiles prior to Christ have nothing to do with all these covenants, they were not even aware of them. They were complete strangers to them, with no knowledge of and no participation in them.

having no hope

They had no hope for the future. They had guesses and wishes, but no basis upon which to found them. Hope is both desire and expectation. They had desires, but nothing to give them any expectation.

elpis, fem. noun. **Hope, desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it.** ... (I) Generally (Rom 8:24, "**in hope are we saved**" [a.t.], **as yet only an expectation, not an actuality**; 2 Cor 10:15; Phil 1:20). ... (II) Spoken especially of **those who experience the hope of salvation through Christ, eternal life, and blessedness** (Rom 5:2,4,5; 12:12; 15:4,13,...) (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1680)

"*elpis*... expectation, **hope**; i.e **expectation whether good or ill**; 1. rarely in a bad sense, *expectation of evil, fear*;... 2. much more freq. in the classics, and always in the N. T. , in a good sense: **expectation of good, hope; and in the Christian sense, joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation**..." (Thayer, p. 205-206; 1680)

They had nothing to fix their desires upon, nothing to expect from the future. Their idols had left them empty. Slaves to passions they could not control, terrified of guilt they could not remove, slaves to superstitions they could not understand. What a horrible condition God removed these people from. They had nothing whatever to look forward to in the future.

To move from no hope to a living hope we can both desire and have great expectations to receive

is one of the most amazing blessings given to us in the gospel and God should be praised!

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you greatly rejoice, 1Pet. 1:3-6

and without God in the world.

átheos, adjective from the privative “a” (1), without, and *theós* (2316), God. In Classical Greek it primarily and actively meant **godless, destitute of God, without God,...** In the NT it occurs only in Eph 2:12 in the passive meaning **without divine help, forsaken by God, excluded from communion with God.** “Without God” does not really convey the full meaning. It means more than not knowing God, it means neglectful of God. See also 1 Thess 4:5...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:112)

atheos, cf. Eng., “**atheist**,” primarily signifies “**godless**” (“a,” negative), i. e., **destitute of God**; in Eph 2:12 the phrase indicates, not only that the Gentiles were **void of any true recognition of God, and hence became morally “godless” Rom 1:19-32 but that being given up by God, they were excluded from communion with God and from the privileges granted to Israel (see the context and cf. Gal 4:8).** (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT:112),

When Paul had entered Athens, the best he could do to connect the true God with the concepts and understandings of the people there was to quote the words he had seen on a statue somewhere in town:

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; 23 for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: (Acts 17:22-23).

From this verse, it is clear that the Ephesians could have had similar things said about them. How sad to live a life with no knowledge of God. How fruitless and pointless it would all be. These are bid to remember such a time in order to appreciate more fully what they have been found.

All of the above is an abbreviation what Paul told the Romans in the first chapter.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up Rom. 1:18-25

They willingly gave God up and God then gave them up. All the horror and sadness of the conditions listed above were willingly brought down upon them by their forefathers. What a horrible heritage to leave one's children. Yet it happens over and over again and as those in the true church have apostatized and left it to place themselves into conditions just as terrible and pass such on to their children.

Eph. 2:13-15

13 But now in Christ Jesus

That was then! “*But now - nuni de*” it is different in every way. In this passage it is both a temporal (in time), and also “*a present reality*” which did not exist before. The Holy Spirit is contrasting the events and circumstances before and after Christ died on the cross, before and after the gospel was preached and accepted by them and culminated in the before and after baptism (Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:11-13; Eph 2:1-8). and fulfilled in baptism in which everything Christ did is incorporated into the life and soul of the one who submits to it.;

nuni appears 20 times ... *nuni* has the same meaning as *nun*. The demonstrative suffix (cf. Lat. nunc from num ce) simply **gives it greater emphasis**. That is true of both the adverb and the conjunction ... When **accompanied by *de nuni* designates a clear contrast**. This is many times stated in terms of content, but usually has a temporal

element as well. ... *nuni de* can designate actual reality in contrast to an assumption — without or almost always without temporal significance — in the sense of for, however (Rom 7:17), **Temporal *nuni de*, however, indicates present reality in contrast to a past** (or future: Rom 15:25) reality. **In the eschatological context of Rom 3:21 it is used of the present situation created by the Christ-event in contrast to the past under the law (cf. 7:6). The aeon has been realized (6:22; Eph 2:13; Col 1:22) and is to be put into effect (Col 3:8) in baptism.**" (Exegetical Dictionary, NT:3570)

They are "now in Christ Jesus" Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places has been bestowed upon them. At this very moment, now that you are in Christ, things are vastly different! Now, precisely because they were are in Christ, all that was spoken of above has been nullified, removed and replaced.

*But now He has obtained a **more excellent ministry**, inasmuch as He is also **Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.** Heb. 8:6*

As God had done so often for the Jews, God intervened for everyone! It had always been part of God's eternal purpose to bring this to pass. But for His own reasons, He divided man again after Babel, accepting Abraham and His seed as His chosen people and nation and rejected all the other nations according to His own purpose (Eph. 3:6-10).

"Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, 16 who **in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways.** Acts 14:15-16

As has been the theme since the beginning of this book (Eph. 1:3), all of this was made possible "in Christ." Hence, once again God is a blessed God worthy of all praise.

you who once were far off

"Far off" is a term used to describe those who have removed themselves as far as possible from God. God had given them up but had not forbidden them to come back. Yet they wandered further and further from God. They were a long long way from God at the time the gospel was sent out to them.

makrán; adverb from *makrós* (3117), **far, long, far off**. Used in the acc. with *hodós* (3598), way, meaning a long way or a great way, far ... With the definite article in the plural, *hoi makrán*, those **far off from God, meaning the Gentiles as opposed to those who are near, *hoi engús* (1451), those near, meaning the Jews** (Eph 2:13,17; see Acts 2:39, "to all that are afar off"; (Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament NT:3112)

makran a position at a relatively great distance from another position - '**far, at a distance, some distance away, far away.**' ... 'he was **still a long way from home**' Luke 15:20; '**I will send you far away to the Gentiles**' Acts 22:21; '**for the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are far away**' Acts 239 ..." (Lou & Nida Greek-English Lexicon Based on Semantic Domain. NT:3112)

It had always been God's intent and plan to bring them back. He showed clearly just how far man would go if they chose to follow Cain.

*Then **Cain went out from the presence of the Lord** and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.* Gen. 4:16

From a spiritual perspective, while these people were in the condition spoken of above, they were about as far from God as one can get. They had absolutely nothing. The Holy Spirit allowed Peter to prophesy of this event, though at the time judging from Cornelius he did not yet understand what he said.

*38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "**For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.**" (Acts 2:38-39)*

*As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 **And other sheep I have which are not of this fold**; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.* Jn 10:15-16

The promise of God extended not only to the Jews who by grace were always kept close to him through the preaching of the prophets and the promise to the fathers, but it was also to be extended to those who were afar off.

In the first gospel sermon, the Holy Spirit used this term to describe those to whom the promise of

salvation has been extended

For the promise is to you and to your children, and **to all who are afar off**, as many as the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:39

Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you **far from here to the Gentiles.**'" Acts 22:21

Although they had been "far off" with all the terrible consequences such a separation from God created, God had acted and made it possible for them to be brought near.

<u>Far Off</u>		<u>Near</u>	
Without Christ		In Christ	Eph. 2:13; 1:3;
Aliens from the commonwealth		Fellow citizens	Eph. 2:19
Strangers from the covenants		In Covenant with God	Eph. 2:14-16
No Hope		Knew their hope	Eph. 1:18
Without God		Access to God	Eph. 2:18

have been brought near

The term "have been" more literally "were made" is a word used 667 times in the NT. It is generally used of things that are created, made or of things that come into being. Also become, originate be produced. It is also used of things that have changed state or position. All of these terms perfectly describe what happened at the moment of transition when they stopped being far off and were brought near.

The verb *ginomai* appears in all NT writings except Jude. **With 667 occurrences, it is one of the most commonly used words.** It appears in the NT only in its Ionic-Hellenistic form (*ginomai* instead of *gignomai*...) It means in the literal sense **become, originate, come into existence.** In the NT the following meanings are found: (1) **happen, occur**; (2) **become, originate**; (3) **attain to or arrive at (something)**; (4) **be made, be created...**" (from Exegetical Dictionary of the NT:1096)

ginomai **To begin to be, to come into existence as implying origin (either from natural causes or through special agencies), result, change of state, place, and so forth.** ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 1096)

They became and were made to be brought near. By using the passive, Since this is in the passive, it is had been done for them. Paul stresses that it was something that God had done for them. God changed their state and maybe even "*they began to be and came into existence*" by the power of God, no longer far off, but near. They were right near the hand

eggus ... Adv.: I. **of Place, near, nigh, at hand,** ... II. **of Time, nigh at hand,** ... III. **of Numbers,** etc., nearly, ... IV. **of Relationship,** akin to, ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT 1451)

engus, enggizo prosengizo ... *engizo* "**to bring near**": mostly intransitive: "to **approach**" ... *engus* a. "in the vicinity," "**close by**" ... b. Temporally "**near at hand.**" ... c. In counting "almost": ... (Kittel, TDWNT 1448)

Both their existence and their state had been changed "*by the blood of Christ.*"

by the blood of Christ.

