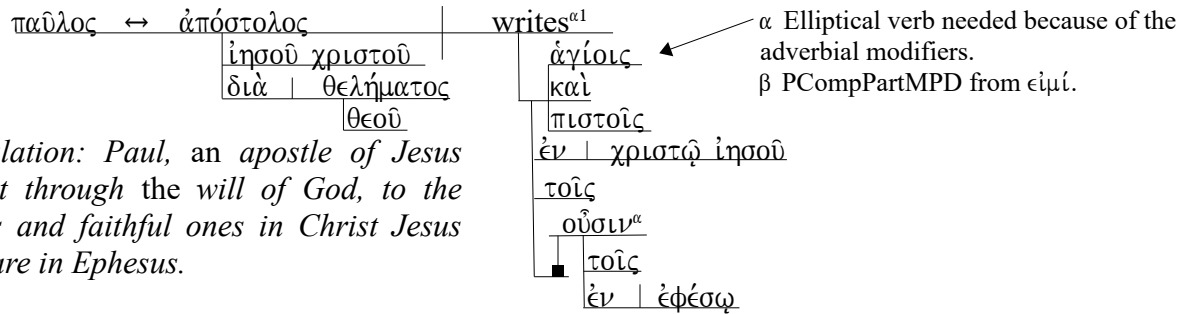


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1:1 παῦλος ἀπόστολος ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν ἐφέσω καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν χριστῷ ἰησοῦ.



*Translation: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, to the saints and faithful ones in Christ Jesus who are in Ephesus.*

**Exegetical Considerations**

**1. παῦλος (Paulos – Paul)**

Paul's name occurs in the New Testament c. 163 times. For an interesting short presentation of Paul's life and ministry see the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* under "Paul."<sup>2</sup> He wrote Ephesians from Rome during his first imprisonment while awaiting trial before Nero,<sup>3</sup> probably in 60 AD, but no later than 61 AD.

**ἀπόστολος (apostolos – an apostle)**

Originally, the word meant a *fleet, an expedition*. Then an *official messenger, someone sent on a mission*. In the NT epistles the word took on a doctrinal meaning:<sup>4</sup> one who was given a spiritual gift, for the purpose of laying the foundation of the new entity the church (Ephesians 2:20. See Ephesians 4:10-11), especially with reference to certain groups of people, in Paul's case, the Gentiles. Thus, the word retained its meaning of one sent, but modified it to include the doctrinal concept of being gifted. The two most prominent apostles in the New Testament gift sense were Paul and Peter, who were sent to the uncircumcision (Gentiles) and circumcision (Hebrews) respectively.

**ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ (iēsou christou – of Jesus Christ)<sup>5</sup>**

Grammarians sometimes call this a genitive of possession meaning "belonging to Jesus Christ.: If so, it is a special subcategory of possession, as it indicates agency as well, and has almost a causal idea. Therefore, rather than genitive of possession, it is better to think of it as a subjective genitive. Then it simply means one sent by Jesus Christ. The basic assumption of this use is that Jesus Christ still lives, that He rose from the dead, that he sent the apostle Paul.

**διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ (dia thelēmatos theou – through the will of God)**

An unusual adjectival prepositional phrase indicating source. The noun *thelēma* refers to God's desirous will shared by all three members of the Trinity, that will which may or may not have been determined.<sup>6</sup> In this case, contextually, God desired and determined that Paul would be an apostle of Jesus Christ. The phrase could be translated "through God's desirous will" as the word *theou* is a genitive of possession showing whose will is in view.<sup>7</sup>

**τοῖς ἁγίοις (tois hagiois – to the saints)**

Adverbial dative of address, implying a verb. The verb is elliptical (must be supplied) per the diagram above. Technically, an adjective, *hagiois* means the holy ones, the sanctified ones, the ones separated from others. Because of its affinity to the OT קֹדֶשׁ (*kōdesh - holy*) the word came to carry the idea of dedication or consecration to the Lord. Unlike some claim, Scripture teaches that all believers are

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saints. There is no separate category of saints. Nor can human beings determine who is a saint; it's a positional term from God's perspective, and applied solely by Him.

**τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν ἐφέσω (*tois ousin en ephesō – who are in Ephesus*)**

*Ousin* is an articular participle (has the word the before it) whose root meaning is “being.” Because it has the article, we translate it simply “who are.”

