



Ephesians

Text and study helps



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inductive biblestudy

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Spiritual warfare, the so-called four apostolic ministries and of course the submission of the wives to the husbands... all these are themes that are taught based on the letter of Paul to the Ephesians. Paul apparently wrote a very diverse and provocative letter, so provocative, that even today people are still “banging each others heads” using the “doctrines” of Ephesians.

Now of course we do not want to do this, and to provoke just for the sake of provoking isn't fun either. So what approach should we take to get into Ephesians and to start understanding what Paul wrote here - if indeed it was Paul who wrote this letter, what some Theologians also consider to be doubtful.

We find a total different letter of Paul here indeed.

Endless long sentences in Greek which (un)fortunately are shortened in our various English translations, a selection of terms which he is not using in his other letters and - even though the letter is rather cordial - it still is a very much impersonal letter. We do not find any personal greetings for example, we also have a lack of specific problems of the church being addressed in this letter. There are even copies of the Letter existing, which do not contain the name “in Ephesus” as recipients of the letter.

How can it be, that Paul is writing such a letter to a church, in which he has spent the most time on his missionary journeys, at least according to the records in Acts. How can it be, that he does not include personal greetings to a church where he stayed for almost three years, nor does he address any specific problems of this church?

Well, we will try and find out by applying our normal procedure in studying this book. That means we read it through in one sitting from beginning to end, to get a first overview. This will take you about twenty minutes only. Then you may proceed to write paragraph titles and so on.

One important key is also to see the structure of this book. So be careful to look for changes in the book that may indicate structure.

But there is also some repetition that helps us to see the structure in here. Paul is introducing a theme, and later he is structuring his arguments with an almost penetrating repetition of terms. If you use a good literal English translation you would even see that in your translation, most certainly you will see it in the Greek text. But for the start and to get an overview and the main structure, this Greek will not be necessary yet.

By the way, Ephesians does a little play on the normal structure of New Testament letters. Normally there is the opening of the letter and after that a prayer or prayer-report. But instead Paul inserts into these two parts a rather extensive and very complex Doxology (ascription of praise to God). This will be one of the first things to look at, in our lectures on Ephesians.

In the meantime, have fun reading

1,1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of

his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

2 in which you once walked, following the course of
 this world, following the prince of the power of the
 air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of
 disobedience – 3 among whom we all once lived in
 the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires
 of the body and the mind, and were by nature
 children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. 4 But
 God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love
 with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead
 in our trespasses, made us alive together with
 Christ – by grace you have been saved – 6 and
 raised us up with him and seated us with him in the
 heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the
 coming ages he might show the immeasurable
 riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ
 Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved
 through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is
 the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no
 one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship,
 created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God
 prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

11 Therefore remember that at one time you
 Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by
 what is called the circumcision, which is made in the
 flesh by hands – 12 remember that you were at
 that time separated from Christ, alienated from the
 commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the
 covenants of promise, having no hope and without
 God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you

who once were far off have been brought near by
the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace,
who has made us both one and has broken down in
his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by
abolishing the law of commandments and
ordinances, that he might create in himself one new
man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and
might reconcile us both to God in one body through
the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he
came and preached peace to you who were far off
and peace to those who were near. 18 For through
him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.
19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,
but you are fellow citizens with the saints and
members of the household of God, 20 built on the
foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ
Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom
the whole structure, being joined together, grows
into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also
are being built together into a dwelling place for
God by the Spirit.

3:1 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ
Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles – 2 assuming that
you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace
that was given to me for you, 3 how the mystery
was made known to me by revelation, as I have
written briefly. 4 When you read this, you can
perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5
which was not made known to the sons of men in

other generations as it has now been revealed to
 his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. 6 This
 mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs,
 members of the same body, and partakers of the
 promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. 7 Of
 this gospel I was made a minister according to the
 gift of God's grace, which was given me by the
 working of his power. 8 To me, though I am the
 very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to
 preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of
 Christ, 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is
 the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who
 created all things, 10 so that through the church
 the manifold wisdom of God might now be made
 known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly
 places. 11 This was according to the eternal
 purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our
 Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access
 with confidence through our faith in him. 13 So I
 ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering
 for you, which is your glory.