Although our translators translated this "by" it is more literally "*in*" the blood of Christ" This is the most used preposition in the NT. It has two basic meanings that could be under consideration here. The first is the place (location) and the second, the instrument (the means).

"*en*...a preposition taking the dative after it;... Eng. **in, on, at, with, by among.** I **LOCALLY**; 1. **of Place proper**; a. **in the interior of some whole; within the limits of some space**... 5. used of that with which a person is **surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted, or acts**... d. **of the instrument or means by or with which anything is accomplished,** owing to the influence of the Hebr. prep... much more common in the sacred writ. than in the prof... where we say **with, by means of, by(through)**..." (Thayer, p. 209-212; 1722)

"*en*... with about **2700 occurrences,** is by far **the most frequent preposition in the NT.** ... **Spatial usage:** a) **en is used to designate the place in, at, or on which something is found** ... **Temporal usage:** *en* is used to refer to: a) **A point in time:** in that hour (Matt 8:13); on the sabbath (John 7:23); ... **Instrumental usage:** a) Use of *en* to **describe means** is not unknown in classical Greek, but becomes common in the LXX, ... "**by the blood (of Christ)**" (Rom 5:9; Heb 9:22; Rev 1:5, etc.) (Exegetical Dictionary of NT: 1722)

There is only one place and location on this earth where the circumstances described here can occur. Just as we are in Christ, we are also in the blood. The second and easier to grasp is the instrument and means by which these things are accomplished.

The difficulty centers on the terms “*blood of Christ*,” for even after looking at the definition of blood as it was used by Greek speaking people, we are unprepared to fully grasp its significance. This is a spiritual concept that can only be understood by how it is used by the Holy Spirit. The understanding of blood as it is used in reference to Christ. Is found in two passages in the OT. The first in regard to human blood and the second for animal blood. Man’s “*lifeblood*” is precious because it represents his ability to life. When this blood is shed that person has died. Since man is in the image of God, the only way to resolve the taking of that life is to take away the life of the one who shed it. That is the power of the blood of man.

But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man. Gen. 9:4-6

The second type of blood is animal blood. God gave man animal blood to make atonement for the soul. Every time man sins, he incurs to wages of sin, death. (Rom. 3:23). Since there was no means by which man could atone for that terrible debt, God gave him animal blood to atone for the death of their soul. This was why the blood of animals must be respected and never treated in a common way.

'And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people. 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.' 12 Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.' Lev 17:10-12

They knew that this blood could not fully cleanse and atone since even after shedding animal blood on the altar for their sins, it was still remembered and confessed on the day of atonement, and even after the blood was taken into the Most Holy Place those same sins were confessed over the scape goat and sent into the wilderness. God explained the full situation in order for us to fully appreciate the blood of Christ which could do what no other blood could accomplish.

The teaching about the life blood of Jesus that was shed on the cross is complex because it is not of this creation. The full damage done by sin cannot be seen in this creation. But in the ages to come, that sin will bring eternal separation from God. Jesus’ death and shedding His blood on the cross created a propitiation. The power and ability to actually and eternally atone and bring eternal spiritual life back to a sinner. It is an eternal redemption, propitiation, justification. Those who are bought into the blood of Jesus Christ are sanctified and cleansed.

being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, Rom. 3:24-26

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. Rom. 5:9

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Heb. 9:11-15

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. ... 8 Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them"(which are offered according to the law), 9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." ... 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Heb. 10:4-10

Whenever the phrase “blood of Christ.” is used, it is a state of existence we can’t feel or understand as long as this creation stands. But after death and the resurrection, we will see that both in location and in instrument, the blood of Christ brought to a location where we are near. It took the death of the Son of God to bring about this much desired eternal purpose of God.

14 For He Himself is our peace,

There is no way to separate Jesus' life blood and His eternal spirit that made that lifeblood so much more powerful than the blood of bulls and goats. It was the Word who was with God and was God who then became flesh and allowed Himself to be crucified on the cross that bought this peace and made it possible for these children of wrath, dead in trespasses and sins to be given this peace. This is a peace that resulted from a reconciliation.

For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. Rom. 5:10-11

It was Jesus who brought peace between God and man. Prior to his coming, although God allowed us to live in a state of truce, His wrath was still waiting and although it felt like peace. It wasn't peace, but an interim period of grace to give us time to seek for peace. Peace is a state where the war has been removed and true reconciliation with God has been accomplished.

"eirene,... The basic feature of the Greek concept of eirene is that the word does not primarily denote a relationship between several people, or an attitude, but a state, i.e., "time of peace" state of peace," originally conceived of purely as an interlude in the everlasting state of war..." (Kittel, TDWNT NT:1515)

God used Jesus' death on the cross to bring reconciliation and peace to both Jew and Gentile. Since the power of Jesus' blood is infinite, God could choose whomever He will to receive this peace.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2Cor. 5:17-21

who has made both one,

God chose to bring all men back to Him on the same basis. Although the Jews fought this, wanting Gentiles to be first made Jews and then made Christians, God rejected it (Acts 15). It had never been God's intent to keep the middle wall of separation intact and continue the Jew-Gentile distinction. All of that fulfilled its purpose and now there is no longer two but only one. They have both been made one. The healing power of Christ's blood was powerful enough to take both those who were near (Jews) and those who were far off (Gentile) and make them both one.

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Gal. 3:27-29).

and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

Broken down can be as soft as removing a sandal tie, book seal or a tied donkey. It can be as strong as the breaking of up a ship in the waves or the dissolving of the elements of the material creation. Whatever the strength of this wall, Jesus loosed, destroyed, or broke it down.

*lúō ... loose, untie; set free; dissolve, destroy ... 1. lúō appears 42 times in the NT, ... with the basic meaning loose (opposite of deō "bind"). with an appropriate object in Mark 1:7; Luke 3:16; John 1:27 (**sandal thong**); Rev 5:2 (**seal of a book**); Mark 7:35 (**ligament of the tongue**). ... the setting free of a prisoner. ... of the **unbinding of an animal**. Figurative language is used for the **liberation of a sick woman "from the shackle" with which Satan had bound her**. ... c) appears in the temple saying in John 2:19 with the meaning destroy (Mark 14:58 has *kataluō* ... One finds a similar meaning in Eph 2:14 ("**he tore down the dividing wall**"). The same meaning is found in Acts 27:41 (**the stern of the ship**); 13:43 (**an assembly**); 2 Peter 3:10,11,12 (**the cosmic elements...**)..." (Exegetical Dictionary NT:3089)*

*"luo... to loose any person (or thing) tied or fastened: prop. the bandages of the feet, the shoes... 2. to loose one bound, i.e. to unbind, release from bonds, set free: one bound up... 3. to loosen, undo, dissolve, anything bound, tied, or compacted together:... Laws, as having binding force, are likened to bonds; hence *luein* is i.q. to annul, subvert; to do away with; to deprive of authority, whether by precept or by act... **to loose what is compacted or built together, to break up, demolish, destroy... to dissolve something coherent into parts, to destroy... metaph. to overthrow, do away with...**" (Thayer, p. 384-385; 3089)*

Jesus dissolved, did away with, broke up, demolished and destroyed the middle wall of partition. When he was finished there was no wall left standing. The term "middle wall" is defined:

mesotoichon, ... **a wall or fence which separates one area from another - 'dividing wall.'** In the NT *mesotoichon* is used **figuratively in reference to the partition in the Temple in Jerusalem, which set off the court of the Gentiles from the rest of the Temple area.** (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3320)

to *mesotoichon* **dividing wall Eph 2:14: "the dividing wall formed by the barrier" of the law, which separated Jews and Gentiles before Christ ...**" (Exegetical Dictionary NT:3320)

This is a middle wall or dividing wall of "separation." Like a hedge or fence, it encloses and separates.

phragmos **hedge, fence, wall** ... Mark 12:1 par. Matt 21:33 (cf. Isa 5:2): **enclosing a vineyard by erecting a hedge or fence**; Luke 14:23: fences around houses (where beggars can be found); fig. in Eph 2:14: ... **of the law, which as a barrier around Israel had represented a dividing wall** between Jews and Gentiles before Christ ..." (Exegetical Dictionary NT:5418)

phragmos primarily **"a fencing" in (akin to *phrasso*, "to fence in, stop, close")**, is used metaphorically in Eph 2:14, of "the middle wall of partition"; "the partition" is epexegetic of "the middle wall," namely, **the "partition" between Jew and Gentile.** J. A. Robinson suggests that Paul had in mind the barrier between the outer and inner courts of the Temple, notices fixed to which warned Gentiles not to proceed further on pain of death (see Josephus,..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:5418),

Each of these terms would have been enough to get the point across that there was a fence, a wall, a hedge that separated. While some say the wall in the temple and others the wall the Law itself created with its many commands to avoid them. This was an impenetrable wall that would have separated these two groups one from another until the end of time if Christ had not come and broke it down.

