The Apostle Paul was angry! In his previous missions journeys he had established the Christian churches in north-central Turkey, an area known as Galatia. He had won Gentiles to Christ, saved totally because of the cross of Jesus and our Lord’s shed blood.

Now, some years later, Paul learned that certain Jewish teachers, who professed to be followers of Christ, had come to tell these fairly-new converts that Christ’s death was not enough for their salvation. No, if they wanted to be saved, taught these fellows, they also had to be circumcised and follow the law of Moses. Paul knew that this false teaching, this abominable thought process, neutralized what Jesus had done by His death on the cross. Their lying teaching destroyed the whole concept of justification by faith.

Paul’s anger comes through very clearly in this short epistle. He mixes no words here. He spent the first several chapters vindicating his ministry (which the new guys apparently had downgraded with lies). Then Paul wrote very clearly what true justification is really all about.

Chapter One

The false teachers told the Galatians that Paul was not all he was cracked up to be and that he was not even an apostle. Paul’s response: Galatians 1:1 [The Message - unless otherwise designated] I, Paul, and my companions in faith here, send greetings to the Galatian churches. My authority for writing to you does not come from any popular vote of the people, nor does it come through the appointment of some human higher-up. It comes directly from Jesus the Messiah and God the Father, who raised him from the dead. I'm God-commissioned.

Paul never claimed to be one of the original twelve apostles. He maintained that he was a true apostle because God had called him to be one.

Another charge laid by these false teachers was that the Gospel as presented by Paul was
just too simple, too easy, that it had to be more complicated. "Enough of this free
grace," they cried. Paul responds: Galatians 1:6-10 I can't believe your
fickleness—how easily you have turned traitor to him who called you by the grace of
Christ by embracing a variant message! [7] It is not a minor variation, you know; it
is completely other, an alien message, a no-message, a lie about God. Those who are
provoking this agitation among you are turning the Message of Christ on its head.
[8] Let me be blunt: If one of us—even if an angel from heaven!—were to preach
something other than what we preached originally, let him be cursed. [9] I said it
once; I'll say it again: If anyone, regardless of reputation or credentials, preaches
something other than what you received originally, let him be cursed.

The simplicity of the Gospel is the greatest hurdle an unbeliever has to overcome. It is
ingrained in us that religion is a matter of dotting all the i's and crossing all the t's. This
is not the case! Jesus paid it all! We cannot buy any part of our salvation. We can not
carn it. Paul told the Galatians that even if an angel walked into their service, preaching
that legalistic philosophy espoused by the teachers from Jerusalem, the angel himself
would be cursed.

Paul's "higher education" from God was extensive: Galatians 1:17 ... and without
going up to Jerusalem to confer with those who were apostles long before I was—I
got away to Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus... Paul's ministry was tailored by
God. No man, no agency, no denomination put it together.

Chapter Two

As many times as Paul had to battle the brethren in Jerusalem, he never went outside the
system to accomplish his work (he never broke with the founding church in Jerusalem.)
Galatians 2:1-5 Fourteen years after that first visit, Barnabas and I went up to
Jerusalem and took Titus with us. [2] I went to clarify with them what had been
revealed to me. At that time I placed before them exactly what I was preaching to
the non-Jews. I did this in private with the leaders, those held in esteem by the
church, so that our concern would not become a controversial public issue, marred
by ethnic tensions, exposing my years of work to denigration and endangering my
present ministry. [3] Significantly, Titus, non-Jewish though he was, was not
required to be circumcised. [4] While we were in conference we were infiltrated by
spies pretending to be Christians, who slipped in to find out just how free true
Christians are. Their ulterior motive was to reduce us to their brand of servitude.
[5] We didn't give them the time of day. We were determined to preserve the truth
of the Message for you.
Paul related the story of the feasts in Antioch in which Peter really dropped the ball. At first he joined eating with the new believers. But some of those “teachers” from Jerusalem cowed Peter into withdrawing from eating with these new Christians. At this point, Paul told Peter off - in no uncertain terms: Galatians 2:11-13 Later, when Peter came to Antioch, I had a face-to-face confrontation with him because he was clearly out of line. [12] Here’s the situation. Earlier, before certain persons had come from James, Peter regularly ate with the non-Jews. But when that conservative group came from Jerusalem, he cautiously pulled back and put as much distance as he could manage between himself and his non-Jewish friends. That's how fearful he was of the conservative Jewish clique that's been pushing the old system of circumcision. [13] Unfortunately, the rest of the Jews in the Antioch church joined in that hypocrisy so that even Barnabas was swept along in the charade.

