

Last time ~ we **concluded** our study of **Ephesians** . . .
at chapter 1,v.18 ... as Paul **prays** for them:

So let's **read**: from there to ... **end of chapter**

The New Testament, describes: **power & strength**.
With several different words, in our older English translations
To keep the story ~ from becoming too 'wordy'
They often left out, some of the 'Flavour' of some of the words.

So ... the 'Amplified Bible' ~ Set out to correct this,
by fully explaining the word meanings.

Which was fine to explore the meaning of a verse or two,
But was **clumsy** ... when you read a passage out loud.

The two N.T. words ~ most often used for '**Power**' are:
'**dunamis**' & '**exousia**' (both words are in this passage)

From **dunamis** we get our English words:
Dynamo and Dynamite:

The power of 'force'

The power of the wind and the waves ~ in a storm.
But also, the force soldiers can use ~ to subdue an enemy !

Whereas ... the 2nd word: '**exousia**'
means ~ **the power of 'authority'**
These 2 concepts often go 'hand in hand'

EG. The chief jailer at Philippi, who imprisoned Paul and Silas, had the power of '**authority**' ... backed up by his soldiers, who could use the power of '**force**' on the prisoners, if needed.

In v19 ~ Paul says: I pray that you will begin to understand, The incredible greatness of His power, for us who believe him. The dynamite of God ... is for those who believe Him.

God's power in our lives, comes from trusting what He's said.

Paul continues: **This is the same mighty power, that raised Christ from the dead, & seated him in the place of honour, At God's right hand in the heavenly realms.**

The Lord Jesus ~ is seated at God's right hand.

That position ... is 'unique'

It represents the highest 'power & authority' in the universe !

In business ~ or politics, one person takes control for a time, Then 'He' or 'She' is **superseded** by another ...

Another President, another King, another CEO, or whatever.

But the **Lord Jesus** ~ has been given a position of Supreme Authority...for all eternity. He will never be deposed !

Because ~ He will never grow old ~ or forgetful !

Or wear out ~ & need to be replaced !

He has this position of authority, right now !

But in total harmony with the Father & the Holy Spirit, He will **not** exercise that authority,

Until ... God's pre-determined time.

v10. Says: **And this is His plan: at the right time ... He will bring everything together under the authority of Christ, Everything in Heaven ... and on Earth.**

vs. 22,23:

And God has put all things under the authority of Christ, and He gave him this authority for the benefit of the Church. And the Church is his body, it is filled by Christ, who fills everything, everywhere, with his presence.

His relationship to the church ~ is described as:
that of the head ~ to the body !

Our head does the thinking, & guides our body, in what to do
The Lord Jesus is the 'head' ~ & Lord ~ of the church.

So **our role** ... is to be **his obedient disciples**.

His 'headship' of **the Church** is current ~ it's right **now** !

His 'headship' of **the Universe**, is also current,

But ... it won't be openly revealed, until ... **the right time**.

Paul was a natural teacher ~ He explains a point of belief,
Then he explains ~ how to apply it,
and then moves on to the next point ~ and its application.

Later ~ he shows how his various points, all link together.

And from time to time ~ he comes back to remind us,
and clarify a point ~ he's already made.

The chapter break (between: Chapters 1&2)
indicates a change of subject.

Read chapt. 2. v 1- 3

v1 ~ **You Gentiles ... were dead** in your sins.

v3 ~ **We Jews ...** were no better...

vs4,5: **But God is so rich in mercy, & he loved us so very much that even while we were dead, because of our sins, He gave us life, when he raised Christ from the dead.**

Some years ago, I took the children, to the **Waiwera** Hot Pools
As we went in ~ I discovered the couple managing the Pools,
Had previously been employed by us.

The front desk, was very busy ~ right then.

So I went back later ~ to chat with them, and catch up.

The husband was **huge**, about 6 foot 6 inches tall, & not thin !
His 'nickname' was **Tiny** ! As we were chatting ...

He continued taking the money, from a few people arriving.

When suddenly a very loud voice shouted:

Quick ! Do something !

A man in his togs ~ was holding a small girl in his arms,
she wasn't breathing ! I guess, she was technically dead !
He'd stepped on her body ~ at the bottom of the hottest pool.

In moments ~ '**Tiny**' had her on the ground ~ giving her air
with an 'airbag' ~ after about 30 seconds ~ (it seemed longer)
she coughed up a lot of water ~ and began to breath again !