There are several views as to what Paul had in mind here as a middle wall of separation. The first and most simplistic is that the middle wall could be the wall in the temple through which a Gentile could not pass upon pain of death. The reason this one is so simplistic is that Paul's arrest and the reason he was in Rome was because that wall was still standing and he had been accused of violating it by bringing a Gentile into the temple.

The second opinion is that it refers to the middle wall in the temple separating the Holy from the Most Holy Place. Although Jesus' death did break this down (or more precisely ripped it in two), it would be difficult to see how this affected the Jew/Gentile relationship.

The third view, refers it to the Old Testament Law itself. The law of Moses separated the Jews and the Gentiles into two distinct groups that could not be merged. A Gentile could become a Jew but this would not make of the two one man. The marriage prohibitions, the food distinctions and other elements of the Law of Moses made it impossible for Jew and Gentile to live and integrate with each other. Only when the law was removed could both Jew and Gentile be merged into a new relationship which made of the two one new man. The context itself favors either the second or third

15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity,

"*Abolished*" is also a term of removal which can be violent or at least powerful. It is what happens to the marriage bond when one party dies (Rom. 7:2), what happened to tongues and prophecy when the perfect came (1Cor. 13:8-11), what Jesus will do to death at His return (1Cor. 15:26), and what Jesus did to the power of the devil when He died (Heb. 2:14). It is used to describe something that was at work, but was rendered inactive and inoperable by events or circumstances.

katargeo... 1. *to render idle, unemployed, inactive, inoperative*: ...to deprive of its strength, make barren... to cause a person or thing to have no further efficiency; to deprive of force, influence, power, [A.V. *bring to nought, make of none effect*]... 2. *to cause to cease, put an end to, do away with, annul, abolish*... " (Thayer, p. 336; 2673)

argos (= *a-ergos*, ...) means "inactive," or "inoperative." It is used in the sense of "incapable of action"... *katargeo*... trans. In the sense of "to render inactive," to condemn to inactivity"... In the religious sense, which is almost exclusive to Paul, it means 1. "To make completely inoperative" or "to put out of use." ... " (Kittel Vol 1 p. 452-454)

Jesus rendered idle and inactive the enmity between the two groups. He deprived it of its strength

and force, He put an end to it and did away with it. This term is used several times to speak of the Law of Moses.

*2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, **she is RELEASED FROM THE LAW OF HER HUSBAND**. ... But now **we HAVE BEEN DELIVERED from the law**, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Rom 7:6*

*7 But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, **which glory WAS PASSING AWAY**, 8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? ... 11 For if **what IS PASSING AWAY was glorious**, what remains is much more glorious. ... 13 unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily **at the end of what WAS PASSING AWAY**. 14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, **because the veil IS TAKEN AWAY in Christ**. 2Cor. 3:7-15*

Jesus abolished the enmity by completely removing and making inactive the laws that had created it. The enmity between Jew and Gentile was based on the Gentile understanding that the Israel was God's chosen people and they were not. They were the cast off and rejected ones. This created a strong desire to persecute which continues down even to this day. The Jews also because they lacked love and mercy saw the Gentiles as dogs and often treated them so.

Jesus removed the enmity, abolishing it by removing the laws that had created it. Enmity is one of the works of the flesh. It is hatred, hostility, conflict and considering someone to be an enemy. This was the state of Israel and the nations (Gentiles) before Jesus removed it.

*"échthras, fem. noun from echthros (2190), enemy, **Enmity, hatred, hostility** (Luke 23:12; Rom 8:7; Gal 5:20; James 4:4; Sept.: Num 35:20; Prov 26:26). Metaphorically, as in Eph 2:15,16, **cause of enmity**. ..."* (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2189)

*"echthra... **"Hatred," "hostility," as an inner disposition**, as objective opposition and as **actual conflict between nations, groups and individuals**. In the NT *echthra* ... **as enmity between men is one of the works of the flesh** ... The **Law means enmity for man, i.e., enmity between men and enmity against God** (not God's enmity against us as in Gal 3:10, but ours against God as in Rom 8:7). (Kittel, TDWNT NT:2189)*

*"echthra ... **a state of enmity with someone - 'enmity, being an enemy of.'** 'do you not know that being friendly with the world means being at enmity with God?' James 4:4. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT 2189)*

The hatred was destroyed, nullified and abolished by removing of the law. The law was not an evangelic tool to seek peace. The law was a fence put up to keep God's chosen nation separate from all the other nations until the promised seed came.

Under the Law of Moses God simply accepted the loss of the Gentiles. He consciously gave them up. He had no intention during those years of the Jews seeking out Gentiles and seeking to convert them. During that long age, the Gentiles were given up and paid the price for their sins. During this period, the attitude of the Jews, which though carried too far at times, was found in the Law. The Gentiles were unclean, they were not God's people, they were not to be associated with by God's chosen people. The Gentiles resenting this separatist and to their eyes groundless prejudice on the part of the Jews hated them for it. As long as the Law was in effect there was little that could be done to remove this enmity even under the best of situations.

Jesus came and died upon the cross taking the old law out of the way and bringing in a new law that was inviting in nature, with the intent of making a new people made up of those who love God both among the Jews and the Gentiles.

This new covenant had nothing exclusive in it. It is not made up of laws and rules that would prejudice groups one against another. Unless of course those who hate God are militant in their hatred. This laid to rest that enmity. It abolished it completely.

What was it about Jesus that abolished this enmity. Was it His teaching, His own good example, His perfect life, His power as the Son of God? No, it none of these things, it was His fleshly body, nailed to a cross and shedding its precious life blood. This and this alone was the necessary price of setting the Law aside. Christ fulfilled it in the very act of His death, and thus was given the authority to remove it.

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. **I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.** 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, **one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.** Mt. 5:17-18

that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances,

These are three synonyms with important differences. Law is the comprehensive term taking in everything. Like the Law of Moses, it refers to every aspect of the commands and ordinances listed in Ex. - Deut. Commands are the individual commands found in the law and ordinances are the opinions, conclusions and conclusions often made in the law itself.

nomos [NT:3551] is the common word meaning law. **It may mean law in general.** In the N.T., however, it usually means **the law of God, and most frequently the Mosaic law.** *thesmos* is law considered with special reference to the authority on which it rests. *entolé* [NT:1785] is more specific, being used of a particular command. **dogma** [NT:1378] is an authoritative conclusion, a proposition which it is expected that all will recognize as universally binding. (Berry's NT Synonyms NT:1378)

"*entole*...**an order, command, charge, precept**; 1. univ. a **charge, injunction**... 2. a **commandment**, i.e. a **prescribed rule in accordance with which a thing is done**... a. used of the commandments of the Mosaic law:... esp of **particular precepts of this law as distinguished from *ho nomos* (the law) their body or sum**..." (Thayer, p. 218; 1785)

dôgma; gen. *dôgmatos*, neut. noun from *dokéō* (1380), to think. **Opinion, conclusion, ordinance, proposition, dogma.** With the meaning of conclusion (Acts 16:4); as a **decree or command** (Luke 2:1; Acts 17:7); of the Mosaic Law, i.e., external precepts (Eph 2:15; Col 2:14;)... Complete Word Study Dictionary)

There can be no real doubt that this is a reference to the law of Moses. It is found in too many places and contexts not to draw this conclusion.

It was this very law that led to enmity. The Jew was required to consider a Gentile unclean. He was required to eat differently, and to view things differently. There was no way these people could peacefully coexist together. The law forbade it. It had to be abolished and made of no effect before what he says next could ever happen.

who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 7 But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, 8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 9 For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. 2Cor. 3:6-9

4 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Col 2:14-15

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them." 13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Gal. 3:10-14

For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. 13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. 18 For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, 19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. Heb. 7:12-19

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. ... 13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. Heb. 8:13

With all these passages, there is no doubt the Holy Spirit is speaking of the Law of Moses.

so as to create in Himself one new man from the two,

This was both the purpose and the result (*eis - for the purpose of, to result in*). The purpose and the result of the removal of the Law of Moses led to the ability and right to create in Himself one new man. Jesus death on the cross and removing of that Old Law brought about the ability for

another act of creation, similar to those described in Genesis 1. The difference between the old man dead in trespasses and the new man made alive in Christ is nothing less than a creation.

ktizō ... to **make or create something which has not existed before** - 'to **create, creation**' (in the NT, used **exclusively of God's activity in creation**). ..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2936)

ktizō used among the Greeks to mean the founding of a place, a city or colony, **signifies, in Scripture, "to create," always of the act of God, whether (a) in the natural creation**, Mark 13:19; Rom 1:25 ... 1 Cor 11:9; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16; 1 Tim 4:3; Rev 4:11; 10:6, **or (b) in the spiritual creation**, Eph 2:10,15; 4:24; Col 3:10. (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:2936)

Prior to Christ there were of by God's decree in the Law of Moses two instead of one. But Christ set all that aside and now there is only one new man. The Jewish religion had been abolished and the Gentile idolatry proven false. Neither could join the other, both had to join themselves to something new. There is now no distinction between these two groups because they have been made into "one new man." There are two terms for "new" in the NT. The first is (*kainos*) which is used here and the second is "*neos*" which is used in Colossians 3.

