

Ephesians

February 22, 2026

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. Don's message this week is titled Ephesians. Thank you to Paul, Aisha, Jonathan, Happy, Christina, Glynnis, and Don for being part of the service. The scripture readings are taken from Psalm 68 and the first nine verses of Ephesians.

Scripture reading

Ephesians 1:1-9 (NIV)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God to God's holy people in Ephesians. The faithful in Christ Jesus, grace and peace to you from God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who was blessed us in heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chooses us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he protected us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will to the praise of his glorious grace which he was freely given us. The one he loves in him we have redemption through his blood. The forgiveness of God in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavishes on us. With all wisdom and understanding he made knowing to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he purposed in Christ.

Sermon

Thank you very much for being with us on this rather chilly day today. I'm glad to have you with us. In our last sermon we traveled to Corinth and today we're gonna travel to Ephesus. The Apostle Paul is prominent of course in the New Testament and he has a blessing to the Ephesian people. Wonderful words of those faithful in Jesus and Paul says faithful in Jesus Christ by the will of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus and Paul was a worldwide evangelist. He begins sharing spiritual blessings. He says this, praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in the heavenly realms, amazing, with every spiritual blessing in Christ which is great and then he says this, he chose us. He chose us. It's incredible, it's remarkable. He chose in him us even before the creation of the world and Paul was a worldwide evangelist.

How many of you remember J.C. Bailey? He was a remarkable person. He was tall, strong and I remember one day we were living in Ajax at the time and he was preaching that day and he said to me, do you want me to get in the car with you? I'll drive you to your home and we'll have dinner with my mother and father and so forth and then I really realized this man does not know how to drive, he just does not know how to drive at all. He's a fantastic preacher, he's wonderful but he does not know how to drive. But anyway, this wonderful man taught something. He just, he spoke straight. He said, young man, do you ever think about being a preacher? I said, well, you know, my father's a preacher. I didn't ask you that, I didn't ask you that. Do you ever think about being a preacher? And I said, well, you know, I probably, do you ever think about being a preacher? And I said, well, yeah, I kind of think so. He said, then do it, then do it. And I sort of forgot about that over the years and then as the years have kind of followed on, I thought, you know what, that's right. He somehow put it in my head or in my heart that this would be a good thing to do because we want to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. And he said, God will help you with it. And so for now, for I guess 48 years, I've still been doing this, so I share it with you. It's remarkable what God can do for us and in us.

So I just want to share a few things about these things. He said, be holy and blameless in his sight. And then he says, in him, he chose us. And that's correct. He chose you and me to be holy, to be blameless in God's sight. In him, he chose us to be holy because he predestined us to be adopted as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will to the praise of God's glorious grace, which he has freely given us, the one he loves. It's remarkable how much God loves us. It's remarkable what God has done for us. He says this, with the riches of God's grace, he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

Well, I had a memory, long, long time ago, our children are grown. But I remember once when our two children were in the bathtub and they were playing and they had all kinds of bubbles going around. And I'll always remember that, though they put bubbles on their head and everything else and it was all foamy and everything else. And I was thinking about the sermon today and I said, well, that's what that means. It's bubbling over. It's this wonderful lavish, this wonderful being that God has given us. He lavishes his love on us. And the understanding that he has made known that this mystery is our good pleasure in order that we who are first to hope in Christ might be the praise of his glory. And he continually says that, this is his message.

And I know that life can be difficult. Life can be challenging, but there's always that promise. I'll never leave you. I will never forsake you. I am, help me, always with you. I am with you always. And then he says this, and again, he's in Ephesus challenging people for their faith. He says, "For he himself is our peace." We don't have church wars. That's not us. His purpose is to create in himself one new out of the two by making peace. Then he says, "Peace to you who were once far away and peace to you who are now near." We are fellow citizens of God's people, and then listen to this. And we are members of God's household. That's who we are, not because of us, but because of him. And it's just a remarkable understanding of it.

And I was talking to myself about this. How can I share this? And then I just said, I don't have to share anything. It's right there that God belongs to us. Of course he does. But we also belong to him. We have become a holy temple, which is incredible. We have become a holy temple, a dwelling in which God lives by the Holy Spirit. It's amazing what things happen in our life because of God's Holy Spirit. The words written by Paul are still powerful today. And then Paul uses the word over and over and over again together, together of one body, meaning the church. Together of the church, together in the promise in Jesus. And being a servant of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And all of this is true for each of us today. Because he says, I kneel before the Father from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth is now. That's incredible to me. I kneel down before the Father from his whole family in heaven and on earth. That's us.