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the
 Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and
 on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches
 of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened
 with power through his Spirit in your inner being,
 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through
 faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the

saints what is the breadth and length and height
and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that
surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all
the fullness of God.

20 Now to him who is able to do far more
abundantly than all that we ask or think, according
to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory
in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all
generations, forever and ever. Amen.

4:1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to
walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you
have been called, 2 with all humility and
gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another
in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in
the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one
Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope
that belongs to your call – 5 one Lord, one faith,
one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is
over all and through all and in all.

7 But grace was given to each one of us
according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8
Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he
led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." 9
(In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but
that he had also descended into the lower parts of
the earth? 10 He who descended is the one who
also ascended far above all the heavens, that he

might fill all things.) 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ! – 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner

of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23
and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24
and to put on the new self, created after the
likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let
each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor,
for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry
and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your
anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28
Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him
labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so
that he may have something to share with anyone
in need. 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your
mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as
fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those
who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of
God, by whom you were sealed for the day of
redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and
anger and clamor and slander be put away from
you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one
another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as
God in Christ forgave you.

5:1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved
children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and
gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and
sacrifice to God. 3 But sexual immorality and all
impurity or covetousness must not even be named
among you, as is proper among saints. 4 Let there

be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking,
 which are out of place, but instead let there be
 thanksgiving. 5 For you may be sure of this, that
 everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who
 is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no
 inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let
 no one deceive you with empty words, for because
 of these things the wrath of God comes upon the
 sons of disobedience.

7 Therefore do not associate with them; 8 for at
 one time you were darkness, but now you are light
 in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit
 of light is found in all that is good and right and
 true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the
 Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of
 darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is
 shameful even to speak of the things that they do in
 secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the
 light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that
 becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and
 Christ will shine on you."

15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise
 but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time,
 because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be
 foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is
 debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19

addressing one another in psalms and hymns and
spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the
Lord with all your heart, 20 giving thanks always
and for everything to God the Father in the name of
our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one
another out of reverence for Christ.

22 Wives, <submit> to your own husbands,
as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of
the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his
body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the
church submits to Christ, so also wives should
submit in everything to their husbands.

25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved
the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he
might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the
washing of water with the word, 27 so that he
might present the church to himself in splendor,
without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she
might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same
way husbands should love their wives as their own
bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For
no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and
cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30
because we are members of his body. 31
"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother
and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become
one flesh." 32 This mystery is profound, and I am
saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33

However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), 3 "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, 6 not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. 9 Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the

authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

In contrast to Philemon we have to deal with a longer text here. In spite of this, there are no other questions for the survey method. We will still try to get an overview of the book at first, like we did with the other book.

For this purpose we have the questions of the survey method, and we simply answer what we can after one or two readings:

What kind of literature is this?

.....
.....

What is the main topic, the main thought?

.....
.....

What is the purpose of the writer of this book/letter?

.....
.....

How is the message structured?

.....
.....

Who wrote this to whom, where and why?

.....
.....

In addition we might want to find answers for the following questions:

Which verses form a greeting and an ending?

.....
.....

Is there a clear turning point in the letter? If so, where?

.....
.....

Where in the letter are the prayers?

.....
.....

Which themes can you discover and where?

.....
.....
.....
.....

We may also note other things that caught our attention:

There is a footnote at 1:1 - in some versions it does not say "in Ephesus" - why is that ?

.....
.....

Neither at the beginning, nor at the end Paul is writing personal greetings - why is that ?

.....
.....