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, Col 3:9-11

"*kainos*... **new, i.e. a. as respect form; recently made, fresh, recent, unused, unworn... new, which as recently made is superior to what it succeeds...** b. **as respects substance; of a new kind; unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of, ...** (Thayer, p. 317-318; 2537)

kainos & *neos* Of the two most common words for "new" since the classical period, namely, *neos* and *kainos* the former signifies "**what was not there before,**" "**what has only just arisen or appeared,**" the latter "**what is new and distinctive**" as compared with other things. *neos* is new in **time or origin, i.e., young, with a suggestion of immaturity or of lack of respect for the old** *kainos* is what is new in nature, different from the usual, impressive, better than the old, superior in value or attraction, *kainos* is the epitome of the wholly different and miraculous thing which is brought by the time of salvation. Hence "**new**" is a leading teleological term in apocalyptic promise: a **new** heaven and a **new** earth, Rev 21:1; 2Pet 3:13 the **new** Jerusalem, Rev 3:12; 21:2 the **new** wine of the eschatological banquet, Mk 14:25); the **new** name, Rev 2:17; the **new** song, 5:9; 14:3 "Behold, I make all things **new,**" 21:5...." (Kittel, TDWNT 2537)

God looking down from heaven sees absolutely no difference between a former Jew who had all the benefits and the Gentile who had none. Instead he sees one new man, a new creature, one never before made. This is the new birth which both must undergo.

thus making peace,

Thus made peace between the two because there is nothing that people who are equal to one another can fight or have enmity over. And it also led to the peace between God which is beyond price.

16 and that He might reconcile them both to God

The peace Jesus brought to Israel and the rest of the nations (Gentiles) was the consequence of a much greater event, reconciliation with God. Breaking down the wall separation (Law of Moses) could only be accomplished through a reconciliation. Without the removal of the Law and replacing it with a law of grace, there could never be reconciliation with God which would make an peace between Israel and the Gentiles of no lasting value. Reconciliation is a very special word. Only used a few times in the NT, it emphasizes a change in relationship. There was a rupture in a relationship. The reasons for the estrangement There was some form of estrangement He also brought reconciliation to God. not only brought peace between Jew and Gentile, but by removing

apokatallassō, , from *apó* (575), from, indicating the state to be left behind, and *katallássō* (2644), to reconcile. *apokatallassō* is the stronger term for reconcile, differing from *katallássō* (2644), to reconcile, to set up a relationship of peace not existing before, in that *apokatallassō* is the restoration of a relationship of peace which has been disturbed (Eph 2:16; Col 1:20,21). ..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:604)

apokatallasso "to reconcile completely" (apo, from, and No. 1), a stronger form of No. 1, "to change from one condition to another," so as to remove all enmity and leave no impediment to unity and peace, is used in Eph 2:16, of the "reconciliation" of believing Jew and Gentile "in one body unto God through the Cross"; in Col 1:21 not the union of Jew and Gentile is in view, but the change wrought in the individual believer

from alienation and enmity, on account of evil works, to "reconciliation" with God; in v. 20 ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:604)

This change is the entire purpose of this chapter. Beginning with dead in trespasses and sins and by nature children of wrath, the Spirit moved to God's love for the Jew making him alive and the the Gentile brought near by the blood of Christ.

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ... 2 ... fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. Eph. 2:1-2

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ Eph. 2:4-5

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Eph. 2:11

This is a reconciliation so complete that by grace and the power of God both Jew and Gentile are brought back to the relationship held in the Garden of Eden. Reconcile carries the idea of bringing back into a relationship of friendship and full fellowship. By fulfilling the law and taking it out of the way Jesus not only broke down the middle wall of partition that separated Jew from Gentile, but much more important that separated each from God. He uses a term to show that Jesus made the both the two separate groups.

amphóteros; ... from ámphō (n.f.), both, the two. Each of two.... There are 14 NT occurrences of this pronominal adj. of duality, all in Matthew, Luke, Acts, and Ephesians and all masc. or neut., most used in place of classical amphō. In Eph 2:14,16,18 ... emphasizes the previous state of separation of those now united in Christ: both together Eph 2:15 oi duo, "each single one of the two" ..." (from Exegetical Dictionary NT:297

Jesus took the needs of the Jews and the needs of the Gentiles and combined them both into the gospel which Paul called the ministry of reconciliation.

Now all things are of God, who has RECONCILED us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION, 19 that is, that GOD WAS IN CHRIST RECONCILING THE WORLD TO HIMSELF, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be RECONCILED to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2Cor 5:18-21

in one body

God and Christ to have used the necessary wisdom and exerted the necessary power to move a seemingly incorrigible Gentile into the one body, and then with the same gospel move a stiff-necked hardhearted Jew into that same body, reconcile them both to God and make them friends and family is something to be amazed and thankful for. The method was described to the Corinthians.

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 1 Cor 12:12-14

through the cross,

The means by which this was accomplished passed through the cross. This is the very heart of God's ministry of reconciliation. It was only by means of the cross and the cross was the instrument used to accomplish it.

“dia.. .A. with the genitive: through... III. of the Means or Instrument by which anything is effected; because what is done by means of a person or thing seems to pass as it were through the same... 2. of the instrument used to accomplish a thing:...” (Thayer, 132-135; 1223)

dia ... A. dia with Genitive ... 4. Instrumental: a. with genitive of cause: “by means of,” “with,” “through”; b. with genitive of person: “through the mediation of.” 5. Causal: a. of the cause: “in consequence of,” “on the basis of,” “on account of”; b. of the author: “from,” “for the sake of.” ...” (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:1223)

Jesus had to go to the cross in order to bring all this into being. The cross was the instrument by which it was affected. The cross was used to accomplish it. This is stated many times and in many different ways.

*The blood of His cross
nailed it to the cross*

*the message of the cross
we preach Christ crucified*

For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and **by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace THROUGH THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS.** Col. 1:19-20

having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, HAVING NAILED IT TO THE CROSS. Col. 2:14-15

For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to **preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, LEST THE CROSS OF CHRIST SHOULD BE MADE OF NO EFFECT.** 18 For **THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.** ...21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, **it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.** 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but **WE PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.** 1Cor. 1:21-25

The depths of the love, compassion and mercy that this implies are beyond the reach of human understanding. For Jesus to leave heaven, and endure the shame, physical anguish and spiritual agony of the cross with the only result being the reconciling of the stiff-necked Jew, and corrupted Gentile into one body that they might be given eternal life is wonderful beyond words. No child of God should ever forget this. It affects our gratitude and appreciation and thus our service to God.

But God **demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, CHRIST DIED FOR US.** 9 Much more then, **having now been JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.** 10 For if **when we were enemies we were RECONCILED to God THROUGH THE DEATH OF HIS SON, much more, having been RECONCILED, we shall be saved by His life.** 11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom **we have now received the RECONCILIATION.** Rom 5:8-11

Therefore, my brethren, you also have **become dead to the law THROUGH THE BODY OF CHRIST,** that you may be married to another — to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God Rom 7:4

And **HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, the church,** who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. Col 1:18

And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, **yet now He has reconciled 22 in the BODY OF HIS FLESH THROUGH DEATH, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight** — Col 1:21-22

By that will we have been sanctified through **THE OFFERING OF THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST once for all.** Heb 10:10

WHO HIMSELF BORE OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BODY ON THE TREE, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed. 25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1Pet. 2:24-25

thereby putting to death the enmity.

The term was used of the Jews putting Jesus to death. It is a term for the violent termination of a life. When someone causes someone's death, this is the word that would be used.

*“apokteinō ... 2. As a synonym for *anaireō* and *thanateō*, the verb denotes the violent termination of life by human beings (Mt 14:5; 16:21; 21:35,38 f., and often) or by some other cause (Luke 13:4: a tower; Rev 9:18: plagues). ...”* (Exegetical Dictionary NT:615)

“apokteinō : to cause someone's death, normally by violent means, with or without intent and with or without legal justification - 'to kill.' 'what about those eighteen in Siloam who were killed when the tower fell on them' Luke 13:4; ... 'though he wanted to kill him, he was afraid of the people' Matt 14:5.” (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:615)

While Israel did this to their own prophets and to Jesus, Jesus used what they did to kill enmity.

Therefore the wisdom of God also said, **‘I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,’** 50 that **the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation,** 51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. **Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.** Lk. 11:49-51

You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! **You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.** 52 **Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,** 53 who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.” Acts 7:51-53

In an amazing example of God's ability to take what Israel did and use it for His own purpose, after they killed Jesus, God used that death to kill something vile and evil. He used it to kill enmity and hatred between Jew and Gentile. This is the continuation of the previous verse.

having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, 2:15

At the same time He was removing the cause of the enmity, he also removed the enmity itself. In the body of Jesus all enmity, hatred and hostility is banished.