The prepositional phrase *en ephesō* tells where the recipients are. Generally handled under the designation “Destination” in most commentaries, this phrase does not identify where the Epistle was sent, but where the saints lived to whom it was sent. This distinction is important because Paul wanted those who were not familiar with the recipients to be able to identify them in terms of their location.

The one's living in Ephesus were generally Gentiles with a certain cultural background. Furthermore, they had come out of Greek paganism, which would color Paul's approach to them. However, Paul had spent much time with them (about three years) during which he ministered throughout Asia. It is clear from his presentation that he considered the saints in Ephesus to be relatively mature Christians. They had grown spiritually to the point where he could discuss difficult doctrines in this short epistle, and expect that they had the spiritual background to understand them.

There is great disagreement whether the words *en ephesō* are original because of two<sup>8</sup> factors:

1. Two Egyptian manuscripts, designated Aef and B, appear to have it inserted by a different hand than the normal scribe, and a couple of papyri leave it out altogether.
2. Some who wrote about the Bible in northern Africa did not have it in their manuscripts. Marcion says it is the Epistle to the Laodiceans, which is mentioned in Colossians 4:16.

In answer to number 1) above, the great majority of manuscripts contained *en ephesō*, including those of the Egyptian text type. It was generally, and almost universally, accepted in antiquity as being written to the believers in Ephesus. That *en ephesō* may have been added, or did not appear in a few manuscripts indicates that an original copier left it out, probably by accident.

In answer to number 2), one should realize that Marcion, who lived in the second century, is unreliable. He was anti-Jewish, rejected the entire Hebrew Bible as the word of God, and held, along with the Gnostics<sup>9</sup>, that the God of the OT was a lesser deity, and that Jesus was not the Messiah of Israel. Tertullian and Epiphanius of Salamis both indicated that Marcion rejected the synoptic gospels as Scripture, and held only to Luke, since it was associated with Paul.

There is, in fact, no doubt that the epistle was addressed to the Ephesians, but, while it is doubtful that it was intended as a circular letter, it may have circulated among most of the assemblies which Paul visited.

**καὶ πιστοῖς (*kai pistois – and faithful – lit. “and faithful ones.”*)**

The *and* (*kai*) connects *faithful* back to *the saints*. Because this adjective is separated from *the saints* by the words *who are in Ephesus* the construction is awkward for English speakers. The article *the* governs both *saints* and *faithful ones*, showing that they belong together.<sup>10</sup> *Faithful* can be used actively, meaning “the believing ones,” or passively, as here, meaning “the faithful ones.”

Faithful people live their lives according to the things they believe. This does not imply perfection. Those who are faithful still make mistakes and are not always consistent in their understanding of biblical doctrine. The believers in the Ephesian assembly were faithful because they continued to live biblically. Undoubtedly, they still made errors in doctrine and practice from time to time, either from lack of

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understanding or lack of knowledge. Nevertheless, they were relatively mature. As noted, Paul had spent almost three years in Ephesus, teaching and evangelizing.

**ἐν χριστῷ ἰησοῦ (*en christō iēsou – in Christ Jesus*)**

This prepositional phrase<sup>11</sup> occurs throughout the New Testament epistles, especially those written by Paul. It carries a variety of meanings, one of which, when used of the believer's relationship to the body of Christ, carries the idea being baptized into Christ, and so identified with Him. Some have misunderstood "in Christ," assuming that it *always* refers to Spirit baptism. There are other uses of the phrase in Ephesians. Here it refers back to both *holy* and *saints*, and indicates identification with Christ.

1:2 χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ.



*Translation: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Exegetical Considerations**

**χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ (*charis humin kai eirēnē apo theou – grace to you and peace from God*)**

*Charis* and *eirēnē* are subjects of an elliptical verb. For diagramming purposes, since the dative pronoun *humin* is an adverb, one assumes the state-of-being verb "be" as the verb.<sup>12</sup> The *kai* (and) connects the two nouns, though they are separated by *humin* (to you), a word order common in Greek.

Many proclaim that *grace* is being used as a regular Greek greeting, while *peace* is a Jewish greeting. However, here the two words take on doctrinal meanings in light of the phrase "from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." The Father and the Lord Jesus are the source of the grace and peace, indicating more than just a regular greeting.

Paul uses the word *grace* twelve times in Ephesians. In his writing, when *grace* is used toward Christians, it usually refers to the application of grace for daily living, as presented in detail in Ephesians 3, though less often it refers to grace for initial salvation, as in Ephesians 2. The immediate context is the deciding factor in each case. Here it refers to grace provision for daily living, since it is directed toward believers without further comment.

