

Ephesians 1.3

"Jesus is All"

Visitors to Seminary in Almaty - COME TO SEE CHURCH HERE

from Airport - Impressive blue-domed mosque below Green Bazaar

Gold domes on Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Paniflov Park

Drive to Seminary - Attractive now Mosque in Tastak on Tole Bi

Seminary - Old, unattractive former kindergarten bldg.

Most Evangelical churches in Almaty - Old halls, houses - Hyatt??!

SAW CITY OF EPHEBUS RESTORED AS IT WAS IN PAUL'S DAY

SITE TEMPLE OF GODDESS - 7 wonders of world / filled with wealth
filled with some of greatest treasures of art in ancient world

TEMPLE WAS THE CENTRAL BANK OF ASIA MINOR
ALL THE RICHES OF PEOPLE IN AREA CAME FROM THERE

Ephesus - THIRD LARGEST LIBRARY IN WORLD

THEATER - SEATED MORE THAN 50,000 PEOPLE

CITY of Ephesus - EVEN BEAUTIFUL today 2000 yr. OLD RUINS

HOW did poor Xtians FEEL SURROUNDED by THESE RICHES?
no great shrine dedicated to Jesus / No Cathedral of St. Paul
meetings were in homes and halls - Did not hire the Ephesus Hilton

Paul wants them to feel RICH - not like second-class citizens

RECEIVED "every spiritual blessing in heavenly places"

Other financial Words - Inheritance 4 x's / Fullness or Filled 6 x's

ALL BLESSINGS COME FROM THE TEMPLE OF GOD - JESUS
 PAUL'S STYLE - THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER - whole 1st chapter

THANKSGIVING - vs. 3-14 // ONE UNBROKEN SENTENCE

1. The Giver of All Blessings

FIRST PART OF PRAISE - READ v. 3 - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

a. Blessed be our God and Father / GOD THE FATHER

ALL OUR BLESSINGS HAVE THEIR ORIGIN IN GOD THE FATHER - HE IS
 THE ARCHITECT OF THE PLAN OF SALVATION

John Stott "Father is subject of all the main verbs in these verses"

1 Cor 15.24,28 - the end will come, when X hands over the kingdom to God the
 Father...then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under
 him, so that God may be all in all.

b. "our Lord Jesus Christ" - Paul teaches that He has 2 natures

1) Human Nature - Jesus is a Man - "the God of Jesus Christ"

AS A MAN - JESUS RELATED TO FATHER AS HIS GOD

Matthew 1:1 Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham

SO MUCH MAN SOME PEOPLE WHO KNEW HIM REJECTED HIM
 HOW COULD HE BE THE MESSIAH? HE IS JUST A MAN!

Matthew 27:46 "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

CRIES OF REAL MAN -SUFFERING REAL, AGONIZING TORMENT

2) Divine Nature - Jesus is God "the Father of Jesus Christ"

Jesus knew God as Father in a way no man ever did

HE IS GOD THE SON FROM ALL ETERNITY - ONLY BEGOTTEN
"unique" / "there is no son like Him"

Psalms 2:7 "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."
IT IS FOREVER GOD'S ETERNAL TODAY - written 3000 yrs. ago

JEWES UNDERSTOOD JESUS THE SON CLAIMED TO BE GOD -
John 10:30-38 "I and the Father are one." Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him..."We are stoning you for... blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God"

HE WAS NOT JUST "a" Son of God / HE IS "THE" SON OF GOD

John 13:32 God will glorify the Son in himself

27 x's in this letter Paul writes the phrase "IN CHRIST"
in Him, in the beloved, in Jesus

2 MEN WHOM GOD SEES MANKIND THROUGH - Adam & Jesus
either you are in one or the other

In Adam - Sin, Judgment, Death, Hell
In Christ - Righteousness, Blessing, Life, Heaven

ALL OF THE GIFTS OF GOD ARE GIVEN TO US IN CHRIST

LEAVE OUT THE "in Christ" - YOU HAVE NO BLESSINGS

Ephesians 1:1 saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus
Ephesians 1:4 he chose us in him
1.5 adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ
1.7 In Him we have redemption through his blood

1.9 the mystery of his will...which he purposed in Christ

1.13 And you also were sealed in Christ

2:5 GOD made us alive with Christ

2:6 God raised us up with Christ

SOME TRY TO GO BEYOND X - EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE OF X

Colossians 2:18,19 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

DANGEROUS RESULT - He has lost connection with the Head

HAVE ALL THE BLESSINGS NOW IF YOU HAVE CHRIST

c. Holy Spirit "every spiritual blessing" / Spiritual = Holy Spirit

PAUL'S 1st Question to DISCIPLES IN EPHESUS

Acts 19:2 "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

"No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

TRAGIC OVERSIGHT

Romans 8:9 "if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ."