While all this was going on ~ her mother arrived !
she was **distraught** ~ and had to be physically restrained,
until the child had recovered a bit ~ and was out of danger !
On that occasion, we had a 'happy ending'
But for the next day or two ... I kept having 'flashbacks'

Paul says: You Christians at Ephesus, & likewise the rest of us
We were all ~ 'as good as dead' ~ **we'd all drowned ...**
in the sinful ways ~ of our culture and environment !

And ... we were **beyond helping ourselves** !
Our behaviour, and sin, had put us 'Offside' with God.
So we were **the objects of His wrath** !
But, we couldn't fix it ! God had to ! (see: v5)
Only He ~ could resuscitate us !

v:6 **For he raised us from the dead along with Christ,**
And we are seated with him in the heavenly realms
I know, we're re seated in this, beautiful **Church** in Drury !
But would you call it ... '**heavenly realms**' !
Of course ... Paul's **not** referring to our physical location,
But to our 'spiritual position in Christ'
Following our '**adoption**' ~ into God's family.

When we trust Jesus, the Son of God ~ as our Saviour,
we're **adopted** ~ as God's sons and daughters, our spiritual
position ~ meaning: (our status before God) changes from
being **the objects of his wrath** ~ to **the objects of his Grace**.

When we were much younger ...

Many of us learned verses 8 & 9 off by heart,

Starting with: **by grace are ye saved, through faith ...**

Committing scripture to memory ~ is commendable.

But we mustn't ~ just learn a string of words 'parrot fashion'
without **understanding & applying** their meaning !

Which is why I like to use, a modern English Bible translation.

One evening, Billy Graham ~ told a story about himself,
that gives a clear illustration, of God's gift to us.

It was the 1950's ~ many people had **both seen & experienced**
'life in the raw' in the **depression**, & during the 2nd World War.

Now ~ they were starting again ... to 'rebuild the nation'

They wanted **a better life for their children**, than they'd had.

Because they'd surely seen 'mankind' ~ at his worst !

Billy Graham's Evangelistic Crusades ~ were selected by
The Randolph Hearst newspapers, to be written up: **positively**.

This increased the crowds, and the media attention, even more !

On this particular occasion:

Billy was able to drive, from his home in: **South Carolina**.

Over the border into the next state ~ to preach at the 'Crusade'

The 'Stateline' ~ (meaning the border between the 2 states)

Was at a 'cross roads'

Less than ½ a mile over the border,

Billy saw flashing lights in his mirror !

A State Trooper pulled him over, and said:

'Sir, you were exceeding the speed limit !

You must follow me into town.'

He took Billy into the Courthouse,

And then went across the road, to get the barber.

The local barber ... was also a Judge !

The "court" ~ was just the 3 of them.

After establishing Billy's identity, the Trooper cited the charge of exceeding the speed limit ~ by 10 mph.

The Judge asked Billy to plead ~ And Billy said:

Guilty, I had no idea, the speed limit changed at the State line.

The Judge said: 'You have been caught ~ breaking the law.

You admit ~ you were breaking the law.

I have no alternative ~ but to apply the law,
and penalise you ~ fined \$10 !'

As Billy was reaching for his wallet,

The Judge came round to 'the other side' of the Bench & said:

'In my role as a **Judge** ... I must uphold: **the rule of law**'

I am not free to say: '**It doesn't matter this time**' !

‘But... as a member of our local church,
Where, we’ve been praying for you ~ and this Crusade,
and many of us will be attending it, too.
I will pay the fine !’

Both the **Jews** ~ and the **Gentiles** ~ had lived in sin.
They’d **broken God’s laws** ~ and they knew it.
But ‘**Law**’ not upheld ... is not law at all !
Even **God** couldn’t say: ‘**It doesn’t matter this time**’ !

BUT, In His Grace, **He could say: I will pay the fine.**
In that way God’s justice is upheld, & His law honoured.
Because of His loving kindness ~ and in response to our faith
He pays the debt ~ which wipes **our** slate clean !

