

*A Study
on the
Epistle
to the
Ephesians*

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Bible Study Guides for the New Testament

Writing a book was not on my mind when this effort was initiated some years ago. In fact, it began when a member of my Sunday School class commented that his son had talked about committing suicide the previous week. As a result, I felt an urge to see what the Bible had to say about hope, with a view toward helping his son cope with his suicidal feelings. The result of that effort was an article entitled: “Hope and the Miraculous Three Pound Computer,” located in Chapter 6 of the book [After the Big Bang](#). My next writing endeavor was a fallout from a Sunday School class discussion about temptations, or trials, and their purpose in our lives. An article entitled “The Trials of Job” located in Chapter 7 of the same book resulted from that effort. After this I began to feel a prodding from the Lord to continue studying and writing. The chapters in this book document what I subsequently learned about two of God’s greatest and most marvelous creations: earth and mankind, who He made to exercise dominion over it.

Some of the material presented in these New Testament Bible Study Guides conflicts with commonly held viewpoints, and differs as well on the definitions of some words used to explicate them. One thing I have learned through this effort is that the meaning of many of the words used in the Bible is not uniformly agreed to by expositors, and in many cases, not agreed to by the various versions of the Bible. For example, in the KJV of the old testament (OT), the word “soul” is used over 780 times. Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words notes that in over 400 of these uses, the Hebrew word used is misinterpreted. I mention this not to heap criticism on the KJV, for it is my personal Bible, and I love it dearly, but to point out the importance of consulting Hebrew and Greek sources, and good conservative lexicons, when trying to understand difficult scripture. The meaning of some words is not absolutely clear even then. Nevertheless, this is the process I have followed in this effort.

I am a retired engineer: my education and work experience sparked a great interest in details. I found that to understand the technical difficulties and problems that arise in the operation of complex machines, a good understanding of the details of the design is absolutely necessary. What is

presented herein is an analysis of important details in God's creation of the earth and man: his habitat and milieu. However, no description is completely adequate to portray the unbelievable complexity and efficacy of tripartite man. Scientists and engineers have tried to duplicate the various subsystems in God's design of man for years, with limited success. Part of the problem is that we do not understand many of the operational details, but the greatest impediment is probably the fact that man is composed of three parts: spirit, soul, and body, two of which (spirit and soul) are immaterial, and are thus largely beyond the scope of scientific and medical analysis. The third part, the highly complex body, is strongly influenced by these two immaterial parts. God has given mankind a great challenge in trying to understand tripartite man. What better model could we find for our study than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: spirit, soul and body in perfect relationship. When Jesus came to earth He emptied Himself, and was formed in the likeness and fashion of a man. Like us, He was a tripartite being, but without a sin nature. Thus, He was the perfect man, the ideal for all to emulate.

I read a book several years ago by Watchman Nee in which he made the observation that one of the primary ways God speaks to us is through our

intuition. After that I began to try to follow the guidance I received in this manner, and what is presented herein is largely a result of that attempt. I hasten to add that all readers will not agree with my conclusions. I have learned much about God's creation, and His design of man through this effort: that may be the primary purpose He had in mind. My hope is that readers will find new ideas in these words that drive them to the absolute authority: God's Word - the Bible.

As references I have used the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), the New Living Translation (NLT), the Revised Version (RV), and Recovery Versions of the bible, as well as the Interlinear NIV Hebrew - English Old Testament (OT), and the Interlinear Greek - English New Testament (GNT). I have also used Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Moulton's Analytical Greek Lexicon, the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, and Webster's New World Dictionary for word interpretation. Unless otherwise noted, scripture passages quoted are from the KJV.

The John A. Dickson New Analytical Bible and Dictionary, Authorized King James Version, Chicago 1950, was a primary reference source. This Bible was given to my wife and I in 1957, and is one of my dearest treasures. It has been rebound once, and is in need of a repair job at the present time. Thus, the reader can appreciate the usage it has had over these 62 years, most of which has been during the last 25 years. The book introductions have been generally quoted from this source, with changes (mostly grammatical) made only when considered necessary.

Finally, I want to recognize the lady that takes everything I have written, and makes the necessary changes for placing it on the internet. Ms. Sandra Crosnoe is the daughter of two of my, and my deceased wife's, dearest friends, Ted and Jimmie Crosnoe (also deceased). When God moved us (my wife and I), to a Methodist Church in Pasadena, Texas, in 1962, Ted, Jimmie, and their two daughters were among the group of several families in the church that were touched by God in a mighty way that led to a weekly Bible study, that resulted in many changed lives. As the years passed by, and the families went in different directions, we were not able to maintain the close relationship we had in Pasadena. We settled in Lubbock, Texas, in 1982, and I got the call to start

writing on the Bible. Sometime after that Sandra was in Lubbock and we got together for dinner. When she learned of my involvement in writing on the Bible she immediately volunteered to help in making it available by publishing it on the internet. She may not have known what she was getting into, for God has not ceased from giving me Bible subjects to study and write about. This series on the New Testament has been our greatest undertaking, and Sandra's help (as always) has been essential. She has corrected my grammar, argued with me on interpretation, prepared the pictorial cover pages, and generally polished the appearance of the various books in ways that I could never have accomplished on my own. Without her help, this (and other) documents would never have been made available to the general public. I do so appreciate all her work. I believe Ted and Jimmie will give her a "well done" when she joins them in heaven. Her personal website is [Finding Gems and Sharing Them](#).