When and how long was Paul in Ephesus - Information out of the book of Acts ?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Now we may read the text paragraph by paragraph - which titles would you give each paragraph ?

1. 1: 1
2. 1: 2
3. 1: 3-14
4. 1:15-23
5. 2: 1-10
6. 2:11-22
7. 3: 1-13
8. 3:14-19
9. 3:20-21
10. 4: 1- 6
11. 4: 7-16
12. 4:17-24
13. 4:25-32
14. 5: 1- 6
15. 5: 7-14
16. 5:15-21
17. 5:22-24
18. 5:25-33
19. 6: 1-4
20. 6: 5-9
21. 6:10-17
22. 6:18-20
23. 6:21-22
24. 6:23-24

1: 1 Saints in Ephesus

Compare this greeting (Similarities and differences) with the other greetings in Paul's letters.
What terms does Paul use to identify Christians with? What is the meaning of these terms?

1: 2 Grace and Peace

How are God and Jesus named? What is the meaning of the prepositions used?
What is the meaning of the different titles that are attributed to Jesus?
What is „Grace" and „Peace"? How are they related?

1: 3-14 Every spiritual blessing (Doxology)

What repetition can you see in the text - what does that tell you about the structure?
What are the main points of Paul's opening doxology (speech of praise) and how are they indicated?
Observe carefully the use of the preposition "in".
Read Acts 16:6; 18:18-20; 20:17-38. How was the church in Ephesus founded and built?

1:15-23 Enlightened heart

What does the term "for this reason" refer to?
How are the Ephesian Christians characterized?
What do we learn about Paul as a man of Prayer?
How is God characterized?
What does Paul want his readers to know? (Compare Jeremiah 9:23-29)
What is the meaning of "the eyes of your hearts enlightened"?
What are the three specific requests in the prayer of Paul?

A note concerning the Greek in 1:19

unmeasurable	=	hyperballo	=	to throw over	=	far exceeding
Power	=	dynamis				
at work	=	energeia	=	Power		
great	=	ischys	=	Might		
Might	=	kratos	=	inherent strength		

In what way did God demonstrate his power?
Which metaphor describes the church, and is introduced in this prayer?

2: 1-10 Made us alive

What persons (groups of persons) are mentioned in this paragraph?
With what term is the acting of God introduced?
What is the effect of the acting of God?
What is the condition of the groups of persons before and after the acting of God, what verb describes it?

2:11-22 ONE new humanity

What persons (groups of persons) are mentioned in this paragraph?

With what term is the acting of God introduced?

What is the effect of the acting of Christ?

What is the condition of the groups of persons before and after the acting of God, and with what verb is it described?

What is the meaning of the term “dividing wall” and “hostility”?

How do now both have access to the father?

3: 1-13 The mystery revealed

Why is the verb in 3:1 in brackets - and where is it then?

What are verses 2-13 grammatically (sentence structure)?

How does Paul describe himself - Prisoner of whom and for whom?

Where from is Paul's ministry?

How was the “mystery” revealed to him?

What was not clear long ago, and is now clear?

What ministry does Paul have now?

To whom shall the wisdom of God now be made known?

How old is this Plan of God?

What for does Paul pray, because of the sufferings?

3:14-19 Power through his spirit

What does the “therefore” in 3:14 relate to?

How is God the father also described?

What for is Paul praying specifically?

What is the effect of this prayer, or rather of the fulfillment of this prayer?

What is limiting the love of Christ?

With what shall they be filled?

3:20-21 More abundantly

Where does the one work, who can do far more abundantly?

What is the meaning of “abundantly far more”?

Where is there to be Glory to him, and what does that mean?

4: 1- 6 Unity of the Spirit

What does the “now” (or “therefore”) relate to?

What attitudes shall Christians live in their relationships?

What do Christians have to do with the unity of the Spirit?

How often is the term “one” used here, and what does that mean?