This brought about a major break among many of the first leaders of the church. Paul broke “the mold” of early Christianity and, as a result, led the charge for Christ in most of the known world.

Crucified With Christ

Here we find one of history’s all-time classic lines: Galatians 2:18-20 If I was "trying to be good," I would be rebuilding the same old barn that I tore down. I would be acting as a charlatan. [19] What actually took place is this: I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God, and it didn't work. So I quit being a "law man" so that I could be God's man. [20] Christ's life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him. Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not "mine," but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. KJV [20] I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

When we are born again, we die to the world system. We are crucified with Christ. A crucified man had no rights. He was no longer in control of his life. Once we are saved, we belong to Christ! We should get it through out heads that salvation is not reform school. Salvation is not our effort to live a better life. Salvation is the divine infusion of Christ’s life within us! Not imitating Christ or doing an impression somehow of our Lord. Salvation is Christ! It is Christ inside of us!
Chapter Three

The church at Galatia was under attack by Jewish legalists who wanted new believers to incorporate the old law of Moses into the Gospel. In other words they were teaching, “Christ and His cross are not sufficient!” Listen to Paul: Galatians 3:1 [Message] You crazy Galatians! Did someone put a hex on you? Have you taken leave of your senses? Something crazy has happened, for it’s obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives. His sacrifice on the Cross was certainly set before you clearly enough.

If keeping the Mosaic law would save us, THEN WHY SHOULD JESUS DIE ON THE CROSS? The Law of Moses emphasized what we are or what we have done. But GRACE brings out what Christ is and what He has done for us on Calvary. So Paul implored the Galatians not to turn back to the Law from which Christ redeemed them.

So what then is the purpose of the Law? Galatians 3:21-25 Its purpose was to make obvious to everyone that we are, in ourselves, out of right relationship with God, and therefore to show us the futility of devising some religious system for getting by our own efforts what we can only get by waiting in faith for God to complete his promise. For if any kind of rule keeping had power to create life in us, we would certainly have gotten it by this time.

Until the time when we were mature enough to respond freely in faith to the living God, we were carefully surrounded and protected by the Mosaic law. The law was like those Greek tutors, with which you are familiar, who escort children to school and protect them from danger or distraction, making sure the children will really get to the place they set out for.

The Law defined sin. But while the Law can define sin, it can’t do anything to cure it.

Chapter Four

In ancient times, a young boy legally became a man at a certain age. With the Jewish people, that age was 12. In a beautiful Bar Mitzvah ceremony, the line dividing boyhood from manhood was passed. With the Greeks the line was age 18. With the Romans - fluctuated from 14-17. Prior to the “legal age,” a lad could not own property, could make no legal decision and was not really in control of his life. As far as the state was concerned, a boy had no more rights than a servant or slave. Once he passed the set age, he took on the responsibilities and privileges of manhood. Paul likens that to mankind prior to Christ coming 2000 years ago: Galatians 4:3-7 That is the way it is with us: When we were minors, we were just like slaves ordered around by simple
instructions (the tutors and administrators of this world), with no say in the conduct of our own lives. 4] But when the time arrived that was set by God the Father, God sent his Son, born among us of a woman, born under the conditions of the law [5] so that he might redeem those of us who have been kidnapped by the law. Thus we have been set free to experience our rightful heritage. [6] You can tell for sure that you are now fully adopted as his own children because God sent the Spirit of his Son into our lives crying out, "Papa! Father!" [7] Doesn't that privilege of intimate conversation with God make it plain that you are not a slave, but a child? And if you are a child, you're also an heir, with complete access to the inheritance.

I love verse 4 in the King James: "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son...etc." It was no accident that Jesus born when He was.

In the following passage, Paul delves into the Old Testament to show the people the vast difference between law and grace: Galatians 4:21-31  'Tell me now, you who have become so enamored with the law: Have you paid close attention to that law? [22] Abraham, remember, had two sons: one by the slave woman and one by the free woman. [23] The son of the slave woman was born by human connivance; the son of the free woman was born by God's promise. [24] This illustrates the very thing we are dealing with now. The two births represent two ways of being in relationship with God. One is from Mount Sinai in Arabia. [25] It corresponds with what is now going on in Jerusalem—a slave life, producing slaves as offspring. This is the way of Hagar. [26] In contrast to that, there is an invisible Jerusalem, a free Jerusalem, and she is our mother—this is the way of Sarah. [27] Remember what Isaiah wrote:

"Rejoice, barren woman who bears no children,
shout and cry out, woman who has no birth pangs,
Because the children of the barren woman
now surpass the children of the chosen woman."