And then he says, I pray out of his glorious riches that he may strengthen us through God's Holy Spirit and being rooted and established in love that we may have power to know this love, this love that surpasses knowledge and to be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. That's incredible. That we might know his love that surpasses knowledge and be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. How could that be? The fullness of God. Can we ever, can we ever capitalize that? And I'm not going to say that. Can we ever capitalize that? But he is in us. All this is from him, and then he says, and for us. And may I just say truthfully, not just words, that Jesus said, I will never leave you, I will never forsake you. I will be with you always.

And then he continues, make every effort to keep the unity of the Holy Spirit through peace, bond of peace, because there's only one body and one spirit, there's one hope, one God, one Father, who was overall and through all and in all, but to each one of us, I love this, but to each one of us, grace has been given to us. We don't deserve it, he gives it to us. God gave some to be apostles, he gave some to be evangelists, some to be pastors, teachers, to prepare for God's people, for us, for works of service, so that the body of the church, Christ, in speaking the truth in love, that we will grow up in him. Doesn't matter how old we are. We wanna keep growing up in him. Allow God to change our life, allow God to speak truthfully to others, to get rid of unwholesome talk and don't grieve the Holy Spirit by God. So be kind and be passionate, forgiving each other, just as Christ forgives us.

That being imitators of God, being dearly loved children, live a life of love. Then in verse eight, for you were once in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Isn't that great? That's what God says to us. So live as children of light, fruit of the Spirit, consists of all goodness, righteousness, truth. Find out what pleases the Lord, have nothing to do with fruitless darkness, but rather expose those things.

Be very careful than how you live. Not as unwise, but as wise. Making the most of every opportunity. Don't be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Always, always give thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are members of Christ himself.

And yet, I can't just finish because there's always Satan's trickery. So we have to put on the armor of God. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the power of darkness. Stand with the belt of truth buckled around your waist with the breastplate of righteousness. Be fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

Take up the shield of faith. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Pray. Pray in the Holy Spirit. Pray in the Holy Spirit. Always keep praying for all the Christians, all of the saints, meaning those of us who believe, of course. And in Paul's conclusion, he says, "Peace to the brothers and love with faith from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love."

And then Paul writes in Philippians these words, "I thank my God every time I remember you." And I think all of us do this. We remember people. Maybe we've forgotten, and then all of a sudden they come back to us. And how wonderful they've been for us. How we've learned through all of them. And so this wonderful Apostle Paul says this to us, "In all my prayers, every time, I remember you." I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel of Jesus. Grace and peace be to you always.

And then he says, when Paul writes to the Philippians saying, "If you have any encouragement from being united in Christ," which we do, "If you have any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Holy Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion from his love, being one in spirit, do this, make my joy complete." Having the same love, being one in the spirit and purpose. That's a lot. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition in vain conceit, but always consider others. Our attitude should be the same as Christ Jesus. Our attitude should be the same as Christ Jesus." Wow. Who being in every nature of God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but he made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant. Being made in human kindness and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place, gave him the name that is above every name, but the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. And Jesus was before all things, and in all things, and in all things he holds together. Just imagine when the Apostle Paul and John met together in heaven, and just imagine what it will be like for us when we will meet with our loved ones again.

And John tells us our future. He gives us a glimpse, and here's the glimpse. I saw a new heaven. I saw a new earth, the first heaven and the first earth that passed away, and I saw God's holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. Yes, from God. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with us, "and he will live with us. "They will be his people, and God himself will be with them "and be their God." Yes, this is for us, and I know it's difficult, but he'll wipe every tear from our eyes. He promises this, there won't be any more death. There'll be no more sadness, no more mourning, no more crying, no more pain. Those things have passed away, and the one who sits on the throne said, "I am making everything new." And if God says he's making everything new, he's making everything new.

We will inherit all these things, and we will be with God. So may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the fellowship right here, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us. May we surround others with love, the love of God, the love of Jesus, the love of the Spirit, the love of scriptures, the love of brothers and sisters,

And I conclude, the wonderful Mother Teresa said, "Let nothing, "let nobody separate us from your love "and our love for our Lord." May our love be a pure love, a humble love, a constant love, and then may we share that with others, that wonderful hymn, "Faithful love flowing down "from the thorn-covered ground makes me whole, "saves my soul, washes whiter than snow. "Faithful love calms each fear, "reaches down, dries every tear, "holds my hand when I can't stand on my own." Faithful love. And then he says, "Peace to the brothers and sisters, "and love with faith from God the Father "and the Lord Jesus Christ. "Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ "with an unending love."

Jesus is with us right now. He sees us, he loves us, and we look forward to the day where we will see him face to face. Amen.

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