These bible study guides are available at no charge to read, print, download and share on a platform called Scribd (no membership is required to read/download). They are all listed and linked as a group in [Bible Study Guides by Jesse C. Jones on Scribd](#). Upon completion, most of them will contain study

questions in the Appendix. Other works available are listed and linked with [Books for Believers and Seekers](#). If you hit a pop-up page on Scribd asking you to become a member to read free, simply click the 'x' in the upper right corner to remove the pop-up and continue to our links on Scribd. My personal website is [Revealed by Fire - Jesse's Studies](#) if you wish to see my latest articles and updates.

It is my sincere hope that these works will guide you to a personal ongoing relationship with Jesus and a life led and anointed by the Holy Spirit.

JESSE JONES

A Study on the Epistle to the Ephesians

From the John A. Dickson New Analytical Bible

It was while Paul was at Corinth where he spent the winter of A.D. 58 on his third missionary journey, that he wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians. As far as we know the Epistle to the Romans was the last epistle written during the missionary journeys. At Corinth he was joined by Luke.

Our book of Acts traces Paul's movements from Corinth to Jerusalem where his enemies had him arrested on a false charge, and his escape to Caesarea, where he was held prisoner for two years. There he exercised his rights as a Roman citizen and appealed to Caesar. That brought him to Rome, where he was held prisoner under a Roman guard for two years (62-63 A.D) in his own house. Luke tells us that he spent his time preaching the kingdom of God. During this period the apostle wrote four of his epistles--Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

At the close of his second journey Paul spent a brief time at Ephesus, but his second visit (on his third journey) extended over two years. When Demetrius (a silversmith in Ephesus) instigated an uproar because of his

financial losses through the preaching of Paul, he was compelled to leave the city.

It is believed that this epistle was not written exclusively for the church at Ephesus. It has been suggested that it was intended as a circular letter for the churches of the provinces of Asia.

God Chose Us Before the Foundation of the World

Ephesians 1:4-5 says: *“According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame [blemish] before Him in love. Having predestined [foreordained] us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.”* This is a difficult biblical teaching for many believers to accept. Our concept of justice rebels at the thought that God would choose only some for salvation and leave the others, thus condemning them to eternal punishment and suffering. We refuse to accept the fact that God could act in a way that conflicts with our own sense of right and wrong.

This is the problem addressed by Paul in Romans 9:18-21: *“Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter the power [a right] over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonour?”*

God is the Creator of all men, but He is Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18). God the Father administers justice with wisdom, kindness, mercy, and love far beyond our comprehension. As His children we must recognize His authority over us in everything.

We must accept God's teaching on predestination and foreknowledge and quit trying to make it correspond to our own sense of justice. I wrestled with this teaching for years, but finally gave up and decided to totally abandon my own idea and just accept what I was repeatedly being confronted by in God's Word, "*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you*" (John 15:16). Since that time I have come to appreciate why God chose us rather than waiting and hoping that we would choose Him. The reverence and awe I have for God's majesty has only increased as a result.

We must understand the biblical meaning of the words "election" and "chosen," in order to understand why God makes this important decision rather than letting mankind chose for themselves. "Election" refers to God the Father choosing (predestinating) those that would be regenerated, saved, and sanctified, before the foundation of the world. By choosing certain people

God seems to commit Himself to doing what is necessary to insure that these chosen ones are “drawn” to Jesus Christ (John 6:44). The word “elect” is used in the old testament(OT) three times, all in Isaiah. Two of these references pertain to God’s election of Israel, and one refers to the coming Messiah. The word elect (elected, election, elect’s) is used 22 times in the new testament (NT), 21 of which refer to the election of those in the body of Christ (the church), and one to elect angels (see 1 Peter 1:2; Romans 9:11; Revelation 17:8). None of the uses of these words refer to men electing to come to Christ.

“Chosen,” as used in the NT, conveys the idea of choosing recipients to bestow special favor and privilege. The word “chosen” is used in the OT 94 times, 21 of which refer to God the Father choosing Israel, or the Savior. Chosen is used in the NT 30 times, nine of which refer to those in the body of Christ (the church) being chosen out of the world (see John 15:16; Ephesians 1:4-5, 11; Romans 8:29; 2 Timothy 1:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:13). Evidence from study of the meaning of the six words choose, chooseth, choosing, chose, and chosen, as used in the KJV of the bible, exclusively supports the fact that God chooses men, men do not choose God. Of the 216 times these words are cited, 78 relate to God choosing a man, men, Israel, or the elect, and the remaining are unrelated to this search.