BLESSINGS of Father and Son GIVEN THROUGH HOLY SPIRIT

Gifts of God - from Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit

2. The Gifts we Have Received

a. **HEAVENLY** - "in the heavenly realms"

COUNT YOUR MANY BLESSINGS - woman wrote them down

PASTOR CAME OVER AND SHE SHOWED LIST OF BLESSINGS

health, job, house, car, insurance policy, funeral plan, children

EARTHLY BLESSINGS - EVIDENCE OF COMMON GRACE

MANY NON-XTIANS BETTER EARTHLY LIFE - house, job, car

LIT "in the heavenlies" USED 5 X'S AND ONLY IN EPHESIANS
MEANING - not a geographical or spatial reference

DEF - "unseen world of spiritual realities, where Jesus reigns
and His people reign with Him"

b. REAL - Heavenly realm is not an unreal, fairy tales, after death

PRESENCE OF CHRIST TRANSFORMS THIS LIFE HERE & NOW

Eph 2.1-10 - From a dead sinner to transformed saint
from following the world to being God's workmanship in X

Eph 2.11-22 Jesus unites people who hate one another
Jew & Gentile made into one new man in X

E 4 - X makes us humble, gentle, patient, forbearing, loving, mature

In X we can speak the truth in love / we can put off falsehood

In Him we can put off our old nature / and put on the new self

In X you can be angry but not sin /
get rid of all bitterness, rage, brawling, slander, and malice

Eph 5 - We can live a life of love

We can reject even a hint of sexual immorality, impurity, and greed

In Him we can live in the light, casting out the works of darkness

In Him we can be filled with the Spirit and not be drunk

Christ only can transform our marriage, parenting, employment

Christ can empower us to stand against the devil's schemes

SO HEAVENLY BLESSINGS ARE NOT JUST RELIGIOUS WORDS
it is a life transforming reality which effects everything about our lives

c. HEAVEN IN THE REAL WORLD

PAUL PRAYS FOR US TO SEE INTO THE HEAVENLIES

Ephesians 1:17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. (18) I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” 2 Cor 4.18

Stephen Curtis Chapman writes:

“Where is the hope, where is the peace? That will make this life complete - for every man, woman, boy, and girl - looking for heaven in the real world. To stand in the pouring rain and believe the sun will shine again. To know that the grave is not the end. To feel the embrace of grace and cross the line where real life begins. And to know in your heart that you have found the missing part. There is a hope, there is a peace. That will make this life complete. It happened one night with a tiny baby's birth. God heard the creation crying and He sent heaven to earth. He is the hope, He is the peace that will make this life complete. For every man, woman, boy, and girl looking for heaven in the real world. Heaven has come to the real world. Heaven has come to the real world. He is the hope, He is the peace. Jesus is heaven, heaven in the real world. He is the hope, He is the peace, He is heaven in the real world.”

“He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the universe” 4.10

3. The Gratitude we Should Reveal

a. Exclusive - No Other Source of Such Gifts

1000 shops in Beijing - ALL HAVE THE SAME PRODUCTS
 row after row of kiosks with the same things inside
 If one is closed - there are hundreds of others to find what you need

Some have SAME ATTITUDE TOWARD RELIGIONS - ALL SAME!

EXCLUSIVE CLAIM OF JESUS/ NO GROUND FOR COMPROMISE

John 14:6 "I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me.