*Peace* usually refers to the fruit of the Spirit peace (Galatians 5:22). Paul uses peace seven times in Ephesians. In this greeting, peace refers to peace between people, the lack of strife. This is the clear meaning of the fruit of the Spirit peace. It does not mean "internal peace," or peace of mind, though Paul does use the word in that sense elsewhere (see Philippians 4:7).

**πατρὸς ἡμῶν (*patros hēmōn – our Father*)**

Technically the noun *patros* stands in apposition<sup>13</sup> to the word *theou*. Since *theos* can refer to any of the persons of the trinity, Paul identified which person he meant using apposition. Note the juxtaposition of the *humin* (to you) speaking of grace and peace, and the *hēmōn* (our), speaking of the Father. The question is, to whom is Paul referring by "our?" Does it refer to all people, or to a limited group of people?

Some have proclaimed the universal fatherhood of God from uses such as this, which is not true in the personal sense. It is true that God is "the Father" in Trinitarian contexts, but such does not imply a benevolent fatherhood for humanity in general. Furthermore, the use of *our* indicates a personal

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relationship of Paul and his readers to the Father. What distinguishes them from humanity at large? It is simply their faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the purpose of individual salvation. Upon that act of faith, individuals enter into a familial relationship to the Father that non-believers do not enjoy. He is *our Father* and is not in this sense a Father to human beings who do not believe.

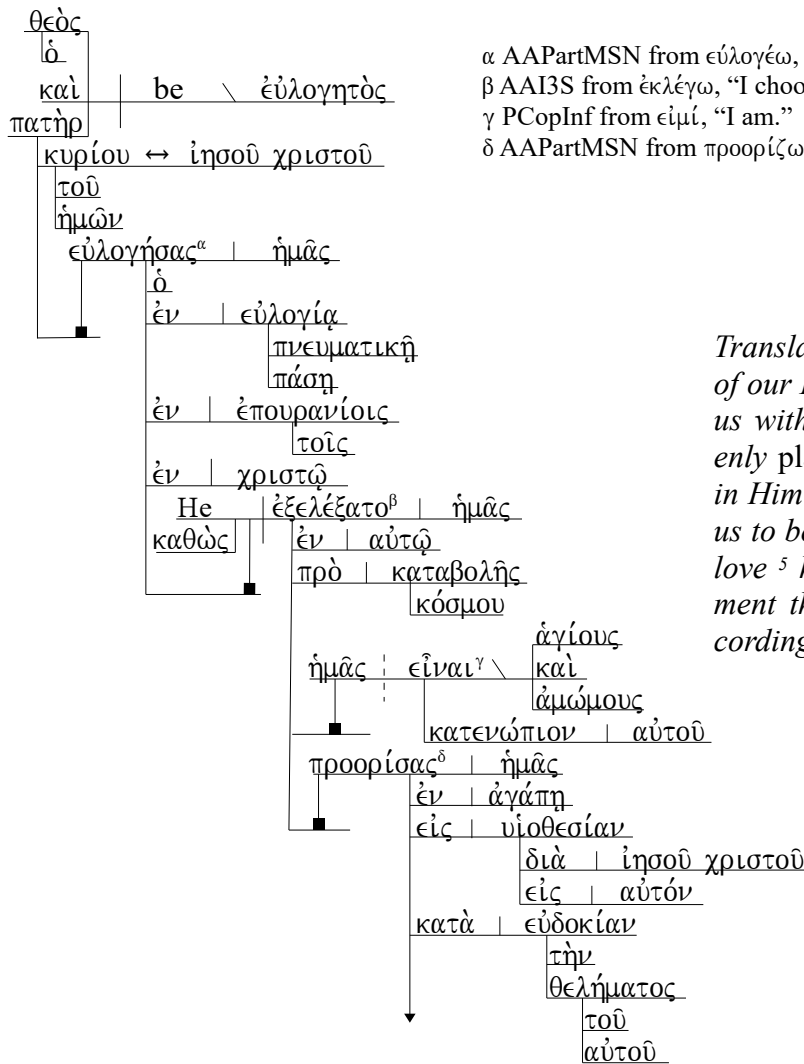
**καὶ κυρίου ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ (*kai kuriou iēsou christou – and the Lord Jesus Christ.*)**

The *kai* (and) both connects the Father with the Lord Jesus and distinguishes between them. They are both the source of the grace and peace. This affirms the close Trinitarian relationship between them. They are distinct persons, so that their activities may, and often do, differ.

