

# Ephesians: Blessed Beyond Belief to Build up the Body

## Lesson 2: Prayer for growth in spiritual insight

Prayer for growth in the intimacy of the knowledge of Christ

### Ephesians 1:15-23

#### Small Group Questions

1. What are the key terms in this prayer? .
2. What is Paul's main focus?
3. What is Paul's request? What is the purpose? Why is this important
4. What questions does this passage raise?
5. How would you summarize this prayer?

#### Outline

- I. Circular letter to those who are "in Christ" 1:1-2
- II. Praise to God: The believer's position in Christ to the Praise of His Glory 1:3-14
  - A. The Father's Past Plan: His eternal plan to choose individuals to be blameless and holy, to be adopted as sons—to the praise of the glory of His grace
  - B. The Son's Present Provision of salvation: redeemed and forgiven, based on the superabounding riches of His grace, having made known the mystery of His will—to subject everything to Christ, providing an inheritance for those who believe—to the praise of His glory
  - C. The Spirit's Present Protection of Future salvation: Sealing those who believe as a pledge of His ownership and their assurance of an inheritance—to the praise of His glory
- III. Thanksgiving and Prayer
  - A. Thanksgiving 1:15-16a
  - B. Prayer 1:16b-23
    1. Content 1:16b-18a
    2. Purpose 1:18b-19
      - To realize
        - The hope of His calling
        - The riches of His inheritance in the saints
        - The extent of His power on their behalf
    3. Creedal confession: Praise to God 1:20-23
      - The power to raise and seat Christ
      - To subject all things to Him
      - To give Him to the Church as Sufficient Head

#### Review

I:1-3:21 Positional Unity of the Church

I:1-23 God's (life insurance) plan and benefits

I:1-2 A circular letter to those "in Christ"  
Paul writes to those "in Christ—that they might experience God's grace and peace.

I:3-14 Believers have: **Every spiritual blessing—to the praise of His glory**  
*The plan, provision and protection of Salvation*

God is blessed, because He has blessed those "in Christ" with every spiritual blessing  
"God has enriched believers with every spiritual benefit for their spiritual well-being."<sup>1</sup>

God's plan and benefits 1:1-23

- Paul writes to those in Christ 1:1-2
- Who have Every Spiritual Blessing to the praise of His glory 1:3-14
- Praying for greater insight into God's plan 1:15-23

<sup>1</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002) p. 301.

The Father's Past **Plan**: His eternal plan to choose individuals to be blameless and holy, to be adopted as sons—to the praise of the glory of His grace

The Son's Present **Provision** of salvation: redeemed and forgiven, based on the superabounding riches of His grace, having made known the mystery of His will—to subject everything to Christ ∴ provide an inheritance for those who believe—to the praise of His glory

The Spirit's Present **Protection** of Future salvation: Sealing those who believe as a pledge of His ownership and their assurance of an inheritance—to the praise of His glory

Every Spiritual Blessing to the praise of His glory 1:3-14

- Plan: Father elected us in eternity past 1:3-6
  - To be holy and blameless adopted sons
- Provision: Son redeemed us in the historical present 1:7-12
  - Superabounding grace
  - Redeemed, Forgiven, Informed and Inheritance
- Protection: Spirit sealed us individually in the past for the future 1:13-14
  - Promised Inheritance

*A reminder of the great things God has done for the individual believer*

**WOW**—it is all about God

All we have in salvation is for His praise and glory.

## Introduction

### Questions

Who do you pray for?

What do you pray about?

How should we pray?

Who should we pray for?

What should we pray about?

What should the focus of our prayer be?

### Overview

1:15-23 Prayer for insight to truly know God

**The prayer for those who have everything**—know God better

*Prayer for personal insight to their relationship with God for the purpose of deeper experiential appreciation of their riches benefits*

To realizing the hope, riches and power on their behalf—which is evidenced by Christ current exalted position

Prayer for insight to truly know God 1:15-23

- To realizing
  - The hope of their calling
  - The riches of His inheritance in the saints (value)
  - The extent of His power on their behalf
- Which is evidenced by
  - The power to raise and seat Christ
  - To subject all things to Him
  - To give him to the Church as sufficient head

Paul prays that believer's know God personally and intimately—so that they would realize the hope of their calling (past), the riches of His inheritance in the saints (value) (future) and the extent of His power on their behalf (present)—which is evidenced by the power to raise and seat Christ and to subject all things to Him and to give Him to the Church as sufficient head (make Him head of the Church).

Why did He do this?