4: 7-16 He gave gifts

With what limitations was grace given?
How is the OT-Quote linked to the argument?
What are the gifts that Jesus gave to the people?
What irregularity can we observe in the listing of the “Gifts”?
What for have these gifts been given?
To what shall the application of these gifts finally lead?
What bad effects shall be avoided by using these gifts?
What concept of the church is introduced in this paragraph?

4:17-24 Truth in Christ

How is the lifestyle “before Christ” described?
What is the root of it, and what is the fruit of it?
Where is the turning point in this paragraph?
What commands (Ethics) are stated here?

4:25-32 Put away!

What is the meaning of truth?
How is the term “be angry” to be understood, how is it limited?
What contrasts (pairs of contrasts) can you see in the text?
What example of “God in Christ” shall we imitate?

5: 1- 6 As Christ loved us

How is this example now further developed?
Where is the turning point in this paragraph, and what term is showing it?
What shall Christians avoid?
What are the consequences of not walking in love?

5: 7-14 Children of light

What contrast is illustrated here?
With whom should children of light not be associated?
What could that mean?
What are the characteristics of “children of light”?
What is also a function of children of light? (What would that “exposing” mean?)

5:15-21 Filled with the Spirit

What does the “so” or “therefore” refer to?
How is the “walking as unwise” being described?
How is the “walking as wise” being described?
What are the results of “being filled with the Spirit”?
What image (what contrast) is Paul using here - and why?

5:22-24 Subject to husbands

How shall wives relate to their husbands?

What comparison (what analogy) is employed here?

5:25-33 Love your wives

How shall men relate to their wives?

What comparison (what analogy) is employed here?

How long is the paragraph relating to the women, and how long the one relating to the men?

6: 1-4 Children / Parents

What are the responsibilities of children towards their parents?

What are the responsibilities of parents towards their children?

How does Paul reason in his exhortation towards the children?

6: 5-9 Slaves / Masters

What are the responsibilities of the Christian slaves towards their masters?

What position should they be conscious of?

What are the responsibilities of the Christian masters towards their slaves?

What shall they stop - and how does this affect the working climate?

6:10-17 Armour of God

In what relation is this paragraph to the previous one and to the whole book?

What is the source of strength of the Christian?

Why do Christians have to wear the whole armour of God?

What parts are being described, and what do they mean?

6:18-20 Pray in the Spirit

How, for whom and when shall they pray?

What is Paul's specific prayer request, what is he not asking to pray for?

6:21-22 Tychicus

How is Tychicus being described?

What for is he sent?

Where else does Tychicus occur in the Bible and for what purpose?

6:23-24 Undying love

What threefold blessing is Paul writing down here?

Where from is this blessing?

What is the answer of Christians towards grace?

How is the ending of the letter related to the beginning of the letter?

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

(English Standard Version)

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 **to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be **to the praise of his glory**.

13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory**.

3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,*

4 even as **he chose us** in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 **he predestined us for adoption** through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 **to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

7 In him **we have redemption through his blood**, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 **making known to us the mystery of his will**, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In him **we have obtained an inheritance**, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be **to the praise of his glory**.

13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, **were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit**, 14 who **is the guarantee of our inheritance** until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory**.

3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us **in Christ** with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,*

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4 even as **he chose us in him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 **he predestined us for adoption** through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 **to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

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7 **In him we have redemption through his blood**, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 **making known to us the mystery of his will**, according to his purpose, which he set forth **in Christ** 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things **in him**, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 **In him we have obtained an inheritance**, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope **in Christ** might be **to the praise of his glory**.

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13 **In him** you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed **in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit**, 14 who **is the guarantee of our inheritance** until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory**.

Observing the content of the previous two pages, which is simply observing the text carefully, we may notice a few things that show us how well Paul thought this text through when he wrote it.