**1:3-14 Part One**

**1:3-5** εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ ὁ εὐλόγησας ἡμᾶς ἐν πάσῃ εὐλογίᾳ πνευματικῇ ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν χριστῷ <sup>4</sup> καθὼς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ <sup>5</sup> προορίσας ἡμᾶς εἰς υἰοθεσίαν διὰ ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ εἰς αὐτόν κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ...

Ephesians 1:3-14 deals with the topic, “The Sovereignty of God Manifested through the Trinity.”



- α AAPartMSN from εὐλογέω, “I bless, speak well of.”
- β AAI3S from ἐκλέγω, “I choose, elect.”
- γ PCopInf from εἰμί, “I am.”
- δ AAPartMSN from προορίζω, “I predestine.”

*Translation: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He elected us in Him before the foundation of the world for us to be holy and faultless in His presence, in love <sup>5</sup> having predestined us unto son placement through Jesus Christ unto Himself according to the good pleasure of His will...*

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*Exegetical Considerations*

3. εὐλογητός (*eulogētos* – *blessed be*)

Here begins the longest sentence in the Greek NT. For convenience sake, I divided it into four parts. The sentence begins with the verbal adjective *eulogētos*. It is not the subject of the sentence (God is the subject) but the complement of the understood verb *be* (see diagram). *Eulogētos* in Ephesians occurs only here, but is found 8 times in the NT. It is in the Greek OT (LXX), generally as a translation of בָּרֻךְ (*baruch*) *blessed*. It also has a noun form, *eulogia*, fair or flattering speech (from which comes eulogy), and a verb form *eulogeō*, to speak well of, both of which also occur in this sentence. *Eulogētos* carries the idea of being well spoken of.<sup>14</sup>

Since *eulogētos* is a verbal adjective ending in *-tos*, it has a particular emphasis. Generally such adjectives indicate a quality of that which is described, in this case, God. It refers to God's character as being worthy of being well spoken of. While *eulogētos* is translated "blessed *be*" it seems to have something of a hortatory emphasis,<sup>15</sup> and could be paraphrased "let God our Father be well-spoken of."

ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ (*ho theos kai patēr tou kuriou hēmōn iēsou christou* – *the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ*)

The subject of this well-speaking is none other than God the Father, as the adjective always is in the Greek NT, though in LXX<sup>16</sup> it also refers to speaking well of men.

In the greeting, Paul spoke of *our Father*, but here, the emphasis is purely Trinitarian. He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. How can one divine person be the God of another divine person? The answer is two-fold, relating both to Christ's humanity and then to His deity.

First, the Father is Christ's God in His humanity. The correct doctrine of Christ is that He is both perfect man as well as God. In His humanity, which is as pure as His deity, the Father is His God and Father.

Second, the term Father also indicates a divine relationship. Within the Trinity, the two persons of the Godhead carry a Father-Son relationship. The word Son when applied to Christ refers, not simply to His subordination to the Father in His humanity, but the equality of His person with the person of the Father. Such was the cultural meaning of those two words. It was exactly this relationship that Christ proclaimed in John 10:30, "I and My Father are one." And His audience knew exactly what He meant.

John 10:31 states, "Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him." Why did they do that? In answer to the Lord's questioning about which good work are they to stone Him, they explain, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God." Being in spiritual darkness, the Jews could not accept Christ's clear statement. They understood that His claiming to be God's Son was claiming to be God, which they rejected and as a result they acted accordingly.

Jesus confirms the Father-Son relationship again in John 10:36, "Do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

In John 10:39 we read that again the Jews attempted to arrest Him, But it was not to be so. The text simply states, "but He departed out of their hand."

Another aspect of Trinitarian doctrine is simply the word "Lord" as applied to Jesus Christ. While the word was in general secular use during the NT time meaning either master, as of a slave, as well as the simple respectful designation of a respected man, similar to our use of "sir," it also carries a special designation when used of Jesus. In the LXX, the Greek word *kurios* is used mainly of the tetragrammaton,

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the four-letter name of God which was so sacred to the Israelites that they refused to speak it. While *kurios* may not mean precisely that here, there is certainly an echo of that meaning, which Paul would have surely realized, as he was well acquainted with the Greek translation of the OT called the Septuagint (LXX).