"Enmity" is the same term used in 2:15, and is defined:

"échthras, ... Enmity, hatred, hostility ... cause of enmity. ..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2189)

"echthra ... a state of enmity with someone - 'enmity, being an enemy of.' 'do you not know that being friendly with the world means being at enmity with God?' James 4:4. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT 2189)

It is a work of the flesh and a terrible emotion that must be removed.

the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, ENMITY, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, Gal. 5:19-21

Jesus was able to kill off this work of the flesh, sinful enmity through His own death on the cross. Who could have imagined all the good that His death accomplished. He extinguished the active hostility and hatred between the two groups. Look at how quickly Paul removed all enmity that he had felt prior to his conversion. Some in Israel had more difficulty and became the judaizing teachers who felt the only way to remove the enmity for them was to get the Gentiles circumcised and keeping the law of Moses. This removed the true power of the cross and that is why Paul and Barnabas fought so hard against it.

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "**Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.**" 2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, Acts 15:1-2

17 And He came and preached

This is a very important passage because it validates the commands Jesus gave before He left to return to heaven. Jesus sent them exactly the same way God had sent Him. Those who receive their words receive Him and those who reject His words reject Him. More importantly, if the apostles are rejected, God is also rejected and if the apostles are received the Father is also being received.

He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." Lk. 10:16

"He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. Mt. 10:40

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me." Jn. 13:20

As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. Jn. 17:18

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." Jn. 20:21

Thus although it was actually the apostles and prophets who went into all the world and preached the gospel, it was truly and completely Jesus because He gave them the authority and sent them the Holy Spirit to give them the words.

And Jesus came 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 of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Mt. 28:18-20

15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. Mk. 16:15-16

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8.

preached peace to you who were afar off

There are several words that are translated preach. This one is the root of evangelism. It is

preaching, but preaching good news about something. In this case the good news is peace.

euaggelizo ... euaggelos (n.f.), bringing good news, which is from eu (2095), good, well, and aggellō (n.f.), to proclaim, tell. To evangelize, proclaim the good news, preach the gospel. ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 2097)

eú; adverb ... (n.f.), good, brave, noble. Well, good. (I) Particularly with verbs, "that it may be well with thee," that you may be prosperous ... (II) In commendations as "Well done!" (Matt 25:21); followed by a noun and an adj. (Matt 25:23), "Well done, servant, a good one" (a.t.). See Luke 19:17. ... (III) Used extensively as a prefix to comp. verbs with the meaning of well, good, and hence often used as an intens., e.g., eulogēō (2127), to eulogize, bless; eukairia (2120), good or appropriate opportunity. ... (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2095)

The prophesy in Isaiah revealed that the Messiah, (Christ), would be "*Prince of peace*" and that "*the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end.*"

For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Isa 9:6-7

Those sent out to preach the good news were sent to preach "*the gospel of peace*" and "*bring glad tidings of good things!*"

For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" Rom. 10:13-15

It was Jesus who took the initiative. Jesus sent them as it was promised and they came preaching the gospel of peace and bringing glad tidings of forgiveness.

you who were afar off

These words are nearly identical to those in 2:13. They were afar off by their own decisions. The first time we see this concept was after Cain killed Abel. It is not possible to leave God's presence, but Cain sought to be as far off as he could make himself. Those who followed him have done the same. It is uncomfortable to be near God when you are rebelling against Him.

Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. Gen. 4:16

The Gentiles were like Cain. They lived in nearby lands, but had chosen to make themselves afar off. God had already promised and Peter revealed it would be fulfilled in the preaching of the gospel.

"I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near," Says the Lord, "And I will heal him." 20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 "There is no peace," Says my God, "for the wicked." Isa 57:19-21

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:38-39)

The Gentiles had been brought near. Everyone who is baptized into Christ and puts on Christ becomes the seed of Abraham, like Isaac, adopted into the children of God.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. 3:26-29

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Gal. 4:5

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. Gal. 4:28-29

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of

bondage again to fear, but **you received the Spirit of adoption** by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God**, 17 and if children, then heirs Rom. 8:14-17

and to those who were near.

After the crucifixion of Christ, Judah had been rejected and cast off just as Israel (10 tribes) had been in the days of Hosea. Now, though nigh, they still needed to be called back to receive mercy and forgiveness. God made this clear in the last days of the 10 tribes of Israel. As Hosea had children, God named a daughter "no mercy" and a son "not my people." They would no longer be God's people and He would no longer be their God. Now they are all being called back. Jews and Gentiles were both not my people but after they obey the gospel they become God's people.

And she conceived again and bore a daughter. Then God said to him: "Call her name Lo-Ruhamah, For I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel, But I will utterly take them away. ... 8 8 Now when she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. 9 Then God said: "Call his name Lo-Ammi, For you are not My people, And I will not be your God. ... 10 And it shall come to pass In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There it shall be said to them, 'You are sons of the living God.' 11 Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel Shall be gathered together, And appoint for themselves one head; Hos 1:6-11

that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? 25 As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved." 26 "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God." Rom 9:23-27

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. 1Pet. 2:9-10

Jesus told the twelve to stay in Jerusalem to be his witnesses and in Acts 2 Peter preached peace to them. The exclusive preaching to those who were nigh continued until Acts 10 when Peter was sent to a "far off" Cornelius who lived in Caesarea.

18 For through Him we both have access

Repeating *dia* the Holy Spirit now speaks of how we can access to the Father. As He told His apostles, He is the only access there is to the Father. He is the Way and He is the Mediator.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. Jn. 14:6

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 1Tim. 2:5

Jesus is the high priest for all sinners whether Jew (nigh) or Gentile (far off). He is not only the mediator of the New Covenant, but He is the high priest of the "greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands" and "not of this creation" (the church). We can now enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus." A "new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh.,

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. Heb. 9:11-13

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb 10:19-23

Only through Jesus can we have "access" to God. Literally, he gathers us us into the presence of God. The synagogue is the place the Jews gathered and the *prosagogue* is the access to the church that Jesus has made which once we enter we become the called out (*ekklesia*)

"prosagoge... lit., "a leading or bringing into the presence of" (pros, "to," ago, "to lead"), denotes "access," with which is associated the thought of freedom to enter through the assistance or favor of another. It is used three times, (a) Rom 5:2, of the "access" which we have by faith, through our Lord Jesus Christ, into grace;

(b) Eph 2:18, of our "access" in one Spirit through Christ, unto the Father; (c) Eph 3:12, (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT: 4318)

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God Rom. 5:1-2

the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. Eph. 3:11-13

by one Spirit

Though our translators used the same word, The Holy Spirit actually changed from *dia* to *en* in describing His own role in the Jewish and Gentile access to God. One must be "surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted" by the Holy Spirit. He is "the instrument or means by or with which anything is accomplished."

"*en*...a preposition taking the dative after it;... Eng. **in, on, at, with, by among**. I LOCALLY; 1. of Place proper; a. in the interior of some whole; within the limits of some space... 5. used of that with which a person is surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted, or acts... d. of the instrument or means by or with which anything is accomplished, owing to the influence of the Hebr. prep... much more common in the sacred writ. than in the prof... where we say **with, by means of, by(through)**..." (Thayer, p. 209-212; 1722)

When Jesus left to return to the right hand of God exalted (Acts 2:33-35) nothing was written. The apostles were equipped, but Jesus had many things to tell them that they were not yet able to bear. Without the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth, we could never have known the wisdom of God's eternal purpose. The Holy Spirit abides with us forever because His word does today exactly what inspiration did for them. He is the only means to access the information necessary to be a disciple of Jesus.

"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- 17 "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. Jn. 14:16-17

"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 things that I said to you. 27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Jn. 14:26-27

12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you. Jn. 16:12-15

The Holy Spirit is the great Helper. His responsibility was to reveal truth to all men, He has given the greatest of all gifts, the knowledge of how to please God and do what God says. This one Spirit has a major role in the redemption and reconciliation of man.

It is interesting to follow the thread of unity and oneness in this section as well as in the entire book of Ephesians.

*14 For He Himself is our peace, who has **MADE BOTH ONE**, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself **ONE NEW MAN FROM THE TWO**, thus making peace, 16 and that **HE MIGHT RECONCILE THEM BOTH TO GOD IN ONE BODY** through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18 For **tHROUGH HIM WE BOTH HAVE ACCESS BY ONE SPIRIT TO THE FATHER. Eph. 2:14-18***

*endeavoring to keep the **unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace. 4 There is **ONE BODY** and **ONE SPIRIT**, just as you were called in **ONE HOPE OF YOUR CALLING**; 5 **ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM**; 6 **ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL**, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Eph 4:3-6*

to the Father.

Another preposition with a wealth of meaning that can't be moved from Greek into English. This is a word always used for movement and direction toward a place, a person, or a thing (any noun).