It seems clear from analysis of the words “election” and “chosen” as used in the Bible, that God chooses those that belong to Him, and man’s free will is not involved in this decision in any way at all. In fact, the Bible teaches that unregenerate man does not have free will in regard to choosing or not choosing God (see Romans 9:10-24). Thus, we see that God determined in advance that we would be His adopted sons through His own Son, Jesus Christ: in whom we have redemption, the remission of our trespasses, through His shed blood. And He has made known to us the mysteries of His will (1 Corinthians 3:9-10), that in the fulness of time He would gather together all things in Christ, in both heaven and earth. We have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Jesus Christ, who works all things by the council of His own will, so that we who previously received the word of truth believed, and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until we are redeemed.

Paul then tells them that he prays for them, that God will give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. And that the eyes of their understanding will be enlightened, and that they would know the exceeding greatness of his mighty power toward them which God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand

in heavenly places, far above all principalities and powers, and above every name that is named in this world, and the world to come. He has also put all things under his feet, and has given Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body.

What We Were By Nature, and What We Are By Grace

Nature: *The essential character of a thing.; quality or qualities that make something what it is; essence. Inborn character; innate disposition; inherent tendencies of a person. The vital functions, forces, and activities of the organs. Any or all of the instincts, appetites, drives, etc. of a person.*

This section is from an earlier work [“Weighed in the Balances”](#) by [Jesse C. Jones](#) available free online in its entirety. Refer to Chapter 2 - The Old (and new) Man and the Flesh.

The Tripartite Man

Genesis 1:26-27 says, “*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . .*”. The Hebrew word “*elohim*”, interpreted “*God*” in these two verses, represents the plurality of identities in the Trinity of the godhead (Theological

Wordbook of the Old Testament by Harris, et. al.). Thus, we know that the image referred to is one that manifests the three separate entities of the triune Godhead: Father, Son, and Spirit. We conclude from this that man must be a tripartite being as well, for he was created in the image of the triune God. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 seems to confirm this when it says that man consists of three parts: soul, body, and spirit. Thus, the tripartite image into which man was formed includes, 1) man's soul, which embodies characteristics of the Father; 2) man's body, which embodies the image of the Son; and 3) man's human spirit, which manifests the Holy Spirit. In contrast to man's body, his human spirit and soul owe their existence to the direct creative power of God. The common doctrine of the church has ever been that the soul of a newborn is not generated nor derived from the parents, but is created by the immediate agency of God. God uses no physical processes in the formation of the soul and spirit: both are immaterial. Several scriptures refer to the fact that God made man's spirit: Ecclesiastes 12:7 and Zechariah 12:1 state that God "*gave*" and "*formed*" man's spirit, and Ecclesiastes adds that the believer's spirit returns to "*God who gave it*" at physical death. We understand from Matthew 10:28 and Revelation 6:9, that our soul accompanies man's spirit to heaven (or hell) at physical death. Job 12:10 indicates that man's soul and spirit are in the hand of

God, and Job 34:14 states that God can gather unto himself man's spirit and breath (life/soul). The Bible seems to say that the soul can be separated from the body, but it cannot be separated from the spirit. This seems to accord with Galatians 5:17, in that the spirit is at war with the flesh (biblical heart), and the Word of God penetrates to the depths of the soul and spirit to assist in resolving the resulting skirmishes. 1 Peter 2:11 exhorts believers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

The part of regenerated man that cannot enter into God's presence at physical death is his earthly body: this is substantiated throughout the Bible, especially in the NT. 1 Corinthians 15:35-50, describes this as follows: Man's earthly body is placed in the ground at physical death. This is not the body that "*shall be*," but "*bare grain*," i.e. not clothed with spiritual clothing. Just as in the case of a seed planted in the ground, this earthly body must die so God can quicken the rudimentary embryo within it at resurrection, and raise the perfected embryo up as a new sinless spiritual body to be joined with its soul/spirit, when Christ returns in the clouds to gather His elect (Matthew 24:27-31). 1 Corinthians 15:43-44 says, "*It is sown in dishonour;; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.*" Verse 49 adds that "*as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also*

bear the image of the heavenly.” This earthly body (or vessel) that our spirit/soul occupies until physical death is a “*natural*” body, bearing an “*earthly*” image. Although this body may have been in the process of becoming holy through sanctification, it will never be totally “holy,” or a perfect “image of Christ.” Thus, this corrupted (sinful) body must die and give life to a new incorruptible body before it can be rejoined by the spirit/soul, and put on immortality.