[28] Isn't it clear, friends, that you, like Isaac, are children of promise? [29] In the days of Hagar and Sarah, the child who came from faithless connivance (Ishmael) harassed the child who came—empowered by the Spirit—from the faithful promise (Isaac). Isn't it clear that the harassment you are now experiencing from the Jerusalem heretics follows that old pattern? [30] There is a Scripture that tells us what to do: "Expel the slave mother with her son, for the slave son will not inherit with the free son." [31] Isn't that conclusive? We are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.

My friend, it is what happened on Mt Calvary that saves you (Jesus death on the cross), not what happened on Mt. Sinai (the giving of the Mosaic law.)
Chapter Five

The whole book of Galatians boils down to this: The old way of the law spotlighted human achievement ("I am saved because I have done so and so"). But the way of grace spotlights what Jesus did on the cross!

The Jerusalem religious leaders were demanding circumcision in order to be saved. Paul hit them with a brutal illustration: Galatians 5:7-12 You were running superbly! Who cut in on you, deflecting you from the true course of obedience? [8] This detour doesn't come from the One who called you into the race in the first place. [9] And please don't toss this off as insignificant. It only takes a minute amount of yeast, you know, to permeate an entire loaf of bread. [10] Deep down, the Master has given me confidence that you will not defect. But the one who is upsetting you, whoever he is, will bear the divine judgment. [11] As for the rumor that I continue to preach the ways of circumcision (as I did in those pre-Damascus Road days), that is absurd. Why would I still be persecuted, then? If I were preaching that old message, no one would be offended if I mentioned the Cross now and then—it would be so watered-down it wouldn't matter one way or the other. [12] Why don't these agitators, obsessive as they are about circumcision, go all the way and castrate themselves!

Near Galatia was Phrygia, where the people worshiped a false goddess named Cybele. The priests of Cybele had a barbaric ceremony in which they mutilated themselves by castration. Paul, in effect, wrote, "If you are going to make salvation dependent upon circumcision, you might as well end up like the heathen by castrating yourself." We might recoil at that illustration but it indicates how strongly Paul felt about the matter.

So...if we are saved by grace, does that give us a license to sin? Galatians 5:13-21 It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows. [14] For everything we know about God's Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That's an act of true freedom. [15] If you bite and rage each other, watch out—in no time at all you will be annihilating each other, and where will your precious freedom be then? [16] My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit. Then you won't feed the compulsions of selfishness. [17] For there is a root of sinful self-interest in us that is at odds with a free spirit, just as the free spirit is incompatible with selfishness. These two ways of life are antithetical, so that you cannot live at times one way and at times another way according to how you feel on any given day. [18] Why don't
you choose to be led by the Spirit and so escape the erratic compulsions of a
law-dominated existence? [19] It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying
to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking
accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for
happiness; [20] trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat
competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an
impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and
lopsided pursuits; [21] the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival;
uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. I could go
on. This isn't the first time I have warned you, you know. If you use your freedom
this way, you will not inherit God's kingdom.

The Fruit Of The Spirit

Galatians 5:22-26 KJV  But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering,
gentleness, goodness, faith, [23] Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
[24] And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.
[25] If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. [26] Let us not be desirous
of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Jesus said in His Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7:16  Ye shall know them by their
fruits.

Chapter Six

I love this chapter in which the Holy Spirit reminds us that IF WE ARE SPIRITUAL,
RESTORE FALLEN BELIEVERS IN LOVE AND GENTleness.  Galatians 6:1 KJV
Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an
one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

My friend Gary S. Paxton once wrote a song that decries, “The Christian Army Is The
Only One That Shoots Its Own Wounded.” We are not to gloat or feel more spiritual
than some believer who has fallen in sin. We are go examine our own lives.

Finally, Paul encouraged the Galatians saints to be generous:  Galatians 6:8-10 [Message]
The person who plants selfishness, ignoring the needs of others—ignoring
God!—harvests a crop of weeds. All he'll have to show for his life is weeds! But the
one who plants in response to God, letting God's Spirit do the growth work in him,
harvests a crop of real life, eternal life.  [9] So let's not allow ourselves to get
fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give
up, or quit. [10] Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for
the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith.

EPHESIANS

Ephesus was a main Roman city in what we know today as Turkey. It was located near
the Aegean Sea and the Cayster River (long since silted up) and history is filled with
stories that took place there. During the Roman period, it was a city of about 50,000
people (which made it one of the largest Roman centers). It was the home of the
worship of Diana, whose temple there was called one of the ancient seven wonders of the
world. Through the ministry of Paul and John, Ephesus became one of the “seven
churches of Asia” written about in Revelation 2 and 3. The incredible ruins of the city,
which I have visited on numerous occasions, is one of the most outstanding tourist
attractions in the world.