Jesus through His death, and the Holy Spirit through His revelation has made it possible for us to “draw near” to God.

pros Preposition with genitive, dative or accusative, common from Hom., also in LXX; in NT once with genitive, 6 times with dative, **679 with the Accusative**. This is very common and **denotes movement “towards.”** In this case, which is also the most important theologically, **pros is almost parallel to eis ... A radical difference which is often overlooked is that with pros; the movement breaks off on the frontier of the object sought whereas with eis; it is continued right on into the object.** ... 1. **Spatially, “to or towards someone or something,”** primarily with an intransitive or transitive verb expressing movement. ...” (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:4314)

“*pros* a preposition,... I with the accusative, **to towards**,... **denoting direction towards a thing, or position** and state looking towards a thing... 1. **of the goal or limit towards which a movement is directed...** 2. **It is used of close proximity** -- the idea of direction, though not entirely lost, being more or less weakened;... 3. **of relation or reference to any person or thing;... b. of the relation or close connection entered (or to be entered) into by one person with another...**” (Thayer, p 541-543; 4314)

19 Now, therefore,

The Holy Spirit now completes the purpose of the chapter. The plight of all mankind (Israel and Gentiles) was revealed in the first three verses:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) <i>dead in trespasses and sins,</i> | (3) <i>fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,</i> |
| (2) <i>conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh,</i> | (4) <i>by nature children of wrath, just as the rest</i> |

But the Gentiles were in a far worse condition than Israel:

Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh ... 12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ... once far off Eph. 2:11-13

But through the blood (death of Christ),

*5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ
6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
10 we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared that we should walk in them.
13 you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ
14 He Himself is our peace, who has made both one
15 to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace
16 reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross,
18 through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*

“Now, therefore” is a combination of the logical conjunction *oun* - “something follows from another necessarily” and “*ara*” “under these circumstances something either is so or becomes so.”

ara ... a marker of result as an inference from what has preceded (frequently used in questions and in the result clause of conditional sentences) - ‘so, then, consequently, as a result.’ *ouden ara nun katakrima* ‘so, then, there is now no condemnation’ Rom. 8:1; (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon Based NT:686)

“*ara*... It intimates that, “under these circumstances something either is so or becomes so”... *consequently* ... 2. ... it is placed at the beginning of a sentence; *and so, so then, accordingly*,... 5. ***ara oun* a combination peculiar to Paul, at the beginning of a sentence... *ara* is the more logical, *oun* the more formal connective...**” (Thayer, p. 71; 686)

“*oun*... indicating that **something follows from another necessarily**;... it is used in **drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically**, *then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so...*” (Thayer, p. 463-464; 3767)

Either one of these words would draw the previous thoughts to a conclusion. Both of them together makes it much stronger and is only used 14 times in the NT. “*Consequently, what follows:*” ... “*As a result, the logical conclusion:*” This last section will complete the revelation of what we were and what we now are.

you are no longer

Jesus death on the cross negated every curse and every consequence of sin. It is “no more,” and “no longer.” From the moment in time that the gospel is obeyed the result of sin is gone forever.

“*ouketi*... an adv. which **denies simply... no longer, no more, no further...**” (Thayer p 462-463; 3765)

ouketi ... a **negative adverb of time**, signifies "**no longer, no more**" (**ou**, "**not**," **k**, euphonic, **eti** "**longer**"), **denying absolutely and directly...**" (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3765)

It simply exists no more.

no longer strangers and foreigners,

Depending on the context, stranger can be a good thing (*confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth*. Heb 11:13) or a bad thing (*strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope*, Eph. 2:12). The word focuses on one who is strange, foreign and alien. In this case they were strange to God, aliens and foreign to His laws and His blessings. But no longer!

zenos, zenia, zenizo, zenodocheo philozenia, philozenos ... **Words from the stem zen - bear on the one side the concept of "foreign," "alien" (also "appearing strange" or "creating distaste")** ... In the NT it is used **predominantly in the sense of "strange"** ... (noun Eph 2:19; Heb 11:13), "**foreign**" (adjective Acts 17:18, noun v. 21, Matt 27:7), ... **Between the stranger and those around him there is reciprocal tension. He is a man from without, strange, hard to fathom, surprising, unsettling, sinister. But to the stranger his odd and different environment is also disturbing and threatening. There thus arises mutual fear**, especially of the magical powers of what is foreign. This is the first and basic mood associated with *zeno*, no less in early antiquity than in other cultures. (Kittel, TDWNT NT: 3578 NT:3579; NT3580; NT:3581)

The Spirit adds the synonym "*foreigner*" to complete the picture. This is an individual who lives in the midst of others, but keeps himself apart or is kept apart by them. The language, clothing and customs were different and therefore although living in their midst, he lives beside and outside.

pároikos, adj. from *pará* (3844), near or at, and *oikos* (3624), to dwell. A **sojourner, one who dwells in a foreign country, a temporary dweller not having a settled habitation in the place where he currently resides** (Acts 7:6,29; Sept.: Gen 15:13; Ex 2:22). Applied spiritually (Eph 2:19; 1 Peter 2:11 [cf. 1:17]). ..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3941)

paroikos, (*para* and *oikos*); 1. in classical Greek dwelling near, neighboring. 2. in the Scriptures **a stranger, foreigner, one who lives in a place without the right of citizenship**; ... metaphorically, without citizenship in God's kingdom: ..." Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:3941

God revealed the nature of these strange foreigners in comparison to those who live as God's citizens. Their different customs and laws led them to be alienated from God.

According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances. 4 You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God. Lev 18:3-5

Because of Christ, the gospel and their obedience they were no longer a part of these people or these customs. All had been forgiven and the invitation to return had been accepted. So once again: Foreigners no longer and no more.

but fellow citizens with the saints

Now far from being strangers and foreigners they are "*fellow citizens*." All who obey the gospel, come out from among them and become separate are citizens on an equal footing in the kingdom of heaven. There is no distinction between those who have the faith of Abraham. Regardless of background or any other distinction, all are equal.

sumpolítés, noun from *sún* (4862), **together with**, and *polítés* (4177), **a citizen. A fellow citizen...**" (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4847)

"*sum-polítés*... **possessing the same citizenship with other, a fellow-citizen**... spoken of Gentiles as received into the communion of the saints i.e. of the people consecrated to God... Eph. 2:19..." (Thayer, p. 597; 4847)

This is a fellow citizenship, not with a human nation, but with the saints (those connection with God).

"*hagios*,... 1. properly, **reverend, worthy of veneration**...a. of things which on account of **some connection with God possess a certain distinction and claim to reverence as places sacred to God** which are not to be profaned,... b. of **persons whose services God employs**; as for example, apostles... 2. **set apart for God, to be as it were exclusively his**... Just as the Israelites claimed for themselves the title *hoi hagioi*, because God selected them from the other nations to lead a life acceptable to him... this appellation is very often in the N. T.

transferred to Christians as those whom God has selected ... "(Thayer, p. 6-7; 40)

Not on the earth but in heaven.

*For **our citizenship is in heaven**, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, Phil. 3:20-21*

Even more they have also become a part of God's family.

and members of the household of God,

Literally, in or of the house, it can refer to things that belong in the house (possessions) or of people who belong in the house, (family, kin), or activities and affairs of the house (home grown)

oikeios ... -in or of the house, domestic, ... household affairs, property, II. of persons, of the same family or kin, related, 2. friendly, ... III. of things, belonging to one's house or family, one's own, ... one's own property, ... wars in one's own country, Thuc.; of corn, home-grown, ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:3609)

oikeios ... primarily signifies "of, or belonging to, a house," hence, "of persons, one's household, or kindred," as in 1 Tim 5:8, RV, "household," KJV "house," marg., "kindred"; in Eph 2:19, "the household of God" denotes the company of the redeemed; in Gal 6:10, it is called "the household of the faith, ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:3609)

This was one of the first things John pointed out in the gospel He wrote:

*He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 But **as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Jn. 1:10-13***

After one is baptized into Christ and become the seed of Abraham All who become Christians belong to the house of family of God. They become the intimate children of God.

*For **as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ... 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. 3:27-29***

*But when the fullness of the time had come, **God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Gal. 4:4-7***

*For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but **you received the Spirit of adoption** by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. Rom. 8:15-17***

The amazing depth of love and mercy that God bestowed it beyond comprehension in this life. From dead in sin to sons of God. From children of wrath to joint heirs with Christ. From stranger and alien to fellow citizen with the saints. This is more than we can take in. We will not fully understand it in this life, but it will become more evident in the ages to come.

*that **in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus Eph. 2:7***

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,

The Holy Spirit concludes the chapter with another figure that will pave the way forward into the next chapter. Not only is the church the body of Christ in which all who are members of the church are "in Christ," it is also the "house of God which is the church of the living God the pillar and ground of the truth." (1Tim. 3:15). This house, includes the members of the family as "members of the household of God," but also the holy temple in which Christians are "the living stones." The Spirit also reveals the importance of the apostles and prophets. To see the fulness of the figure we want to begin with another passage that deals with this same topic.

*Coming to Him **as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1Pet. 2:4-5***

The tabernacle in the wilderness was built by Moses to become a dwelling place for God.