This “*natural body*” includes everything given to man in creation/birth except his spirit/ soul. Genesis 2:7 says that “*And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*” Notice that God “*breathed*” the breath of life into the body that was already formed. This “*breath of life*,” which included Adam’s soul and spirit, came directly from God: it was not “*formed*” of anything that previously existed. This is exactly the same manner in which human beings come into the world in our own day. A new being is “*formed*” in the womb of the mother in accordance with a code (DNA) originally given to Adam and Eve, but transmuted over eons of time to produce billions of different people that occupy the earth. God “*gives*” the spirit and soul to this new being while still in the womb, and he/she is born a tripartite being (body, soul, and spirit).

Genesis 139:13 describes this: “. . . *thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb.*” This body that “covers” the spirit and soul is often referred to in the Bible as “flesh and blood,” but the part of the body we want to focus on is the biblical heart, for it is the vital element of the body in salvation and sanctification.

The biblical heart includes the central nervous system, which controls our senses and voluntary behavior; the autonomic nervous system, which regulates our emotions and internal organs; our intellect, memory, conscience, and thought; and the circulatory system and internal organs and glands to which it provides fuel and oxygen. All the issues of life flow from the biblical heart (Proverbs 4:23). When God wants to determine the measure of a man He looks on the heart. 1 Samuel 16:7 says, “. . . *for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.*” “Why does God not look on the spirit or soul, instead?” I believe the answer to this question is that the heart is the part of man’s physical body, or “flesh,” that can be controlled and programmed by man; whereas the spirit and soul are immaterial and immortal, were formed and given to man while in the womb, and will return to God upon physical death of the body. They will not be vitiated (corrupted) by the acts of believers for they have been forgiven.

1 Corinthians 15:52-53 describes this as follows: “*In a moment, in the twinkling of*

an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

There is one scriptural statement that we have not addressed in the discussion above. Genesis 1:27 says “*So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.*” Of course, God could have created Eve from anything He chose, but the additional information provided about Eve being created from one of Adam’s ribs introduces several new considerations about their relationship that we need to try to understand. Chapter 5 states that a godly marriage should be a “one-flesh” relationship, which certainly seems to follow from the creation of Eve from Adam’s rib. Couples in one-flesh marriages are probably aware of the blessings they receive, but would still be hard pressed to describe a one-flesh marriage. Chapter 5 provides some analysis of this mystery, but this is probably one of those conundrums that won’t be completely understood this side of heaven.

The Gentiles Are Included In Christ

The fact that the Gentiles were to be included in the New Covenant established through Jesus Christ's crucifixion and subsequent resurrection was a mystery to the NT Jews. It seems strange to us in the twenty-first century, for we have been aware of this fact from the time of our first encounter with Christianity, and, in fact, we were made aware of this from our familiarity with the OT (Isaiah 49:6 and others). When Paul encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus he was told to go into the city (Damascus), and there he would be told what he must do (Acts 9:6). Ananias, a disciple at Damascus, was told in a vision to go and pray for Paul, for he was a chosen vessel unto the Lord. Paul was to bear Jesus' name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel, and straightway he preached Christ in the Synagogues (Acts 9:15). This appears to be the first "shot fired" in the battle to convince the Jews that God intended to save the Gentiles, although it had always been God's plan for Christ to serve as a "light" to the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:6). His appointment of Paul as His chosen vessel to the Gentiles was the vital element in achieving this goal.

Verse 15 introduces somewhat of a mystery. Referring to the Father it says: *“Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.”* We know that God has a particular name for His saints, for He refers to His particular name for certain ones in the scriptures: Israel for Jacob, Abraham for Abram, Paul for Saul, etc. So what He may be alluding to here are these names that in some way identify us as part of His family.

He closes this chapter by asking the Father to strengthen them by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith; that they would be rooted and grounded in agape love, and that they would be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes all knowledge, that they would be filled with the all the fulness of God. Unto Him be glory in the church, both now and evermore by and in Christ Jesus. Amen.

The Mystery of Paradise

Paul encourages the Ephesians to live their lives worthy of their calling, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all, and through all, and in all. Every member of the body (the church), is given grace according to the measure of the spiritual gift they receive to help in building up the body of Christ (Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7). But the gift has to be received and made our own, separately by each soul, and gradually in the course of life. It is given by the Holy Spirit according to the determination of the individual's capacity to receive it in faith. Christ does this in conjunction with His role as mediator of the new covenant as He sits at the Father's right hand.

Ephesians 4:9-10, introduce a mystery that is not clarified by the Bible, nor by any commentary that I have found. Below, I have outlined my understanding of the very important events which occurred immediately following Christ's death and resurrection. I urge the reader to judge this

analysis just as we are advised to judge all prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 John 4:1; Revelation 2:2).