Firstly, Paul is helping his audience by structuring the text with a Refrain-like repetition “to the praise of his Glory / glorious Grace”. With that he indicates 3 Verses or rather 3 parts. But firstly, these three parts are introduced with a summary sentence, where Paul states that God has indeed “blessed us with every spiritual blessing”.

These blessings are “in the heavenly places” or “in the heavens”, and all of them, without any exception are “in Christ”. This “in Christ” or “in him” is very clearly emphasized and underlined. Outside of him, there are no blessings to be found. Yet, these blessings are no future issue, but all of them have already been given. So it can only mean, that those who are blessed, are also “in the heavenly places”, even though they still live on earth. The Saints or the faithful, are thus the ones that live simultaneously on earth and in heaven.

The blessings are grouped into two blessings, then three and then two again, which can easily be attributed to the Father, to the Son and to the Spirit. So in total they are complete - seven blessings - and they are from the triune God..

So, before Paul is arriving at the prayer or a prayer-report, as he would usually do when using his regular letter structure, he is inserting this marvellous doxology. In that he explains the believers that they are indeed blessed in Christ, and that this has taken place according to “the pleasure of his will”.
So here we already may see the total message of Grace, which is then further expounded and explained throughout the rest of the letter.

In terms of application we may learn, that God is blessing us according to his will, without any previous effort or work from our side as a condition - it is simply his grace. God is blessing us in the heavenly places, but the effect is already not taking place on earth. And he is blessing us in Christ - since now we also are in Christ.

In addition we should of course try to understand the meaning of each of these blessings, which means we should look up the terms used in a concordance and thus in other places in the Bible. Then we may also look them up in a Bible Dictionary or even in a Theological Dictionary.

- We are:
- chosen, to be holy and blameless in love (before the foundation of the world)
 - pre-destined to be his children (to be sons in Christ)
 - we have redemption through his blood (Redemption = Liberation)
 - to us the mystery of his will is being made known
 - we have received an inheritance (or have become an inheritance)
 - we have been sealed with the promised Holy Spirit (Seal = Possession & Quality)
 - he is the downpayment of our inheritance (Guarantee)

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Therefore,

as I have heard of the faith
in the Lord Jesus
with you
and the love
toward all the saints,

I do not cease to give thanks for you

remembering you in my prayers,

that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,

the Father of glory,

may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in coming to know him,

so that,

with the eyes of your heart enlightened,

you may know

what is the hope of his calling,

what are the riches of his glorious inheritance

in the saints,

and **what is the immeasurable greatness of his *power***

in us who believe,

by the working of his great power,

which operated in Christ

Having raised him from the dead

and having seated him at his right hand

in the heavenly places,

far above all rule and authority and power and dominion,

and above every name that is named,

not only in this age but also in the age to come.

And he has put all things under his feet

and has made him the head over all things for the church,

which is his body,

the fullness of him

who is filling all in all.

(Adapted text according to the Interlinear)

This again (Like 1:3-14) is a very long and complex sentence.

Yet, looking at it in a different layout (optically) reveals that it is not so difficult to understand. Paul is actually praying for three things, which he already has mentioned in the opening Doxology (Eph 1:3-14). These three things are also coming from the Father, from the Son and from the Spirit as we saw it before.

The closing part is “simply” describing the power, with which God is at work in “us who believe”, in order to achieve the things for which Paul is praying.

Look at this description of the power of God a bit more detailed, and see where it all ends...

Power, Strength (all 5 terms that exist in Greek):

Verse 19

ὑπερβάλλον	= hyperballon:	taller than, superior, higher than
μέγεθος	= megethos:	Greatness
δυνάμις	= dynamis:	Power to achieve what is purposed
ἐνέργεια	= energeia:	at work, Power in action, Energy
κράτος	= kratous:	Strength, inherent strength
ἰσχύς	= is'chous:	Vigour, Strength

Verse 20

ἐνήργηκεν	= energeken:	Power to act
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Political (spiritual) Powers (all 4 terms that exist in Greek):

Verse 21

ἀρχῆς	= arches:	Control, Rule
ἐξουσίας	= exousias:	Authority
δυνάμεως	= dynameos:	Power
κυριότητος	= kyriotetos:	Lordship, Government

First Paul is using every possible term from the Greek Language to describe power/strength. Then he describes HOW this power has operated, that is by raising Christ from the dead and seating him in the heavens.