“In chapters 2 and 3 Paul explains the execution of the eternal plan by showing how God makes sinners into saints and builds them into the church, the body of Christ. In 2:1-10 Paul states how sinners, who deserve nothing but God's wrath, become trophies of his grace.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002) p. 305.

## Exposition

The paragraph as a whole with its long sentence containing a **thanksgiving (vv. 15–16a), an intercession (vv. 16b–19), and confessional material in praise of God who has raised and exalted Christ (vv. 20–23), presents God’s purposes for his people on a broad canvas.**<sup>147</sup> Like the preceding eulogy (vv. 3–14), the pattern of thought encompasses past, present, and future, as Paul describes the work of the triune God on behalf of his people. Regarding the **past**, mention is made of God’s raising Christ and exalting him to the place of highest honour, and of his calling believers to himself. In the **present** there is a focus on the privileges that God’s people have, not least his power that is available to them, and on Christ’s present cosmic rule along with the church’s relation to him. As to the **future**, there is mention of the hope to which Christians have been called and of the age to come. The **Father** is addressed in the intercession (v. 17), for he is at work on behalf of his people. **Christ** is the focus of the Father’s activity — in his raising Christ, exalting him, placing all things under his feet, and appointing him to be head over everything for the church. The **Spirit** is the agent of revelation ‘who interprets God’s activity and enables believers to appropriate what has been accomplished for them’.<sup>148</sup> Again, as in the eulogy, there is a **theological, christological, and ecclesiological focus**. Paul prays that his readers might know more of the hope to which God has called them, the rich inheritance which he possesses in them, and the mighty power by which he energizes them. These are all aspects of the mighty salvation which has been won for them in Christ (vv. 18–19). The place of the church in the purposes of God is particularly underscored in this passage: it begins with thanksgiving and prayer for believers, which in turn leads to a statement of God’s purposes for them in Christ. The role of the church in a cosmic context concludes the paragraph: Christ’s rule over all things is for the benefit of his people.<sup>3</sup>

Paul wants his readers to more fully appreciate “every spiritual blessing” so in the thanksgiving and intercession section of the letter, he continues the themes.

### I. Thanksgiving 1:15-16a

“For this reason”

What is Paul’s reason for praying?

- because of what God has done for them in planning, providing and protecting their salvation, i.e. because of their relationship with God—their salvation, Paul is thankful that he knows they are true believers
- because of their faith and love

Particularly tied to 1:13-14—which emphasized “you Gentiles”

Thankful for

“faith in the Lord Jesus Christ”

Focus is on their faithfulness

The focus is not on who they have faith in, but the sphere in which their faith lives and acts?

“love toward all the saints”

Paul includes 2 of his normal 3

faith—love—hope

**I Thessalonians 1:3** remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

<sup>147</sup> Note the insightful treatment of Lincoln, 81–82.

<sup>148</sup> Lincoln, 81.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 126.

**2 Thessalonians 1:3** We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. (ESV);

**Romans 5:1-5** Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us, (ESV)

**Galatians 5:5-6** For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love. (ESV)

**Ephesians 4:2-5** 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, (ESV)

## II. Prayer 1:16b-23

A chief object of all prayer is to bring us to God.<sup>4</sup>

### A. Content 1:16b-18a

Paul matches his statements of thanksgiving with petitions. It is as though, when Paul remembers them, he first breaks forth in thanksgiving, followed quickly with continual petition. He not only wants his followers to start well, but to finish well.

Key element of his petition:

that they would comprehend what God has already done for them in Christ

See 1:3-14

Paul wants his readers to fully grasp the implication of all their privileges in Christ

John Stott puts it aptly: ‘What Paul does in Eph. 1, and therefore encourages us to copy, is both to keep praising God that in Christ all spiritual blessings are ours and to keep praying that we may know the fullness of what he has given us’.<sup>157 5</sup>

### God's title

“God of our Lord Jesus Christ”—draws attention back to 1:3

“Father of glory”

This breaks Paul's normal phrase, “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”—causing this praise to be highlighted.

The titles for God used in the petitionary prayers emphasis or stress a key characteristic of God, often but not exclusively related to His salvific work, that is especially appropriate for the content of the request.

Only the Father of glory can provide what is needed for the readers to grow in knowledge (understanding) and wisdom, hope, glorious inheritance and power.

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<sup>4</sup> P. T. Forsyth, *The Soul of Prayer*, (Regent College Publishing, 1997) p. 16.

<sup>157</sup> Stott, 51–52.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 130.

Glory speaks of the visible representation of the total wonder of His being.