Christ Leads Captivity Captive

When Jesus was crucified He hung on the cross for three hours before He cried out with a loud voice, and yielded up the ghost (yielded up His spirit), as recorded in Matthew 27:50, and also in Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; and John 19:30. There were two thieves that were crucified with Jesus, one on each side. One of the thieves railed on Jesus, saying *“If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other thief rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly: but this man has done nothing amiss. And he turned to Jesus and said “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise”* (Luke 23:39-43).

This introduces the first of several conundrums associated with the word Paradise: where is it located and who is in it, and why does Jesus go there? Ephesians 4:8-9, referring to the resurrected Christ says: *“When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that He ascended, what*

is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far beyond all heavens, that He might fill all things)."

From this it appears that Paradise is in the lower parts of the earth, for Jesus went there first, and if He was there for any length of time, it must be the place He referred to when He told the thief that he would be with him there that very day. The next question would seem to be, Why was Jesus going there, and how long was He in the lower parts of the earth? Well, we know that one thing He did there was to "capture" the captives, and lead them somewhere(?). Colossians 2:15, says that He also spoiled principalities and powers while He was in the lower parts of the earth, making a show of them openly, and triumphing over them. But our interest is in Paradise, and who is in it, and what did Jesus do there.

I believe the answer to this question lies with OT believers, those that Hebrew 11:13 says, *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."* These were OT men and women of faith that had not had the opportunity to receive Jesus as their Savior, and therefore had not had their sins forgiven. They were ultimately destined for heaven, but had to receive Jesus Christ as their savior in order to get there. I

believe they were the “captives” referred to in Ephesians 4:8, and Jesus had to descend to the lower parts of the earth to Paradise to minister to them (preach the salvation message), and take them to heaven with Him. There is additional evidence to support this in the fact that they were the predecessors of NT believers that meet Christ in the clouds, as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:14, 16-17. In this case the spirit/souls of the dead in Christ come with Him to join their resurrected and now sinless bodies to complete the spiritual tripartite body that is forever with Him in heaven. In the same way Jesus takes the spirit/souls of the OT believers (captives), from Paradise in the lower parts of the earth to join their sanctified bodies that rise from their graves, and are seen by many (Matthew 27:52-53).

The final question here is, Where is Paradise located, in heaven or the lower parts of the earth? I would argue that it was in both places, for it gets its identity from those that are located within it: somewhat like the church body being made up of the ones that worship within it, and not the building they meet in. When Jesus takes the captives to heaven he is also taking Paradise to heaven. There are scriptures that support it being in the lower parts of the earth (Ephesians 4:9; Luke 16:19-31) and there are scriptures supporting it being in heaven (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:1-4; Revelation 2:7). According to this

Paradise has been a part of heaven since Jesus Christ took it there three days after His crucifixion. It would no longer have any purpose in the lower parts of the earth, for all the OT saints are now in heaven. It is now identified by Paul as the third heaven.

Let us now return to what Jesus did after He returned to heaven.

The reader may also wish to refer to an earlier work [“A Study on the Book of Hebrews” by Jesse C. Jones](#) available free online in its entirety. Refer to Chapter 5 - Jesus, A High Priest After the Order of Melchisedec.

Jesus Christ, Our Intercessor and Mediator

We need to start by reviewing what God’s Word says about Christ’s role as intercessor and mediator. The word “intercessor” is used only one time in the King James Version (KJV) of the OT. Isaiah 59:16 says, *“And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.”* This passage describes the condition of Israel as God looked and saw there was no man to intervene (or intercede) for the people. Since there was no man worthy enough to

intercede, He resolved to send the Redeemer to intercede and turn them from transgression.

Another OT scripture that is helpful in understanding intercession is Ezekiel 22:30: *“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.”* It is clear from these scriptures that God the Father looks for intercessors to reason with Him in regard to contemplated action. The word “intercession,” is used four times in the KJV of the OT. In all cases the identical Hebrew word (root) is used meaning a request, or entreaty. Intercession is used five times in the KJV of the NT. In all applications the same Greek word (root) meaning “to light upon, fall in with, intercede (with or for), and entreat” is used.

The word “mediator” is not used in the KJV of the OT, but is used seven times in the NT, all translations of the same Greek word. The uses of this word are all clearly references to Jesus Christ, except for Galatians 3:19, which refers to Moses standing between God and the Israelites at Mt. Sinai, when the law was given. Three of the seven uses of this Greek word in the NT relate to Christ’s role as mediator of the new covenant (or testament). Hebrews 9:15-18 says that Jesus Christ’s work as mediator of the new covenant began at His death, and the purpose or goal of His efforts as mediator is to insure that

those that are called (elected) receive eternal life. Thus, we see that Christ's role as mediator is to act as our advocate to the Father, representing us in all things related to receiving our eternal inheritance. Our betrothal to Jesus Christ is consummated when we meet Him in heaven, and He delivers us to the Father as His bride, but the work of conforming us to His image is finished at our physical death. The works the Holy Spirit has accomplished using our vessels (bodies) are finished when we die, and these works are the building materials for the immortal bodies Christ gives us when we join Him in heaven (1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4; Revelation 19:8).