**ὁ εὐλογῆσας ἡμᾶς (*ho eulogēsas hēmas – the one who blessed us*)**

Here we have the aorist active participle, from the verb *eulogeō*. Participles are also verbal adjectives, but are different than the adjective *eulogētos* above. Each participle is directly derived from a verb and maintain certain verb characteristics. In this case the adjective function is strong, because of the word *ho*, the article *the*, refers the participle back directly to the God the Father, the one who blessed us. Again the word *blessed* expresses well-speaking, in this case, as the context will show, the well-speaking took place before the foundation of the world.

But the verb element is equally strong, because this participle has a direct object, *hēmas*, us, the ones being well spoken of. By interpretation, this refers to Paul and his immediate readers, but can be applied to believers today, who exist in the same relationship to God the Father that they did. How God spoke well of believers is revealed in the next prepositional phrase.

**ἐν πάσῃ εὐλογίᾳ πνευματικῇ (*en pasē eulogia pneumatikē – with every spiritual blessing*)**

This prepositional phrase indicates with what God blessed believers, and uses the noun meaning well-speaking, *eulogia*. The nature of the well-speaking is expressed in the words *pasē* and *pneumatikē*, *every*<sup>17</sup> and *spiritual*. When God spoke well on our behalf, He spoke every well-speaking that could possibly be spoken. Nothing can be added to it, nor, as we shall see, can anything be removed from it. It is settled for all the ages. But there is no direct physical blessing here. It is of a spiritual (*pneumatikē*) nature. The specific location of the act of well-speaking is identified in the next phrase.

**ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις (*en tois epouraniois – in the heavenly places*)**

Here is the plural form of the adjective *heavenly* (*epouranios*) used as a substantive,<sup>18</sup> and we add *places* to show that it is an object of the preposition *en*, a locative of place. This is *where* God did the well speaking, which indicates that these events, down through vs. 14, referring to things that take place within the creation, not prior to it. Much mystical nonsense has been written about the phrase *en tois epouraniois*, often equating it with some present reality within the believer, apparently because of the preconceived idea that these events must be eternal, outside of time and before the creation. But of the 20 times<sup>19</sup> *epouranios* is used in the NT, only this particular place is even considered as something other than the actual physical places in heaven. The normal, literal meaning fits the context best, even here. It refers to the physical realms, places in heaven, in which God's pronouncements were made.

From this simple statement we can infer certain things:

1. God's well-speaking to the other persons of the Trinity was revealed to Paul, who then wrote about it for the benefit of the believers of the present evil age.<sup>20</sup> Paul's communication was maintained providentially down through time so that all believers who have access to the NT can understand that God has left nothing to chance, and that the act of decree consisted of personal pronouncements concerning how unbelievers become believers.
2. The heavenly *places* must refer to the created heavens, but the plural phrase will not allow a particular place in heaven. Therefore, the best view is that God the Father acted in His unlimited state within the created heavens during time, rather than "in eternity."<sup>21</sup> We shall see in vs. 4 that this well-speaking happened after creation, but before the laying of the foundation of the world.

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**ἐν χριστῷ (*en christō – in Christ*)**

At the time of God's well speaking, the "us" of the context, which consists of believers at the time of writing, but applicable to all believers throughout time, were considered to be "in Christ" in some sense. Some have suggested that this refers to the baptism of the Holy Spirit,<sup>22</sup> which the phrase often does. If so, here it would be predictive of a narrow group of believers, the ones who believed on or after the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Acts, which does not seem to be the force of the context. It limits the scope and grandeur of the rest of this sentence and the larger context, which deals with the counsel of God (vs. 11).

Rather, based on what follows, it appears that "in Christ" indicates that the blessings God spoke related to Christ's activity in His incarnation on behalf of mankind, specifically, that portion of mankind that believed or will believe God's message that results in deliverance (see note on vs.7). If there is any prediction, it is found in the results of the future situation of believers, and is probably not limited to those living in this age. Hence, it would not be referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but the redemptive relationship that any believer enters into upon faith, regardless of which age they inhabit.

Therefore, the phrase *en christō* refers to all believers who benefit from the activities of Christ on their behalf, rather than a specific group of believers who happen to have been baptized into the body of Christ. This is consistent with the context, which speaks in terms of the initial plan of God which was formulated in Trinitarian counsel before the foundation of the world. See the comments on Ephesians 1:11 for a fuller discussion of the Trinitarian counsel.

**4. καθὼς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς (*kathōs exelexato hēmas – just as He elected us*)**

*Kathōs* is a comparative subordinate conjunction referring back to the well-speaking of the previous participle. Note the diagram. Here Paul states that God's well-speaking about "us" consisted of His election of individuals.