Glory also speaks of the splendour and brightness of the divine presence.<sup>6</sup>

Further, in Paul ‘glory’ and ‘power’ are often used synonymously; for example, the resurrection of Christ is attributed to the power of God (1 Cor. 6:14), and it is also regarded as a manifestation of his glory (Rom. 6:4). As the Father of glory God is the source of all glory and power. He is omnipotent and is, therefore, perfectly qualified to answer the apostle’s wide-ranging petition out of his boundless resources. Thus, Paul intercedes with confidence to ‘the Father of glory’ to enlighten the spiritual eyesight of his readers (note the connection between God’s glory and the light of knowledge in 2 Cor. 4:4, 6) so that they might know more fully about the hope of his calling, the riches of his glorious inheritance, and the surpassing greatness of his power.<sup>7</sup>

Example of titles in petitionary prayer—“God of consolation and Comfort” 2 Corinthians 1:3

### Key Request

Verse 17—the reference to “spirit” is ambiguous.

Or “the Spirit of wisdom and revelation,” or “a spirit of wisdom and revelation.” Verse 17 involves a complex exegetical problem revolving around the Greek term πνεῦμα (*pneuma*). Some take it to mean “the Spirit,” others “a spirit,” and still others “spiritual.” (1) If “the Spirit” is meant, the idea must be a metonymy of cause for effect, because the author had just indicated in vv. 13–14 that the Spirit was already given (hence, there is no need for him to pray that he be given again). But the effect of the Spirit is wisdom and revelation. (2) If “a spirit” is meant, the idea may be that the readers will have the ability to gain wisdom and insight as they read Paul’s letters, but the exact meaning of “a spirit” remains ambiguous. (3) To take the genitives following πνεῦμα as *attributed* genitives (see *ExSyn* 89–91), in which the head noun (“S/spirit”) functions semantically like an adjective (“spiritual”) is both grammatically probable and exegetically consistent.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>9</sup>1:17 Paul’s reference to the Spirit is ambiguous. He may have the Holy Spirit in mind (NIV) or he may be referring to a general gift of spiritual wisdom (NASB). In the Greek New Testament the Holy Spirit is usually (but not always) preceded by a definite article, the Holy Spirit. In 1:17 there is no definite article:

... we should probably not see too great a difference between the two translations, for in either case the gift comes only through the indwelling Spirit of God; and where the Spirit is given, wisdom and revelation follow. (Morris, p. 31)

In either case, wisdom refers to seeing and living life from God’s vantage point (consider wisdom in the book of Proverbs). This is a gift from God.

Think about wisdom and the Christian life. How does a wise person behave? What person do you know who is wise? Why do you consider this person to be wise? How is this wisdom a result of the Holy Spirit’s work in that person’s life? (Who is the wisest person in your home group???)

Paul focuses here on what is accomplished for humans, but as 3:16 shows, he is thinking of the Holy Spirit as the one who performs this task (see also 1 Cor. 2:10–12).<sup>7 10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 131.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 131.

<sup>8</sup> *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (Biblical Studies Press, 2006; 2006). Eph 1:17.

<sup>9</sup> Reed Jolly, *Ephesians Study* (sbcommunity.org)

However, since the ‘revelation’ word-group always describes a disclosure given by God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit, or is the result of events brought about by them,<sup>160</sup> it is more likely that our phrase is speaking of the Holy Spirit; hence the NIV rendering *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation*. ‘Spirit of wisdom’ turns up several times in the Old Testament (but not the expression ‘Spirit of revelation’), the most notable reference being Isaiah 11:2, where the Spirit is said to rest on the Messiah. ‘Wisdom’ has to do with a knowledge of God’s will (Col. 1:9), that is, his saving purposes, and this necessarily involves walking worthily of the Lord (1:10). Often wisdom relates to an understanding of God’s activity in Christ, which in Ephesians is specifically bound up with the mystery (Eph. 1:8–9). The Spirit’s activity in revealing to believers the wisdom of God is most clearly enunciated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:6–16.

In Ephesians<sup>161</sup> the motif of ‘revelation’ has specially to do with making known the mystery or various aspects of it. So at 3:5 God’s open secret is revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets, while at 3:3 the revelation is to Paul himself. Here in the intercession of vv. 17–19, the apostle’s prayer to God is that the Spirit, who had been given to the readers at their conversion (cf. v. 13),<sup>162</sup> might impart wisdom and revelation to them so that they might understand more fully God’s saving plan and live in the light of it. The mystery had already been made known in Christ (vv. 9–10), but the readers needed to grasp its full significance, not least of all their own place within it. And as the Spirit worked in their midst, giving them insights and revealing God’s purposes in Christ, so they would grow in the knowledge of God.<sup>163 11</sup>

The role of the Spirit therefore, is not “more revelation” but the application of reality of the revelation already given/received. It could be said, that Paul wants the Spirit to personalize the magnitude of the truth.