To return to Jesus Christ's role as mediator of the new covenant we need to examine what the new covenant actually is. Ezekiel 36:25-27, 29, describes the changes that occur under the new covenant. The final change given here states that He causes us to walk in His statutes and to keep his judgments. It is this last mediation task that I want to focus on: the renewal of our minds, or sanctification.

The biblical definition of sanctification is to separate, or set apart for God: to separate from sin or to make holy. When believers receive the Holy Spirit, God sets them apart to Himself. Although He sees us as sanctified at this point, His plan is to bring us to the place where our body (biblical heart) is

actually holy and sanctified, conformed to the image of Christ. The process of sanctification in our bodies does not begin until we receive the Holy Spirit, for He is the One God uses to bring about this change: conforming us to the image of Christ by making us holy (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). He does this by providing godly wisdom and guidance so that we can choose to believe and act as God wants us to, or we can reject God's guidance and continue to act as we did when we were disobedient (Romans 6:19). This is where the rubber meets the road, so to speak, for it is very difficult to change old habits and give up strong feelings of lust and pride: to die to ourselves. But this is what is required if we are to become like Jesus; He has the right to do whatever it takes to prepare our bodies for immortality, to spend eternity with Him. This is what the goal (Paul calls it the prize) of sanctification really is: to present us holy, without blemish, and not deserving reproof before Him, so that we will be among the sanctified who receive an inheritance from God (Acts 26:18, 20:32; 2 Timothy 2:21). Christ brings this about through His role as mediator of the new covenant.

For a child to be educated in our public schools he needs a good teacher as well as a true source of knowledge (or wisdom). In the sanctification process we have the very Spirit of God and Christ within us as our teacher, and a

source of wisdom beyond comprehension, for the Holy Spirit knows the mind of God. But just as a child needs an appropriate environment conducive to learning, we need a spiritual protector (or mentor) to insure that we make it “home” with a full knapsack of works, recorded in our name that survive the refiner’s fire (1 Corinthians 3:13-15). God the Father looks to Jesus Christ to bring those that He has given Him home safely; and that means to our home in heaven after physical death, for eternity. He does this out of His great love for the saints, for whom He died on the cross and now continues to care for while at the right hand of the Father. *“Christ shows and proves his love to his saints in richly providing for all their needs”* (John 1:16 NKJV). Christ sheds abundant grace over His saints, for He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20). He has given us wisdom and prudence and made known unto us the mystery of His will, so that in the fullness of time He can gather all things unto Himself (Ephesians 1:8-10). I like what Webster’s Dictionary says about grace: “divine influence in man to make him pure and morally strong.” It is this divine influence that our Mediator Jesus Christ provides for us through the Holy Spirit.

Some of the ways that Christ as Mediator cares for his saints are listed below (see [“Communion With God” by John Owen](#) pg. 112).

- 1.** He strengthens us against the sin that assaults us by strengthening and fortifying our hearts. He then tests our strength by allowing Satan to bring temptation.
- 2.** He sometimes removes the temptation entirely when it grows so strong and violent that we do not know what to do (2 Peter 2:9). He sometimes gives more grace as temptations (trials) grow and continue to increase (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- 3.** He gives wisdom to make a right, holy, and spiritual use of all temptations (James 1:2). Peter tells us that it is sometimes necessary to be left in temptations (1 Peter 1:6).
- 4.** He supports us with mercy and pardon when at any time we are overcome by temptation so that we will not sink utterly under the burden.
- 5.** He shows compassion for us in all our afflictions (Isaiah 63:9, Colossians 1:24). His compassion is revealed in two ways: He intercedes with His Father (Zechariah 1:12), and He avenges His elect on those who cause them to suffer (Luke 18:7, 2 Thessalonians 1:6).

6. He has a plan for the believer's life, and He tries to keep us on the right track to fulfill that plan. To do this He opens some doors and closes others. We must learn to recognize and pass through the open doors, and turn back from those that are closed.
7. He is constantly nurturing us through training and discipline to make us more like Himself. When we are victorious over our lusts and pride the Holy Spirit can manifest Christ through our bodies. In all this effort He seeks our ultimate good.

When God begins to make us holy our lives begin to get difficult. God is removing the last vestiges of evil from our hearts and it is difficult to change old habits and give up strong feelings of lust and pride: to die to ourselves. But this is what is required if we are to become like Jesus, and live a life of crucifixion and humility. Great demands of obedience, that may seem onerous and burdensome, will be required, but it is His right to expect us to be obedient if we truly belong to Him. He has the right to do whatever it takes to prepare our bodies for immortality, to spend eternity with Him. Are we really prepared for what that will cost? As Oswald Chambers says, "it will cost us absolutely everything in us that is not of God." This is what the goal of sanctification really is: to present

us holy, without blemish, and unreprieveable before Him, so that we will be among the sanctified who receive an inheritance from God (Acts 26:18, 20:32).