Acts 19 narrates the marvelous ministry of Paul there: Acts 19:1-7 Now, it happened
that while Apollos was away in Corinth, Paul made his way down through the
mountains, came to Ephesus, and happened on some disciples there. [2] The first
thing he said was, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? Did you take
God into your mind only, or did you also embrace him with your heart? Did he get
inside you?" "We've never even heard of that—a Holy Spirit? God within us?"

Twelve men of Ephesus were baptized in the Holy Spirit and it triggered a great revival to
Christ in the city: Acts 19:17-20 It was soon news all over Ephesus among both
Jews and Greeks. The realization spread that God was in and behind this. Curiosity
about Paul developed into reverence for the Master Jesus. [18] Many of those who
thus believed came out of the closet and made a clean break with their secret
sorceries. [19] All kinds of witches and warlocks came out of the woodwork with
their books of spells and incantations and made a huge bonfire of them. Someone
estimated their worth at fifty thousand silver coins. [20] In such ways it became
evident that the Word of the Master was now sovereign and prevailed in Ephesus.

It was here that a riot was instigated, led by a silversmith named Demetrius. The union
of silversmiths had been making a fortune selling “Diana” statues and trinkets. Because
of the revival, many Ephesians stopped worshiping the goddess and buying the products.
The riot took place in the great stadium/theater (shown on the next page). The stadium
then would seat about 25,000. It still stands and is used for concerts to this day. For two
hours the riot continued. The Apostle John became the pastor of the Christians. He
was arrested there by Emperor Domitian’s military and sentenced to the Isle of Patmos.
When the emperor died, John returned to this city and did much of his great writing.
Chapter One

The theme of Ephesians is the fact that the Church is the body of which Jesus is the Head. The book can be divided into two parts: Chapters 1-3 - Paul informs us who we ARE in Christ and in chapters 4 - 6 he tells us what we are to DO because we are in Christ.

Paul was not a negative thinker. Despite all his persecutions, imprisonments and beatings, he considered himself blessed: Ephes. 1:3 KJV  Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: What blessings?

- God has known us and called us before the foundation of the world
- We have redemption through Christ’s blood
- God has revealed His will and purpose to us
- We have a fabulous inheritance

In verses 15-23 Paul called for us to mature as believers: Ephes. 1:18 ... your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for Christians... Salvation is the open door to God’s plan for us. What has happened to you “since you believed?”
Chapter Two

Salvation is more than making a mental assent that Jesus is OK. It is quite literally life from death: Ephes. 2:1  KJV  And you hath he quickened (resurrected), who were dead in trespasses and sins;  A person outside of salvation through Christ is considered dead in God’s eyes. Our soul’s resurrection requires a change, an inner transformation: Ephes. 2:2-6 (NAS - New American Standard) ... in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. [3] Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. [4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our transgressions, 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. Our “want-to’s” are changed when we are saved!

Salvation cannot be earned! Never! It is a gift of God. Ephes. 2:8-10 NAS For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; [9] not as a result of works, that no one should boast. [10] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

No, I cannot earn my salvation; however, once saved, God expects “fruit” from His investment in us. God expects me to grow in grace and spiritual stature. Note verse 10 which speaks of “good works.” Here is what we must remember:

SALVATION IS A GIFT OF GOD;  ETERNAL REWARDS MUST BE EARNED!

Chapter 3

Paul probably wrote this book when he was a prisoner in Rome awaiting his first trial before Nero (in which he was acquitted). He paid a dear price for his obedience to Christ’s call (on the road to Damascus) but he never questioned that call: Ephes. 3:7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. I have personally learned this principle: It can get tough in our Christian walk; so you had better KNOW you are in the will of God Who called you.

Paul prayed that the Ephesian saints would know that same assurance: Ephes. 3:16-17 ...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened
with power through His Spirit in the inner man; [17] so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

“Rooted and grounded...” In other words, maturing! How does that happen? There is certainly no substitute for the study of God’s Word. Scriptures are like a mirror - showing us exactly where we stand. Our church services should also enhance our maturity. The Word of God must be the primary factor in any service: Ephes. 3:18-19 (So that we) may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, [19] and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.