There he is ruling over every possible power - here again Paul uses all the Greek terms for political powers - Christ is the ultimate ruler. Then he shows that this power of Christ is not limited in strength, in Rule, nor in Duration - “in the world to come”.

Now he is relating this power to the Church. Everything is subjected to this power and Christ is (in this might) the head of the Church. The Church then is the body of Christ (so it is also under the feet of the Church) and the Church is his fullness - but he again is the fullness of the Church.

A very amazing picture - and that is why Paul is praying for them, that they may receive the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation to see this.

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2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience — 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. 4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved — 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Here we find again a very long sentence. Paul is changing his way of communicating now. Before he has usually built his arguments on three elements which were related to the Father, to the Son and to the Spirit. Now he is using an arrangement of stating Contrasts. He is first listing a few things that speak about negative aspects, then he is introducing a change which happens through the intervention of God in Christ, and then he is listing some positive aspects after that. The change from death to life is caused by the intervention of God.

Our condition BEFORE Christ, and our condition AFTER Christ.

Condition BEFORE Christ (2:1-3):

- Being dead in trespasses and sins
- **having lived** (having walked) according (to the course of) this world
- (having walked) ...under the ruler of the power of the air...
- having lived (once lived) in the passions of our flesh...
- by nature children of wrath...

Condition AFTER Christ (2:4-10):

- made us alive together (with Christ)
- raised us with him (with Christ)
- seated us in heavenly places (with Christ)
- have been saved (through faith, by a gift of God)
- created what he has made us (in Christ) -> for good works, to be **our way of life**.

So the Contrast looks the following way:

Before

(Perpetual)Condition of death

having lived according to this world

under the ruler of the power of the air

in the passions of our flesh

Children of wrath by nature

Now

Made alive with Christ

having been raised with Christ

having been seated in heaven with Christ

having been saved through faith (God's gift)

His work created for good works, **to walk** in them

The difference happens through the big **“BUT GOD”**, who has intervened. The big **“BUT GOD”** is the cross.

There is a change from a death without perspective and an uninevitable end, the wrath of God - to a life with perspective, to an active walk which will produce good works (not ours, but the ones that God has prepared).

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands – 12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without 3God in the world. 13 **But now in Christ Jesus** you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Our condition BEFORE Christ, and our condition AFTER Christ.

Condition BEFORE Christ (2:11-12):

Gentiles from birth (outside), called “uncircumcision” by the “circumcision”

- were without Christ
- aliens from the commonwealth of Israel (People of Covenant)
- strangers to the covenant of Promise
- no Hope
- without God in the world

Condition IN Christ (2:13-19):

been brought near in the blood of Christ

- made ONE out of both (having broken dividing wall, having abolished law, having made peace)
- both access to the father in one spirit
- No more strangers, but co-citizens with the saints
- Members of God's household
- built together into a dwelling place for God

So the contrast is looking the following way:

Earlier separate “uncircumcised”

being without Christ

aliens to commonwealth of Israel (people of Covenant)

Strangers to covenant of Promise

No Hope in the World

without God in the world

Now been brought near - made Peace

made into ONE new man in Christ

both having access to the Father

Co-Citizens with the saints

Members of God's Household

built into a dwelling place for God

The difference happens through the **“BUT IN CHRIST”** who has intervened. The reason for this **“BUT IN CHRIST”** is the Cross, what Christ has achieved there.