Jesus Christ is both mediator and intercessor to those the Father has given Him. His work in bringing believers “home” to the Father in heaven does not end until we are safely there, and are in His arms as His pure bride. We then receive the inheritance promised: eternal life!

The Gifts of God

Ephesians 4:11-16 says: *“And He gave some to be apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect (fullgrown) man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, cunning in craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the*

body unto the edifying of itself in love.” This is Paul’s recipe for perfecting the first century church, and it remains valid to this day. He goes on to say that we must put off the old man, which was corrupt, leading to deceitful lusts, and be renewed in our mind by putting on the new man, which is created in righteousness, and true holiness. This is what sanctification is all about. Sadly, we seldom hear any teaching or preaching on this subject. Our eyes seem focused on increasing the size of the flock and less on the tough meat of the Bible.

Paul closes this chapter by reminding us to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven us.

Love is the Principle Thing in Your Life and in Your Marriage

We should be imitators of God for He is our Father. The Son of God, Jesus Christ our Brother, loved us and gave His life for us so that our sins could be forgiven, and we could become one with the sanctified ones, and enjoy eternal life. Therefore, we should not allow fornication, nor any kind of sexual immortality to be mentioned among us. Fornicators, those that are unclean, and those that are covetous, have no inheritance in the kingdom of God. The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth and love, proving what is well pleasing to the Lord. Do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is, and don't be drunk with wine, which is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, giving thanks to the Lord for all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, and unto God the Father.

Wives should submit themselves to their husbands as unto the Lord, because the husband is head of the wife just as Christ is head of the church. This guidance is difficult for twenty-first century wives to accept, and in fact it is opposed outright by many women's organizations. I became aware of the virulence with which at least one woman's rights belief is defended some years

ago when a friend and I were returning home from a meeting we had conducted. I innocently mentioned the sinful aspect of abortion when my friend, who was a woman, reacted harshly saying: “You don’t know a damned thing about a woman.” I was surprised by her violent response, for we had worked together for some time, and had become friends. But her out-of-character response took me by surprise; it was like some outside force had taken control to express her anger. I know that all women’s organizations do not reflect strong feelings like my friend, but some seem to demonstrate similar attitudes.

We know that God created an “*help meet*” for Adam, by causing a deep sleep to fall upon him (Genesis 2:20-22). He took a rib from Adam and closed up the flesh thereof. He then formed a woman from the rib and brought her before Adam. *And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*” Although God does not form our wives from one of our ribs today, I do believe His plan for a Godly marriage is for the man and wife to come together as one flesh. I believe this occurs over time, as God prepares husband and wife to receive this wonderful gift. Charles Hodge’s Systematic Theology, Volume III, describes

marriage as a Divine Institution for the following reasons: 1) Because it is founded on the nature of man as constituted by God. He made man male and female, and ordained marriage as the indispensable condition for the continuance of the race. 2) Marriage was instituted before the existence of civil society, therefore it cannot in its essential nature be a civil institution. 3) God told Adam and Eve to marry when He told them to multiply and replenish the earth. Thus, we see that the union was consummated when Adam and Eve came together as one flesh in the act of sexual intercourse. 4) God has prescribed the duties belonging to the marriage relation in His word. 5) The vow of mutual fidelity made by husband and wife is not made exclusively to each other, but by each to God, and a voluntary mutual contract is made between husband and wife. They promise to be faithful to each other, and they promise God that they will live together as man and wife, according to His word. Any violation of this compact is therefore, a violation of a vow made to God.

The fact that man is a servant of God and bound to make His word the rule of their lives, is not inconsistent with his being a servant of the state, and bound to render obedience to its laws. Thus, it is not inconsistent with the fact that marriage is an ordinance of God that it should be, in another aspect, a

civil institution, and therefore it is recognized and enforced by the state. It imposes civil obligations which the state has the right to enforce.

Very little of the guidance above is reflected in marriages of today.