*And let **them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.** According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it. (Ex. 25:8-9, 40; 26:30; Num. 8:4).*

This tabernacle was destined to become the type and shadow of the heavenly things that exist today in the church.

***who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle.** For He said, "**See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.**" Heb 8:5*

This is the church Jesus built when He returned to heaven and it is now the true tabernacle that the Lord erected and not man. It is the "*greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands that is not of this creation.*" The first tabernacle was "*copies of the things in the heavens,*" cleansed with the blood of bulls and goats. The "*true tabernacle which the Lord erected*" is the "*greater and more perfect tabernacle not of this creation*" it contains the "*heavenly things themselves, and was cleansed "with better sacrifices."*"

*Now **this is the main point of the things we are saying:** We have such a **High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,** 2 a **Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.** Heb. 8:1-2*

*But **Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.**" "With His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. Heb. 9:11-13*

*Therefore it was necessary that the **copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these (blood of bulls and goats), but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.** For **Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.** Heb. 9:23-25*

This sanctuary had been in a tent and in a tabernacle, but when it was moved to Jerusalem David sought to build a permanent house. When David asked God to allow him to build it, God revealed that He had always dwelt in a tent and in a tabernacle.

*Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: "**Would you build a house for Me to dwell in?**" 6 For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but **have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle.** 2Sam. 7:5-7*

When God later commanded Solomon to build this house using plans given to David by the Holy Spirit the sanctuary that had been in the tabernacle was moved into the temple. Thus, everything written in Hebrews about the tabernacle also applied to the temple.

*6 Now He said to me, 'It is your son Solomon who shall build My house and My courts; ... 10 Consider now, for **the Lord has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong, and do it.**" 11 Then **David gave his son Solomon the plans ... 12 and the plans for all that he had by the Spirit, ... 19 "All this," said David, "the Lord made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the works of these plans."** 1Chr. 28:6-19*

The same priest who built the tabernacle not made with hands and not of this creation was also prophesied to build the temple.

*Behold, **the Man whose name is the BRANCH!** From His place He shall branch out, And **He shall build the temple of the Lord;** 13 Yes, **He shall build the temple of the Lord. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne;** So **He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.**" Zech. 6:11-13*

This is what these Gentiles have been built upon and this is what the foundation of the apostles and prophets has been laid "*to build*" upon. This is the fulfillment of the prophecy God had made. As "*living stones,*" these Gentiles had be used to build upon and erect a building on a foundation.

epoikodoméō, from epí (1909), upon, and oikodoméō (3618), to build. To build upon, to erect ... (1 Cor 3:10,12,14; Eph 2:20); to build up, edify (Acts 20:32)..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2026).

This "*foundation*" has three materials. The apostles and the prophets and the third, the chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ. This foundation has been laid down and is now gives the stability to the

church.

*“themelios (thema [i.e. thing laid down]), **laid down as a foundation, belonging to a foundation,... the foundation (of a building, wall, city)**... of the apostles as preachers of salvation, upon which foundation the Christian church has been built, Eph. 2:20; a solid and stable spiritual possession, on which resting as on a foundation they may strive to lay hold on eternal life, I Tim. 6:19... (Thayer, p. 286-287; 2310)*

It was certainly and act of grace that placed the apostles and prophets into such a position. But this was not new. God used Moses in a very similar manner. Although it was always and only the law of God, it is referred to as the law of Moses. The Holy Spirit clarified this in the next chapter.

*how that **by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: Eph. 3:4-5***

When Jesus left this earth, all was prepared, but there was no knowledge of what to do. The Holy Spirit was sent to the apostles to teach them all things and guide them into all truth. While the Holy Spirit is the real source of the foundation, God has graciously given this to them. The Holy Spirit revealed all that Paul and the rest of the apostles and prophets have written (The entire NT). But their writings have become a central part of the foundation of this temple.

God graciously gave them the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the right to complete and finish the kingdom. Peter was given the keys to open it to all mankind, and then for the remainder of their lives the apostles and prophets of the first century labored and toiled to fully lay the foundation in order that all future generations might lay the living stones (Christians) onto this foundation.

These prophets are not to be understood as those prophets who wrote the OT. These are the prophets that Jesus gave to His church.

*And **He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some shepherds and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, Eph 4:11-12***

Jesus gave this office. There were only 12 plus Paul who could call themselves apostles. Yet there were many prophets. Mark and Luke were prophets who wrote books every bit as important as those written under the Old Testament period, as also did James and Jude and possibly the author of Hebrews. These prophets shared with the apostles the ability to preach by inspiration and to reveal divine truth with perfection. The main difference between the apostles and the prophets is the ability to lay hands on others to pass on spiritual gifts:

*14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18 And **when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given**, he offered them money, 19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:14-19*

Those early men given the gifts of inspiration which led to the preaching and subsequent writing of God's truth and God's commands have left a lasting foundation for all future generations to build upon. John made it clear that our attitude toward the apostles is the basis of being built on the foundation.

*That which was from the beginning, which **we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life** — 2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us — 3 **that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.** 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. 1Jn. 1:1-4*

The apostles and prophets are the foundation because if we are not in fellowship with them then we cannot be in fellowship with God.

They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. 6 We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth

and the spirit of error. 1Jn. 4:5-6

Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone,

The meaning of this chief cornerstone is based more on the prophecies from which it was first revealed than its meaning in the Greek language. It is completely a biblical word and used only in writings by Christians (ecclesiastical). Literally it means something placed at the extreme corner.

akrogōniaios, a word wholly Biblical and ecclesiastical (Winer's Grammar, 99 (94); ... *akros* extreme, and *gōnia* corner, angle), placed at the extreme corner; ... cornerstone; used of Christ, 1 Peter 2:6; Eph 2:20; the Sept. Isa 28:16 ..." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:204)

Since this term was not used in common (Koine) or in Classical Greek, we can gain no more from it that the basic meaning of the two terms it is made of.

"*akros*... highest, extreme; *to akron* the topmost point, the extremity... the farthest bounds, uttermost parts, end, of the earth, of heaven..." (Thayer, p. 24; 206)

"*gonia*... an angle, i.e. a. an external angle, corner... the head of the corner, i.e. the corner-stone,..." (Thayer, p. 123; 1137)

A look at the prophecies gives is the best mean to understand what the Holy Spirit expected to be understood as revealing. It is obvious from the two prophecies that this stone is the chief cornerstone of the foundation. It is laid in Zion for a foundation. A tried stone and a precious cornerstone that will create a sure foundation. Hence it is a chief cornerstone because it creates all the angles for the building.

Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Whoever believes will not act hastily (be in haste - ASV). Isa. 28:16

The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. Ps. 118:22

Everything laid after the chief cornerstone is laid must be made to fit that stone. If it will not fit with it then the only solution is to remove the stone that doesn't fit because the chief cornerstone is fixed. Set in place by God it is a precious cornerstone that cannot be moved or changed.

Jesus warned the "*chief priests and the elders of the people*" that the prophecy in the Psalms had been written for them. He was the stone, they would reject Him, and He would become the chief cornerstone. He further explained that this would end in the kingdom of God being taken from the Jewish nation and given to another nation. He also warned that there was grave danger in rejecting this stone as it would also break those who fell on it and grind to powder those it fell upon.

23 Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?" ... 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes"? 43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." Mt. 21:23, 42-44

After Peter was confronted after healing the lame man and preaching his second sermon, He reminded these same people of what Jesus had told them just a few months earlier.

This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:11-12

Peter looks at both prophecies and explains that after God laid this elect and precious chief cornerstone, both outcomes were possible. To those who believe He is precious. Obeyed, honored, praised and with all authority. To those who do not believe and reject Him, He became a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." 7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," 8 and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. 1Pet. 2:4-8

It becomes evident that this a multifaceted stone that cannot exist in the real world. No stone can at the same time be the chief cornerstone in the foundation and also be a stone of stumbling and rock of offense. While one might fall on the chief cornerstone and be broken, how can the chief cornerstone fall on the one who rejects it?

*but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For **they stumbled at that stumbling stone.** 33 **As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."** Rom 9:31-33*

Since there is no use of this outside of the Bible with which to compare and assess, there is no way to proceed any further. It is evident that it is a stone of great importance. It was the stone which God himself selected and placed. It was a costly stone, precious and elect, it was made the head of the corner and in spite of the builders (those who crucified Christ) rejection, it became the head of and the chief cornerstone.

Although no stone will at the same time pulverize those who mock it and remain stable to hold the rest of the building in place, in spiritual figures the physical must sometimes be enlarged to capture the full spiritual significance.

Some proclaim this stone holds two walls together in the building (but what of the other two walls?) Others think of the smooth and perfectly shaped stone which guides all the angles of the building. This would fit well with our understanding of Christ's ruling and guiding hand in all that His church must do. From the divergence of opinion in definitions and commentaries, the above will have to suffice even the most curious.

21 in whom the whole building, being joined together,

In whom refers, as it has throughout the entire letter to our relationship to Christ. Every spiritual blessing is in Christ and in Christ the whole building is joined together. Thus this chief cornerstone is also responsible for holding every other stone in the building in place. Every single stone, from those baptized and added after the first sermon until the very last stone that will be added prior to the Lord's return, that is the whole building.