The change from a state of Separation and a divided situation takes place to a reconciliation. What was without Christ before, is now ONE new and reconciled man (humanity) - one Body. What did not have citizenship at all in the people of

Now Paul is changing his way of communication. In Chapter 2 he has worked by using contrast, now he is choosing some other means of rhetoric. Beginning in 3:1 he says:

For this reason, I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles - 2 you have ... heard ...
In all translations there is a verb in 3:1, but in the Greek text there is none, or not here at least. Paul is beginning the sentence, but then makes a change of thought - or inserts something - and speaks about his ministry and proclamation. Only in Verse 14 is coming back to what he originally wanted to say, and now we also find the verb that he wanted to use in the first place "for this reason I bow my knees before the father ..."

So, Paul actually wants to pray, but interrupts that thought right away and only picks it up again in verse 14. Doing that it looks at first sight like he has just had some other thought on his mind - a random change? Most probably not. If we consider how careful he has structured and arranged the text in the rest of the book, we may almost be certain, that he has chosen this means of rhetoric on purpose. Either to keep the attention span of his audience, or even to make it a bit more exciting and personal for his audience. Of course this is "interpretation" but with a sound basis.

It is not very difficult to understand chapter 3. Paul is simply showing that the mystery of Christ has been given to him as well as a revelation (so by the Grace of God and not by theological achievement or performance). This mystery he is now proclaiming to the Gentiles. But he also wants the Church to proclaim that mystery and to be a witness of it, not only to people on earth, but also to "rulers and authorities in the heavens ..."

Since this is an enormous task, Paul is praying from verse 14 on that the Church may be strengthened in order to fulfill that task and of course to understand the Love of Christ, which is incomprehensible. This is what should take place in the Christian community. Then strength that is necessary we already know, since Paul described this in chapter 1.

At the end he is closing this part of the book with a short Doxology - a word of Praise to God.

Now we will see a second part of the book, which is much more focussing on that what the Church should do in response to the things that God already has done. So, how the Church should live or "walk" as he puts it.

By the way, the only personal things we find in this book, are here in Chapter 3. We get a little glimpse of the personal situation of Paul and a bit of the Ephesians as well, that is in verses 1 and 13.

So, let's look at some aspects of structure until here and from here on as well...

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Oun / ouh

So / Therefore - connected with an imperative it occurs in:

4:1 4:17 5:1 5:7 5:15 6:14

Peripateo / peripatew

walk / live (leading life) - Occurs in Ephesians in:

2:2 2:10 4:1 4:17 5:2 5:8 5:15

(H)istemi / iſthmi

stand / stand against / stand fast / be rooted - occurs in Ephesians in:

6:11 ; 6:13 ; 6:14

The "THEREFORE" only occurs in connection with an imperative, where Paul is talking about the "WALKING", and once more at the end, where he speaks of the "STANDING". So we have an indication towards the structure of the second part of Ephesians.

It can also be seen to some degree in the ESV-English translation without the greek:

4:1 I therefore urge you
4:17 Now this I say and testify
5:1 Therefore be imitators
5:7 Therefore do associate
5:15 Look carefully then how you walk
6:14 Stand therefore

Why not making a Segment at 6:14 only?

The last segment is already introduced in 6:10 with some remarks, and especially with a big "FINALLY" (actually means: "What is still lacking"). In this introduction he already uses the term standing, which then leads in to the emphatic statement "THEREFORE STAND" in 14.

So the Segments in the second part have to be arranged in the following way, and otherwise it would not be logical:

4:1 Theme Dignity (worthy)
4:17 Theme Truth
5:1 Theme Love
5:7 Theme Light
5:15 Theme Wisdom
6:10 Theme stand fast, Armour of God

Personal remark:

If we consider this structure of the "walking", we see, that it is introduced in Chp. 2. Because people lived in a wrong "walk" (before Christ) God came in Christ into the world, gave us live and showed us the right "walk".

Therefore (the Oun / ouh), is for a specific reason. It is because Christ has shown it to us, that we also shall walk like him. So it is all because of the great work of Grace seen in the first part of the book.