I protest with all my strength churches that advertise themselves as merely enjoyable places to be, where not much is taught and not much is expected of the saints. Such congregations are a far, far cry from the demands of scripture. Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians was that they would grow in the things of God. This must be our prayer for ourselves today. Lord, have I gone deeper into Your Word than last year? Have I grown in love and grace? Am I really more committed, more firmly grounded than I was just a few months ago? Deeper, deeper, would I go!

Chapter 4

As I indicated earlier in this study, the first three chapters of Ephesians tell us who we ARE in Christ. How we are told what we should DO. Ephes. 4:1 KJV I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you (beg you) that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

You and I do not have the prerogative to just do any old thing we want to do. Is our life WORTHY of Christ? So what are those requirements?

• Verse 2 “Live peacefully together, forbearing on another in love.”
• Verses 4 - 6 “Live in unity among ourselves”

God has given gifts to the church, which we learn about in Ephes. 4:11: And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

The original 12 apostles were those who had literally walked and lived with Christ. Paul deemed himself an apostle. But we have apostles today, such as some of the missionaries who have spearheaded the Gospel into previously untouched areas. We also
have prophets, those who fearlessly proclaim God’s truths (generally not loved and appreciated). There are also evangelists, such as Billy Graham. And pastors and teachers - sort of a combined ministry there. I am not an apostle; I certainly am not a prophet or evangelist; but all I have ever felt called to be was a pastor/teacher.

In verses 14-24 Paul makes a plea for believers to find new depths of spiritual maturity...

Ephes. 4:14-15 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; [15] But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

There are some telltale signs of immaturity in believers. One of the chief ones is their constant running after new teachings. Fads. Paul wrote that even our conversation should evolve to deeper dimension in God: Ephes. 4:22-23 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; [23] And be renewed in the spirit of your mind...

Chapter 5

Paul got quite specific here in areas of Christian maturity: Ephes. 5:1-5 (The Message)

Watch what God does, and then you do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parents. [2] Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with him and learn a life of love. Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that. [3] Don't allow love to turn into lust, setting off a downhill slide into sexual promiscuity, filthy practices, or bullying greed. [4] Though some tongues just love the taste of gossip, Christians have better uses for language than that. Don’t talk dirty or silly. That kind of talk doesn't fit our style. Thanksgiving is our dialect. [5] You can be sure that using people or religion or things just for what you can get out of them—the usual variations on idolatry—will get you nowhere, and certainly nowhere near the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of God.

Sexual sin is sex outside of marriage (to each other!!) The Bible states that the marriage bed is undefiled. Sex was not given by God only for procreation, it was also given for the pleasure of the husband and wife. Paul warns that adultery and fornication are never to be part of the believer’s life.

BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT! Ephes. 5:18-21 NAS And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, [19] speaking to
one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody
with your heart to the Lord; [20] always giving thanks for all things in the name of
our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; [21] and be subject to one another in
the fear of Christ.

Being filled with God’s spirit is not unique to Assemblies of God people. One of my
favorite people ever was a nun in Jerusalem, Sister Agnes. She radiated the presence of
God and her witness won countless persons to Christ.

GOD’S ORDER IN THE HOME: Ephes. 5:22-33 NAS Wives, be subject to your
own husbands, as to the Lord. [23] For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ
also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. [24] But as
the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in
everything. [25] Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and
gave Himself up for her; [26] that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the
washing of water with the word, [27] that He might present to Himself the church in
all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be
holy and blameless. [28] So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own
bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; [29] for no one ever hated his own
flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, [30] because
we are members of His body. [31] For this cause a man shall leave his father and
mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. [32] This
mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. [33]
Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself;
and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.

I have heard men claim to be “the king in my household.” But....what kind of king?
There have been some really terrible, brutal kings. A man can only claim to be the head
of a household if he fulfills verse 25: “Loving you wife as Christ loved the Church and
gave Himself up for her.” A true husband sacrifices himself for his wife.

Chapter Six

GOD’S ORDER IN THE HOME also pertains to the children. Ephes. 6:1-4 NAS
Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. [2] Honor your father
and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), [3] that it may be well
with you, and that you may live long on the earth. [4] And, fathers, do not provoke
your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the
Lord.
Parents have the responsibility to be disciplinarians and teachers to their children; however, those responsibilities should never block a constant revelation of true shown love to them. Christianity begins at home.

Paul concludes this letter by telling the believers: Ephes. 6:10-20 NAS  Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. [11] Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. [12] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. [13] Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. [14] Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, [15] and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; [16] in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. [17] And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. [18] With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, [19] and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

This life is a constant battle against the enemy of our souls. So Paul teaches us to “put on the whole armor of God so we will be able to stand!”

Next week:  Philippians and Colossians