The object of the election, expressed by the pronoun *hēmas*, "us" refers to his immediate readers, but is applicable to all those who, through time, became or will become justified believers. Given the broad scope of this sentence, the pronoun cannot simply refer to believers of the present age alone.

The verb *exelexato* means to choose out for oneself, though it is rarely translated so. Usually the simple past tense of *choose* is used by translators.<sup>23</sup>

Three word families relate directly to the doctrine of election: The *eklegō* family, as here, the *haireomai* family, and the *cheirontoneō/procheirontoneō* family. Each of these families speak of electing or choosing. All of them are used of human beings choosing, and all are used of God choosing people. There is always an element of distinguishing between two or more possibilities in election, which seems self-evident, but which some overlook.<sup>24</sup>

All three word families are used of God electing, that is, His choosing one person over another.

1. *Eklektos, eklegomai* – Ephesians 1:3-4 – God chose men to be holy and faultless.

Blessed [well-spoken of] be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one who blessed [spoke well of] us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,<sup>4</sup> just as *He elected* us in Him before the foundation of the world for us to be holy and faultless in His presence...

2. *Haireō* – 2 Thess. 2:13-14 – God chose men to be saved.

But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning *chose you for salvation* through sanctification by the Spirit

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and belief in the truth, <sup>14</sup> to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>25</sup>

3. *Procheirontoneō* – Acts 22:12-14 – God chose Paul.

Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, <sup>13</sup> came to me; and he stood and said to me, Brother Saul, receive your sight. And at that same hour I looked up at him. <sup>14</sup> Then he said, The God of our fathers *has chosen* you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth.<sup>26</sup>

The fact that God chooses certain people while not choosing others cannot be denied. It includes choosing for people for salvation. Salmond says that the word *eklegomai* “expresses the idea of selecting for oneself out of a number.”<sup>27</sup> This is a correct observation because in the New Testament, the verb *eklegō* always occurs in the -ομαι (-*omai*) form, which often has a reflexive function.<sup>28</sup>

Election is often confused with predestination, though the word *predestined* does not occur until vs. 5. They are not the same, and must be carefully distinguished.<sup>29</sup>

**ἐν αὐτῷ (*en autō* – *in Him*)**

This prepositional phrase is another locative of sphere. It means, in relationship to election, the same thing as “in Christ” meant in relationship to the well-speaking of vs. 3. It refers to all believers throughout time, regardless of age or household program. See the comments on *en christō* in vs. 3.

**πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου (*pro katabolēs kosmou* – *before the foundation of the world*)**

This is a temporal adverbial prepositional phrase indicating *when* God's election took place. One thing it cannot mean is “before the creation of the heavens and earth,” for the words taken individually and collectively do not mean that. However, such is the meaning that almost all expositors espouse.<sup>30</sup> The word *foundation* is the stumbling stone for all such views. Can the word *world* not refer to the created universe? Can it not refer to the earth? It can. However, here it does not state “before the *creation* of the world.” Paul knew the difference between a creation and a foundation. A foundation is, without exception, part of that which is created, upon which the rest of the creation resides. Whatever the word *world* means here, it clearly has, as part of its structure, a foundation. Granted, this is a figurative foundation, a metaphor for something.

What, then, do the words mean? *Pro* is clearly a preposition of time. God elected us before something happened in time, not in eternity, which is apart from time. As noted, the terminology “foundation of the world” has a metaphorical element, the word *foundation* itself. There is a likening of the world to a building that has a foundation to be laid. But of what does that metaphorical building, the world, consist? The word *world* has several uses in Scripture, one of which fits perfectly here. It is the world of man, the people who inhabit the earth. It is this world of which John speaks in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world.” God loved people, not the evil world system, not the “cosmos,” not the earth, but people, with the result that He gave His Son to come to earth.

So, the best view of “before *the* foundation of the world”<sup>31</sup> is that it refers to the act of creating people, specifically the first couple, from whom the rest of humanity sprang. Adam and Eve were the “foundation” upon which the world that consists of people came forth.

“Before *the* foundation of the world” does not mean before God created the universe, but before He created the first human beings. This act of electing did not take place “in eternity” as is usually taught, but in time, after the creation took place, but before Adam and Eve were created.