“knowledge of Him”

Epignosis is the fullness of knowledge acquired through personal acquaintance  
See also 3:19 for similar

‘Knowledge’<sup>164</sup> appears in the intercessory prayers of Paul’s four Captivity Epistles (Phil. 1:9; Col. 1:9–10; Phlm. 6, in addition to Eph. 1:17), yet it does not turn up in prayer requests outside these letters. Knowledge is closely connected with ‘*the knowledge of Christ and conformity to his likeness, which, in turn, is the substance of God’s self-revelation*’.<sup>165</sup> Paul’s use of this term here (cf. Col. 2:2; 3:10) and its cognate noun<sup>166</sup> (Eph. 3:19; cf. Col. 2:3) may stand over against the faulty notions of

<sup>7</sup> See the discussion in Gordon Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), 674–76.

<sup>10</sup> Klyne Snodgrass, *The NIV Application Commentary: Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996). 73.

<sup>160</sup> Matt. 11:25, 27; 16:17; Rom. 2:5; 8:19; 1 Cor. 1:7; 2:10; Gal. 1:12, 16; Eph. 3:5.

NIV New International Version

<sup>161</sup> The noun ἀποκάλυψις (‘revelation’; cf. 3:3), the cognate verb ἀποκαλύπτω (‘reveal’; 3:5), and the synonymous γνωρίζω (‘make known’; 1:9; 3:3, 5, 10; 6:19) all occur in connection with various aspects of the mystery.

<sup>162</sup> G. D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 676 n. 55, comments that ‘the prayer is not for some further Spirit reception, but for the indwelling Spirit whom they have already received to give them further wisdom and revelation’. He later adds that the term ‘revelation’ (instead of ‘insight’, used in Col. 1:9) is particularly appropriate in this prayer, since it is ‘through the Spirit’s revelation that his readers will be able also to *understand their place in the people of God*’ (692; emphasis added).

<sup>163</sup> ἐν ἐπιγνώσει αὐτοῦ means ‘consisting in the knowledge of him’, i.e., God, rather than Christ. The growth in knowledge comes about through the Spirit’s activity of revealing and giving insight. Some take the phrase ‘in the knowledge of him’ to signify the *goal* of the wisdom and revelation being imparted (cf. Bruce, 269).

<sup>11</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 132.

<sup>164</sup> Gk. ἐπίγνωσις.

<sup>165</sup> C. F. D. Moule, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 161 (his italics).

<sup>166</sup> Gk. γνώσις (‘knowledge’).

wisdom and knowledge circulating in Asia Minor. His prayer, then, is for the true knowledge of God. What this means is explained in the rest of the prayer in vv. 18–19.<sup>12</sup>

**Goal of the prayer is that the Ephesians would gain intimacy in their knowledge of Christ.**

Paul's view of knowledge is largely determined by the Old Testament. To know God means to be in a close personal relationship with him because he has made himself known. There is an obedient and grateful acknowledgement of his deeds on behalf of his people. The knowledge of God begins with a fear of him, is linked with his demands, and often is described as knowing his will. In the Old Testament, as well as in the writings of Paul, knowledge is not a fixed quantum but rather something that develops in the life of people as they are obedient.<sup>13</sup>

Do we pray that for ourselves? For other?  
 Are we getting to "know" Him better?  
 How do you work toward growth in intimacy with God?  
 A chief object of all prayer is to bring us to God.<sup>14</sup>

"since the eyes of your heart have been enlightened"

The perfect participle *πεφωτισμένους* (*pephōtismenous*) may either be part of the prayer ("that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened") or part of the basis of the prayer ("since the eyes of your heart have been enlightened"). Although the participle follows the *ἵνα* (*hina*) of v. 17, it is awkward grammatically in the clause. Further, perfect adverbial participles are usually causal in NT Greek. Finally, the context both here and throughout Ephesians seems to emphasize the motif of light as a property belonging to believers. Thus, it seems that the author is saying, "I know that you are saved, that you have had the blinders of the devil removed; because of this, I can now pray that you will fully understand and see the light of God's glorious revelation." Hence, the translation takes the participle to form a part of the basis for the prayer.<sup>15</sup>

**B. Purpose 1:18b-19**

Paul's prayer that they might see with the eyes of their heart

To realize

**1. The hope of His calling**

Not 'the hope of *your* calling', which might be interpreted in a narrow or individualistic sense, but 'the hope of *his* [i.e., God's] calling',<sup>171</sup> **which is to be understood comprehensively in relation to his calling within his saving purposes** (see on 4:4). God's calling finds its origin in the choice of his people in Christ before the world's foundation (1:4) and becomes effective in their lives, as it did in the case of the readers,<sup>172</sup> through the preaching of the gospel (Rom. 8:30). Paul prays that his readers might grasp more fully the hope into which God has brought them by his call (cf. Eph. 4:4), that hope which is held out in the gospel (Col. 1:5).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 133.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 132-33.