God has lived in Christ on this earth, has shown how we shall live - walk. Our walk of life has to be rooted in this example of him, so he is the one to be imitated in our lives. This means, the central part of the 5 "walk"-parts is: to follow God's example (be imitators).

Ephesians 5:15-6:9 - a paragraph break in the middle of a sentence is misleading

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, 16 making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but **be filled with the Spirit,**

1. as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves,
 2. singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts,
 3. giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 4. Being subject to one another out of reverence for Christ
- wives _____ to your husbands as you are to the Lord,
for the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.
 - Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish.
In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies.
He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, because we are members of his body
“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”
This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church.
Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.
 - Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother”—this is the first commandment with a promise: “so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”
 - And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
 - Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ; not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women, knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free.
 - And, masters, do the same to them. Stop threatening them, for you know that both of you have the same Master in heaven, and with him there is no partiality.

(Text adapted from the Interlinear)

Observing structure -> The structure of the letter & the connections

1:1 Beginning of Letter		Greeting & Blessing
1:3 Doxology (Praise)	Praise	Blessing from Father Blessing through Son Blessing in Spirit
through this		
1:15 Prayer / Prayer-report	Prayer	Know: Hope of your calling Glorious inheritance Greatness of his Power
and you		
2:1 made us alive with him (New Creature)		Dead - walked according to this world But God - made us alive with Christ Saved - walking in good works
therefore		
2:11 one new humanity . . . (New Community)		Gentiles - without Christ But now - in Christ Reconciled - in one Body
for this reason		
3:1 mystery revealed (through Paul)		Ministry - through revelation proclaim: Gentiles fellow heirs Gift - through God's grace
for this reason		
3:14 Strong through his Spirit (through the church)	Prayer	Request: Strong through his Spirit Christ may live in your hearts Being rooted in love
3:20 second Praise - to him be glory	Praise	
4:1 so...		
4:1 walk worthy (Unity & Diversity)		... I exhort you
4:17 so...		
4:17 walk in truth (Principle & Specifics)		... I affirm
5:1 so...		
5:1 walk in love (True love not Lust)		... follow God's example
5:7 so...		
5:7 walk in the light (Light not darkness)		... do not be associated with
5:15 so...		
5:15 walk in Wisdom (Woman / Man, Child / Parents, Slave / Master)		... be careful how you live
6:14 so...		
6:11 finally: be strong (what still remains)		... stand firm

Summarizing the survey -> Creating a horizontal chart

1: 1	Faithful Saints	Plan of the Father	The Christian's wealth (Christian position in life)
1: 2	Grace and Peace		
1: 3-14	Every spiritual blessing (Doxology)		
1:15-23	Enlightened Heart		
2: 1-10	Made us alive	Ministry of the Son	
2:11-22	ONE new humanity		
3: 1-13	The mystery revealed	Work of the Spirit	
3:14-19	Power through his Spirit		
3:20-21	More abundantly		
4: 1- 6	Unity of the Spirit	walk worthy of your calling	
4: 7-16	He gave gifts	walk in truth	
4:17-24	Truth in Christ		
4:25-32	Put away!		
5: 1- 6	As Christ loved us	walk in love	
5: 7-14	Children of light	walk in light	
5:15-21	Filled with the Spirit	walk in Wisdom	
5:22-24	Subject to husbands		
5:25-33	Love your wives		
6: 1-4	Children / Parents		
6: 5-9	Slaves / Masters	Stand firm !	(... Warfare)
6:10-17	Armour of God		
6:18-20	Pray in the Spirit		
6:21-22	Tychicus will tell		
6:23-24	Undying love		

Literature
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Content
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Ambiance / Mood
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Terms / Themes
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Structure
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Reason / Effect
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Author / Place
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Recipient / Place
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Date

Book title
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Key verse

Chapters : _____ Verses : _____ Read in : _____