*"pas,... I. adjectivally, and 1. with anarthrous nouns; a. **any, every one** (sc. of the class denoted by the noun annexed to PAS);... **all or any of the class** indicated... b. *any and every, of every kind, ...* 2. with nouns which have the article, **all the, the whole, ... with a Plural, all (the totality of the persons of things designated by the noun)** ... *always, perpetually, ... in every condition, or in every matter, ... in everything, in every way, on every side, in every particular or relation,...*" (Thayer, p. 491-493; 3956).*

Jesus is the chief cornerstone which connects and joins the entire church of believers together into a united whole. Any where in the world and at any time in the world, Jesus is the tie that holds all into one. Thus the entire building made up of every class and kind of each and every individual believer for all time is under consideration. This broadens out this "chief corner stone" to a concept beyond man's ability to even comprehend. No wonder those who seek its exact meaning founder. Jesus is responsible as the chief cornerstone for joining together the entire building.

Although Jesus is chief cornerstone, He is also responsible for being the wise master builder who fits each and every stone (Eph 2:21) and joint (Eph 4:16) into the whole of both building and body.

*sunarmologéō, from **sún** (4862), together, and **harmologéō** (n.f.), to join together, which is from **harmós** (719), joint and **lógos** (3056), word, account, reckoning. To fit or frame together..."* (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4883)

*sunarmologéō, fit/join together, unite ... This compound is documented only in Christian writings and, like the simple verb, belongs to the language of building construction: fit together (stones; cf. "joint"). According to Eph 2:21 ... in Christ "the whole structure [of the Church of Jews and Gentiles] is joined together into a whole" so that **Christ constitutes the "cornerstone"** ... **He alone establishes the Church's unity, he alone maintains its connection with the "saints and members of the household of God"** (Exegetical Dictionary NT:4883)*

For the one who fit an entire universe together into a cohesive whole, this is not a difficult task. But with all the different materials and all the differing weaknesses for Jesus to keep this church held together is a daunting task no one on earth could help Him to accomplish. Listen to Paul

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 16 **Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?** 17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. **For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.** 1 Cor 3:10-17

As the type and shadow of building and body give way to the reality of God's great spiritual temple, built up of individual Christians as the stones(materials), Jesus keeps that building knit and joined together and becomes a stable and fixed building.

oikodome, "a building, or edification" (see A, No. 1), is used (a) literally, e. g., Matt 24:1; Mark 13:1-2; (b) figuratively, e. g., Rom 14:19 (lit., "the things of building up"); 15:2 of a local church as a spiritual building, 1 Cor 3:9, or the whole church, the body of Christ, Eph 2:21. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3619),

This building continually grows but is always completed. There is always room to add one more stone, but the temple of God is always perfect from generation to generation.

grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

The dynamic growth of this temple never ends. It is always growing!

"*auxano*... 1. trans. to cause to grow, to augment... Pass. to grow, increase, become greater... 2. acc. to later usage... intrans. **to grow, increase: of plants... of a multitude of people...** of inward Christian growth... so as to form a temple, Eph. 2:21...of the external increase of the gospel..." (Thayer, p. 84; 837)

auxano ... **to grow, to increase in size, whether of animate beings or of plants** - 'to grow, growth.' ... 'look how the wild flowers grow' Luke 12:27; 'the child grew' Luke 2:40. 'the whole body ... grows as God wants it to grow' Col 2:19. In Col 2:19 is used figuratively in the sense that the reference of 'body' is the church rather than a physical body. Normally a term for 'growth' would imply not only size but also number, that is to say, the growth of the church would be in terms of the increase of members of the church, though it might refer to spiritual maturity..."(Greek-English Lexicon NT:837)

As Paul paints this beautiful spiritual vision for all Christians to see, each phrase adds a new stroke of the pen and the picture becomes clearer, and more beautiful. Now the building being formed by each individual Christian who is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone, is increasing and becoming greater and more magnificent. This is a temple which is greater than that of Solomon's.

"*naos*... used of the temple at Jerusalem, but only of the sacred edifice (or sanctuary) itself, consisting of the holy place and the holy of holies (in class. Grk. used of the sanctuary or cell of a temple, where the image of the god was placed... used specifically of the Holy place, where the priests officiated... of the Holy of Holies... in the visions of the Revelation used of the temple of the 'New Jerusalem'... of any temple whatever prepared for the true God... metaph. of a company of Christians, a Christian church as dwelt in by the Spirit of God I Cor 3:16; II Cor. 6:16; Eph 2:21; for the same reason, of the bodies of Christians, I Cor 6:19..." (Thayer, p. 422; 3485)

This is the term that applies to the Holy or Most Holy Place(Holy of Holies). Only that part of the temple which the priests themselves could enter. Only that place where the High Priest under the Jewish age could enter once a year on the day of atonement. That temple was forever removed as the dwelling place of God when His people rejected His Son and crucified Him. Yet the temple itself still stands and always will stand. The temple of God, his dwelling place has been moved from the physical dwelling place at Jerusalem to the spiritual hearts of every faithful believer in Christ. Christians are the temple of God! Consider the passages quoted in the definition above.

Or do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. 1Cor. 6:18-21

And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? **For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."** 17 Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." 18 "I will be

a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." 2Cor. 6:15-18

Do you not know that **you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?** 17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. 1Cor. 3:14-20

To be a part of this Holy temple is one of the great spiritual privileges and blessings of being in Christ. Praise be to the God of heaven for such a blessing! The glory is this temple is far greater than that of Solomon's.

"For thus says Jehovah of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and **I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;** 7 and I will shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and **I will fill this house with glory,** saith Jehovah of hosts. 8 The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts. 9 **The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former,** says Jehovah of hosts; and **in this place will I give peace,** says Jehovah of hosts." Hag. 2:6-9

22 in whom you also are being built together

With another phrase another stroke of the brush is added and the picture grows more vivid. The parallel passages help fill out and complete the picture as far as is possible in this age.

Now **if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,** 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 1Cor. 3:12-15.

4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 **you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.** 1Pet. 1:4-5

Reading these words nearly 2000 years later and nothing has changed. The building together has changed from generation to generation regarding those who are building on the foundation, and the stones that are being added are in addition to those described here. But even if the earth continues for thousands and thousands of years, nothing will change. The gospel has eternal power to perpetually add and lead others to be built together.

sunokodomeō, to **build together**, ... Plut.:-metaph. ... 2. Pass. **to be built in with other materials**, (Liddell and Scott, Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:4925)

sunokodomeō, from *sún* (4862), together, and *oikodoméō* (3618), to build. To build in company with someone. With the dat., in the pass., figuratively **to be built together with other Christians into a spiritual temple** (Eph 2:22). ... " (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 4925)

With all the information above, the picture grows ever clearer. Paul, Apollos, Peter, and other apostles, prophets, evangelists pastors and teachers are continually adding people to the body by preaching the gospel. Christ takes each one of these and fits them into the temple He is building for the Lord. Some of these materials are better than others, and not all endure, but they are all initially built into this temple. Each Ephesian, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female, had been built into this great temple of God.

We as they are all a part of the living temple of God. We are the living stones out of which it is built. Each of us is a stone, but only we know what we are truly made of. Are we a precious stone of gold silver or gem, or are we a stone of stubble, of wood, or of hay. The day will declare that, but let each of us put on the armor of God that at that evil day we might be a precious stone purged only of dross and not entirely consumed.

for a dwelling place of God

"Dwelling place" is defined:

katoikétérion ... neuter noun from *katá* (2596), an intensive, and *oikétérion* (3613), **a dwelling place** (Eph 2:22; Rev 18:2). A dwelling place. It is distinct from *katoíkésis* (2731), the act of dwelling, and *katoikía* (2733), a house, settlement, colony. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2732)

katoiketerion (*kata*, "down," used intensively, and *oiketerion* "a habitation" (from *oiketer*, "an inhabitant," and *oikos*, "a dwelling")... **implying more permanency than *oiketerion*** is used in Eph 2:22 **of the church as the dwelling place** ... Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:2732

All that the temple of God in the Old Testament conveyed by having God dwell in it now applies to the temple of God and each individual stone that is built into it. In the dedication of the temple Solomon made the following statements about this dwelling place of God.

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! 1Kings 8:27

And the LORD said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. 1Kings 9:3

This is what Christians are to understand about themselves and about the congregation they attend and the universal church of which it is a part. God's eyes and heart are with us perpetually.

in the Spirit.

Again, this is greatly dependant upon the Holy Spirit and our relationship to Him. If we rebel against His commands in the written if we do not respect all the truth that He has revealed then it will have an impact on the quality of our material and upon the indwelling of God. God will not dwell in a stiff-necked and uncircumcised heart. He will now dwell in the heart of one which has waxed gross. One who has closed his eyes and his ears. Those who honor God with their lips while their heart is far from him will not have him dwelling within them. In is the Greek preposition "EN" which was translated earlier as "the instrument." Without hearkening to the Spirit there will be no indwelling.