<sup>14</sup> P. T. Forsyth, *The Soul of Prayer*, (Regent College Publishing, 1997) p. 16.

<sup>15</sup> Biblical Studies Press, *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (Biblical Studies Press, 2006; 2006). Eph 1:18.

i.e. *id est*, that is

<sup>171</sup> Greek: ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς κλήσεως αὐτοῦ.

<sup>172</sup> In this sense the clause looks back to the past when the readers were called by God into a relationship with himself. The hope itself points to the future. Cf. D. Wiederkehr, *Die Theologie der Berufung in den Paulusbriefen* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1963), 199–210, esp. 205.

<sup>16</sup> Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 134.

Hope in Paul is oriented to what is unseen in the future, the content of which is defined in various ways: salvation (1 Thess. 5:8), righteousness (Gal. 5:5), resurrection in an incorruptible body (1 Cor. 15:52–55), eternal life (Tit. 1:2; 3:7), and God’s glory (Rom. 5:2).<sup>17</sup>

**Ephesians 1:10** as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. (ESV)

## 2. The riches of His inheritance in the saints

But the text speaks of ‘*his* [*sc.*, God’s] inheritance’, and it is better to understand this of the portion which belongs to him, namely, his own people,<sup>175</sup> rather than the inheritance which he bestows. According to v. 11, men and women who first hoped in *Christ* are his chosen people and have been claimed by him as his portion or inheritance. Gentile believers, too, have been sealed and guaranteed by God’s Holy Spirit with their full and final redemption as his prized possession in view (v. 14). God has made them his own; they are his treasured possession, and he will redeem them completely on the final day.<sup>18</sup>

## 3. The extent of His power on their behalf

The resources available

In his third and climactic request, which is specially emphasized by its connection with vv. 20–23, the focus of his prayer is upon the amazing power of God working on behalf of believers.<sup>19</sup>

Although slightly different nuances have been suggested for the power synonyms used here,<sup>183</sup> it is their similarity which is underscored. Paul has piled up equivalents because he wants to convince his readers that God’s power working on behalf of believers is incomparable and able to bring them to final salvation.<sup>20</sup>

## C. Praise to God 1:20-23                      Creedal confession

The third request for an increased knowledge of God’s almighty power (v. 19) leads on to a declaration that the supreme demonstration of this power took place in God’s raising Christ from the dead and exalting him to a position of authority in the heavenly realms above all hostile spiritual powers. In these verses, which are a continuation of the preceding sentence and round out the introductory thanksgiving of vv. 15–19, God is praised for exercising his mighty power in raising Christ from the dead and exalting him (vv. 20–21) to be head over all things for the church (vv. 22–23).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 134-35.

*sc. scilicet*, namely

<sup>175</sup> So C. C. Caragounis, *Mysterion*, 66; Bruce, 270–71; Arnold, 88; and Lincoln, 59–60. In the Old Testament God’s inheritance is often a synonym for his people, Israel; see, e.g., Deut. 4:20; 9:26, 29; 2 Sam. 21:3; 1 Kings 8:51, 53; Ps. 28:9; 33:12; 78:62, 71; 106:5, 40; Isa. 19:25; 47:6; 63:17; Jer. 10:16; 51:19, etc.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 135.

<sup>19</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 136.

<sup>183</sup> With δύναμις meaning ‘power’ or the ‘ability’ to accomplish something, ἐνέργεια denoting the operation or realization of δύναμις, κράτος the power to overcome obstacles, and ἰσχύς the exercise of power.

<sup>20</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 137.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Thomas O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999). 139.



Which is evidenced by

1. **The power to raise and seat Christ**
2. **To subject all things to Him**
3. **To give Him to the Church as Sufficient Head**

These affirmations point to the raising and enthronement of believers with their Lord

**Ephesians 2:4–7** 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. (ESV)

The idea of all in all is either related to the universe (hence, he fills the whole universe entirely) or the church universal (hence, Christ fills the church entirely with his presence and power).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (Biblical Studies Press, 2006; 2006). Eph 1:23.