Verses (8, 9, 10) hang together, and address an important issue:
(Or) ‘grace’

**God saved you by his special favour / when you believed.
And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God.**

**Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done,
so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece.
He has created us anew, in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the
good things he planned for us, long ago. Eph. 2. Vs: 8, 9, 10. NLT**

Our salvation - (from the penalty of sin) - is entirely by
God’s grace ~ meaning ~ **God’s kindness, & favour.**
v.9. **Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done,**

The 'good things' ... we do for the Lord,
Should be in **response** ~ to His salvation,
Not ... in order to gain it.

From V.11- onward, we commence a new section, headed:
'Oneness and Peace in Christ' **Read Ch.2. vs11-18**

From the salvation of individuals ... & the
importance of reconciliation, between God and man.
Paul moves on ~ to another aspect of salvation in which:
God reconciles the Jews and Gentiles,
Who had previously been **completely hostile** to each other.

The Gentiles knew ... **all too well:**
The prejudice, the Jews held against them.

Which was why they'd had to leave the Synagogue in Ephesus,
& move to the School of Tyrannus.

But now, they've been reconciled ~ both **to God,**
And, to each other ...through Christ !

Paul is under 'house arrest' in Rome ...

Confined there by ~ **that same Jewish prejudice,**
to anyone disagreeing with the 'Official interpretation'
of how the Messiah would present himself !

Paul had completed three, extensive, missionary journeys.
And seen first hand ~ how **'each different group of people'**

Thought ~ their way of doing things ~ was best !
And therefore, other ways ~ must be inferior, or wrong !

The Greeks ... had good reason to feel superior.
Hadn't **Alexander** ~ conquered 'the World' in just 13 years ?
And hadn't the Greek language spread, as the trade language
All over the known world ?

They could name Homer & Pythagoras & Archimedes,
and a host of poets ~ writers ~ & mathematicians.
Who'd changed the educational world, of their time.

The Romans also ... had conquered the known world.
Their armies had conquered ~ & their laws of administration
Continued ... to supply a steady flow of taxes, back to Rome.
But these attitudes ~ created a divisive atmosphere,
and an un-Godly: '*pecking order*' !

Paul, had spent ~ the first 30 odd years of his life,
Sincerely believing in ... Jewish superiority.
But when he became a Christian, he discovered.
That's not ... how God views things !

For Paul ~ that mental and spiritual re-think ~ was so huge,
so 'mind-blowing' ... that he took 3 years off !
(much of it ~ spent in Arabia)

He had to **re-think**, the **theology** he'd been taught & trusted.

& to re-visit, **all** the Messianic passages in the Psalms & Isaiah.
To recognise the huge number of times ~ these passages made
reference to the '**birth**' & '**life**' & '**death**' of the Messiah !
Now he's asking **all** the Ephesian Christians,
to **re-think** their personal **prejudices**,
& to recognise they're all on an equal footing ~ before God.

v18. **Now all of us, both Jews and Gentiles,**
may come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit,
because of what Christ has done for us.

Only when they can accept each other as equals before God,
Can there be, any real "Fellowship" or mutual care & support.

So ~ let's read on: ~ vs19 - 21.

Paul explains that, 'What' the Jews had studied for centuries:
The Law of Moses, & the teaching of the OT prophets,
And all that was predicted ~ about the coming of the Messiah
All this ... now has meaning ~ for the **Gentiles** as well !

But, There was one important difference !
vs.14,15a, say: **For Christ himself has made peace between**
us Jews and you Gentiles by making us all one people. He has
broken down the wall of hostility that used to separate us.

By His death he ended, the whole system of Jewish law
That excluded the Gentiles.

So the old way, to be right with God ...
Through the Law of Moses ~ is **superseded**, and set aside.
It's not necessary ... **Now that Jesus the Messiah, has come.**

In those days ~ when you planned to build a new house,
You chose the site ~ cleared the land of stones,
and levelled the ground, as best you could.

Then you looked for the heaviest, flattest, stone you could find
to be **the chief cornerstone**. (the first one to be laid down)

Each corner ~ would be marked with a 'corner stone'
But the first one, would be carefully set in place
& levelled, so that all measurements, could be taken,
from that one: ... **the chief cornerstone !**

(v20 says) **And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself.**
So: Paul uses 'something' ~ they're all familiar with,
to describe the Lord.

**All measurements ~ to ascertain right from wrong.
were to come from Him !**

The last verse: v 22:
Applies equally to us, **here and now:**
It says: **Through him you Gentiles (& that includes us)
Are also joined together as part of this dwelling
Where God lives by his Spirit.**