Nevertheless, I believe the key to a successful marriage in God's eyes is to understand the meaning of Ephesians 5:31-32, and to fulfill its stipulations in the marriage relationship: *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

So what is a one-flesh relationship? One thing we know is that it is a mystery, so the only safe way to define this term is to rely on God's word to guide us. There are several scriptures that provide guidance on this and I have listed the ones I am aware of:

1. Genesis 2:23-24: *"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."*
2. Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:7-9: *"And He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they*

twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no longer twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

3. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: *“What? know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*

4. Ephesians 5:28-33: *“So ought men to love their wives as their own body. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Lord the church. Nevertheless let everyone of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband. This is a great mystery: but I am speaking of Christ and the church.*

5. Jude 7: *“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”*

The matter referred to is the typical relation between the marriage of man and wife, and the union of Christ and the Church. It is called a mystery, and some light has been shown upon it, but that is all. It is implied that there is something of a mystery in many of the relations between things natural and things spiritual, but in the depth and grandeur of the subject, the mystery

connected with the marriage relation is pre-eminent — it is "a great mystery." The analogy of the wind to the Holy Spirit; the springing up of plants to the resurrection; the melancholy sounds of nature to the prevalence of sin; and many other analogies, present vague shadows of truth, the clear, full forms of which we cannot see. When the day breaks and "the shadows flee away," such things will appear in a clearer light."

It is clear that God desires the marriage relationship to be two (male and female), coming together as one flesh. I have not found any clear definition of the term "one flesh" in any of the many references I have consulted. I would add to the above a few observations that I believe are characteristic of those married couples who have been blessed in this way:

1. Both husband and wife have received the Holy Spirit and they try to honor God by giving control of their lives to Him.
2. They know God's plan for their lives and follow it in their decisions.
3. They are truly "one-flesh" in the sense of caring for each other including: intimacy, submission, joy, commitment, harmony, shared burdens and responsibilities, humility, and love (agape, phileo, and eros).
4. Forgiveness and submission plays a big part in their lives.

5. Their human spirits have been regenerated, and they have received the nature of Jesus Christ by joining Him on the cross and crucifying their old sin nature.
6. They are in the process of being sanctified (conformed to the image of Christ).

The War Christians Face and the Armor God Provides

Adapted (in part) from the Bible Hub commentary of Matthew Henry.

When a person receives Christ (and His Holy Spirit), spiritual strength and courage are necessary for the warfare and suffering he/she will encounter. The battle is not against human enemies, nor against our remaining corrupt nature; we face an enemy who has a thousand ways of attacking new believers. But applying the armor provided by God, our enemy has little, to no chance. However, no protection is provided for our back; nothing to protect those who turn their back, and retreat from trials. When evil comes our way we need to confront it head-on, knowing we are equipped offensively and defensively by God. Truth, or sincerity, is our girdle. It fastens together other pieces of our armor, and is thus essential to our protection. Truth is characterized by Christ (John 14:6), we cannot enter into battle with the evil one without the protection of truth through Christ. The righteousness of Christ is represented by the breastplate, protecting us against the enemy, and fortifying our heart against the attacks of Satan. Our feet must be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Effectiveness during trial is based on a clear understanding

of the gospel. Above all is the shield of faith, wherewith the fiery darts of the wicked one are quenched. When we are in Christ and He is in us, the devil's tactics are ineffective. Jesus has already refused Satan's greatest enticements and Satan knows that he cannot win in any engagement with Christ. With the helmet of salvation we can expect victory for we have Christ in us and us in Him. Jesus Christ is our Mediator seated at the right hand of God the Father, ever guiding us in battle. Only one weapon of offense is given: the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. When rightly applied it will at once destroy any temptation or objection, and will subdue the most formidable adversary.

Finally, prayer must integrate all the other parts of our Christian armor. There are other duties of religion, but we must keep times of prayer, and we must do it by the grace of God the Holy Spirit, in dependence on, and in accord with his guidance. We must pray with importunity for particular requests, notwithstanding discouragements. Our enemies are mighty, but our Redeemer is almighty, and in the power of his might we can overcome.

APPENDIX

Questions from Ephesians

Chapter 1

1. Explain the meaning of verses 4 and 5.
2. Give your interpretation of verse 10.
3. What is the “earnest” referred to in verse 14?
4. When did God put all things under the feet of Christ?

Chapter 2

1. Explain verse 1 and 5.
2. Discuss the meaning of verse 8.
3. Explain verse 15.
4. Explain verse 22.

Chapter 3

1. What is the mystery referred to in verse 3?
2. Do you feel that you have the fullness of God operating in your life?

Chapter 4

1. Explain the meaning of verse 7.
2. Explain the meaning of verses 8 - 10.
3. Do you know the particular gift or ministry that God has given you?
4. Have you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness?

Chapter 5

1. What is the fruit of the Spirit? Is it manifest in your life?
2. If married, do you have a “one flesh” relationship with your wife?
3. Explain verse 32.

Chapter 6

1. Explain verse 8.
2. Describe how the various pieces of the armour of God work to help you stand against the wiles of the devil.

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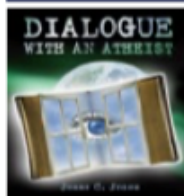
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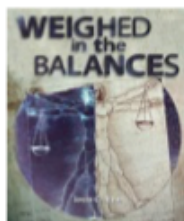


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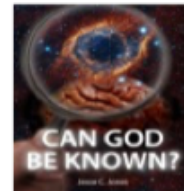


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