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εἶναι ἡμᾶς (*einai hēmas – for us to be*)

This is an infinitive clause of purpose, telling why *He elected us*. The pronoun *hēmas (us)*<sup>32</sup> is acting as the subject of the infinitive *einai*, referring to all believers, not just to the elect of this age.

ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους (*hagious kai amōmous – holy and faultless*)

These adjectives are complements to the accusative of general reference pronoun *hēmas*, and are therefore in the accusative form. The entire clause reads “for us to be holy and faultless in His presence,” indicating the ultimate purpose for God’s election of us. The vocabulary (nominative) forms are *hagios* and *amōmos*, respectively. These words do not refer to our condition in this life, but to our condition once we are presented to God’s presence. In other words, these are not words referring to *character* to be obtained, but to the *condition* which will be a fact once the believer is presented to God at the resurrection. Future tense salvation is what’s in view here, not present tense salvation which consists of progressive sanctification.

The word *hagios (holy)* occurs some 229 times in the NT, and always carries the idea of being separated. In the plural, it is usually translated saints, meaning “separated ones,” used in its positional sense. In that sense, a person is holy from God’s perspective because He has chosen the person to be separate, no matter what one’s lifestyle is. However, it is from its positional sense that its functional sense arises. In the functional sense, God expects saints to be separated in their lifestyle (1 Peter 1:15), living a life consistent with one’s holy position.

One was also chosen by God to be faultless (*amōmos*). This word occurs 7 times in the NT, always with the same meaning. Faultless is a better translation than the KJV “without blame.” The word is stronger than that, since any person can be blamed, either rightly or wrongly. There is no such “wiggle room” for *amōmos*. The writer to the Hebrews uses it of Christ offering Himself without spot (Hebrews 9:14) as does Peter (1 Peter 1:19). This sacrificial sense is not meant here, however. Rather, and in contrast to *hagios*, *amōmos* means faultless in a purely moral and ethical sense. Such will be the condition of all believers at the resurrection, when they enter into God’s presence.

κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ (*katēnōpion autou – in His presence*)

*Katēnōpion* is considered an “improper preposition” by grammarians.<sup>33</sup> It emphasizes place or position, and is sometimes translated “before Him.” The great question arises, does this presence mean His presence during our current life, or does it refer to our presence in the future? This is of great importance, because it speaks to the overall force of Paul’s discussion. If God’s presence refers to the believer’s being in God’s immediate presence now, the word “presence” carries no physical meaning at all from a human perspective, which must be taken by faith. But the time will come when we will recognize, apart from faith, that we are in the presence of God, for our physical location will change, and we, in our resurrection bodies, will be where He is.

Likewise, if the phrase means that believers are to be faultless in His current presence, the issue is one purely of consistency in Christian living. If this is true, the view point ceases to be God’s, and becomes the human actor’s. Therefore, it is much more likely that this phrase refers to the believer’s being in God’s presence in the future. While this sentence is certainly a *motivator* for living the right kind of life, that is not its purpose. Its purpose is to present God and His choice in the context of His sovereign actions resulting in the presentation of the elect believer as holy and faultless in His presence.

Note Colossians 1:21 & 22, where again we find “holy and faultless” with “in His presence,” along with “above reproach.”

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And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled <sup>22</sup> in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and faultless, and above reproach in His sight...

The two adjectives are descriptors of “you” (*humas*) in the aorist<sup>34</sup> infinitive phrase “to present you.” Now, aorist infinitives are not past time, at all. They are considered “futuristics” by grammarians, meaning that the action of the verb is to be viewed as not having yet occurred, but must take place sometime later from the point of view of the immediate context.<sup>35</sup> Doubtless, this significant passage by Paul emphasizes a future presentation of the holy and faultless and above reproach believer in the actual physical presence of God.

See also Jude 1:24 where the believer is to be caused to stand (another aorist infinitive) faultless in the future presence (*katenōpion*) of God's glory.

Finally, another consideration concerns the next prepositional phrase, “in love.” If being in God's presence currently is being emphasized, the phrase can, and probably does, go back to “holy and faultless.” If, however, His presence is actually His physical future presence, “in love” most likely refers forward, to *proorisas* (having predestined).

**ἐν ἀγάπῃ (*en agapē – in love*)**

A prepositional phrase indicating locative of sphere. The great question is whether the phrase should go backward or forward in its association. Commentators are quite divided on this issue.<sup>36</sup> I have associated it with *proorisas* (having predestined) in the next verse for good reasons, which I will discuss in more detail in the comments for vs. 5.