NOT ALL ROADS LEAD TO HEAVEN -

ROAD IS NARROW & HARD - ONLY A FEW FIND IT

Matt 11:27 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

JESUS IS THE ONLY ONE WHO MAKES THE FATHER KNOWN

Acts 19 - Paul in Ephesus / Home of Goddess - Diana/ Artemis

Her temple was one of Ancient Seven Wonders of the World

Makers of silver shrines of goddess "brought in no little business"

v. 26 "this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man made gods are no gods at all. There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess will be discredited, and the goddess herself will be robbed of her divine majesty"

So THEY SHOUTED FOR 2 HRS "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians"

EVEN IF PAUL NEVER SPOKE OF ARTEMIS - implication is clear

IF JESUS IS LORD - Artemis cannot remain on her throne
 THRONE OF HEAVEN IS OCCUPIED BY KING JESUS / NO ROOM

CLAIM FULLY UNDERSTOOD BY MUSLIMS in Indonesia
 why they BURNED 10 more CHURCHES this week

Ephesians 1:21-22 GOD raised CHRIST...far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. {22} And God placed all things under his feet

THOSE GENTILES IN EPHESUS WITHOUT CHRIST

Ephesians 2:12 you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

b. Exhaustive - All we ever need is in the Lord

NEVER FIND MORE OF GOD THAN WHAT JESUS REVEALS

Ephesians 3:8 the unsearchable riches of Christ

Col1:19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in HIM

Colossians 2:9,10

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form

CANNOT GO BEYOND CHRIST - IF NOT SATISFIED WITH HIM

John 14:8-10

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

PERHAPS REVEALED A TONE OF BOREDOM, NOW WHAT?
 WE'VE BEEN WITH YOU FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS - ENOUGH?

{9} Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father' {10} Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

HARD FOR THE JEWS - 2000 YEARS OF STRICT MONOTHEISM

NOW HUMAN REVELATION OF GOD - GOD AS MAN - ONE GOD

WE WILL NEVER GO BEYOND JESUS - Jesus is God

BEST FRIEND John introduced to Dayna- John no less a friend
 DAYNA NOW redefined BEST FRIEND

JEWS - knew GOD AS FATHER / found whole new level through Son

WE'LL NEVER KNOW FATHER & SPIRIT APART FROM THE SON

AS YOU GROW IN LIFE YOU'LL SEE NOTHING ELSE MATTERS
 looked forward to our vacation in SE Asia - now tan is fading, bills
 looked forward to graduation - now have to work in real world
 looked forward to marriage - now.....

NOT THAT THINGS LIFE IS NOT GREAT - IT IS INCOMPLETE

GOD SHAPED VACUUM IN OUR SOUL - ONLY HE CAN FILL

2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us,
 so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Only one life, soon it will pass, only what is done for Christ will last"

c. Exuberant / GRATITUDE

THAT'S WHY LONG SENTENCE IS PUNCTUATED BY PRAISE

v. 3 "Praise be to God"

v. 6 "to the praise of His glorious grace"

v. 12 "for the praise of His glory"

v. 14 "to the praise of His glory"

COUPLE HAD BEEN MARRIED FOR 20 YEARS

wife was very unhappy / finally went to husband and shared grief

"Do you love me?" "Of course I do!" "Then why don't you tell me?"

"When I married you 20 years ago I told you I loved you, I still do!"

TRUE LOVE NEEDS TO BE EXPRESSED MORE FREQUENTLY

"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus"

1 Thess 5.18

WHAT IS GOD'S WILL - THAT WE ALWAYS BE THANKFUL

BE JOYFUL ALWAYS/ LET the REDEEMED of the LORD SAY SO

BICF - WHY SING SONGS AGAIN / SOME MORE THAN ONCE?

Practice for heaven - Where we will endlessly praise our God & King

THANK GOD FOR NEW WAVE OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

movement of Spirit has brought life, and joy into the cold Church

Paul wrote from his prison cell - Philippians 3.1

"My brothers, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard to you."

SAFEGUARD? Why a safeguard to continuously rejoice in the Lord?

Some years after this letter the Church at Ephesus received another

This one was from Jesus himself, penned by John the Apostle

They learned they were rich / Known for Strong Doctrine - Orthodox

Also known for COLD HEARTS - Jesus said to them,
 You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have
 fallen...If you do not repent, I will come and remove the lampstand from its place”

Revelation 2.4-6

APPARENTLY DID NOT REPENT - LOVE GREW COLD
 LAMPSTAND REMOVED - NO CHURCH THERE, NO CITY THERE

REMEMBER TO REJOICE, THE REMINDER IS A SAFEGUARD

Psalms 103:1-5 Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being,
 praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not
 all his benefits--who forgives all your sins and heals all your
 diseases who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and
 compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things

EVERY BLESSING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US BY
 THE FATHER IF WE ARE IN THE SON

WHAT IS THE ONLY FITTING RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE

Read vs. 3!