It is important to realize that when God loves, as He is said to do here, it is not to be equated with human emotional love. The word *agapē* primarily refers to an attitude rather than emotion, even when used of human beings. God does not have capricious emotions brought about by circumstances, as do humans. His love is a *determined mental attitude* towards the objects of His love by which He provides what He has decided to be the best for them. This love was His attitude when He predestined us.

**5. προορίσας ἡμᾶς (*proōrisas hēmas – having predestined us*)**

This aorist participle<sup>37</sup> is in grammatical subordination to the main verb of the clause, ἐξελέξατο (*exelexato*), “he elected.”

The word *proōrizō*, from which *proōrisas* is derived, occurs 6 times in the NT and consists of two elements: The preposition *pro*, meaning before and the verb *horizō*, meaning to establish a boundary. *Horizō*, used 8 times in the NT, is the Greek word from which the word *horizon* is derived, an English word which means a boundary beyond which one cannot see. It is regularly used in the NT to mean “to determine.” Peter uses *horizō* of God's decree program in Acts 2:23. See also Romans 1:4, where Jesus was determined to be the Son.

The verb *predestine* carries the idea that God has set determined boundaries around the ones He has chosen. It is a verb of limitation, not of election. It seems almost impossible for anyone to have confused election and predestination, yet such is the case. The two terms are distinct, election referring to God's act of choosing, including for salvation. However, predestination has nothing to do with salvation. Both election and predestination were decreed simultaneously by God,<sup>38</sup> but predestination has not to do with getting people saved, but with protecting an individual so that God's ultimate purpose for that individual will be realized. In this location, the word is being applied strictly to the elect.

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For the elect individual, predestination is the act of God, resulting from His attribute of love (ἐν ἀγάπῃ of vs. 4), having previously established boundaries and limits in His decree program by which God the Father made certain the various circumstances and events in time, so that His specific purpose derived from His choices (election) will come to pass. In this verse, Paul teaches that God, in His decree, placed limits around us (believers) outside of which we could not go. The ultimate result for these limits in this context is in the next prepositional phrase, the first of six which express, in varying ways, important truths relating to predestination and son-placement.

Further information concerning predestination will come forth in the notes on Ephesians 1:11, where the concept is expanded, and related to several other important passages which we will discuss at that time.

**εἰς υἱοθεσίαν (*eis huiiothesian – unto son placement*)**

An adverbial prepositional phrase, modifying *proorisas*. I purposely translated *eis* “unto” here, though it could be translated legitimately “for,” or even “resulting in.” It indicates intention or result of predestination, unlike the use of the same preposition later in this sentence (*eis auton*). But this result of predestination is only proximate. The ultimate result Paul expresses in vs. 6 below (q. v.). Here it indicates that God’s intended result through predestination of the believer is son placement, which is almost universally translated “adoption.” It is used only 5 times in the NT.

*Huiiothesian* refers to the cultural practice of son placement (from υἱός [*huios*] son, and τίθημι [*tithēmi*] to place), which is not related to the modern idea of adoption at all. In biblical times, when a boy reached a certain age determined by his father, he was raised to a place as an adult son (*huios*). Until then, he was no better than a slave, being an immature child (νήπιός [*nēpios*], a minor child)<sup>39</sup> under the authority of guardians and stewards (see Galatians 4:1-5, where Paul uses this same cultural practice as an illustration of the historical Messianic coming of Christ for Israel as a people). After being placed as a son, the boy, no longer considered a minor child but an adult, had all the privileges of his father, even being considered equal with him in business and family authority.

This is the result that God has determined for believers, both male and female, and speaks to the ultimate placing of the individual believer in a position of maturity as adult sons. This is how God sees believers in our saved state, and is an encouragement for us to live up to our positional maturity.

**διὰ ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ (*dia iēsou christou – through Jesus Christ*)**

The next two prepositional phrases, unlike the previous one, are adjectival, modifying *huiiothesian*, not *proorisas*. This is a logical and contextual decision, which has been much disputed among Greek students. But it makes more sense that the Lord Jesus Christ is the intermediate agent of son-placement, rather than the act of predestination itself. Predestination is solely based on the determination of the Father in agreement with both the Son and the Holy Spirit as the result of the Trinitarian counsel. Son-placement, however, while part of God’s determination of limitation, functionally is performed by the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His relationship to the believer that the application of growth toward maturity occurs.

**εἰς αὐτόν (*eis auton - unto Himself*)**

The second of two adjectival prepositional phrases which refer to son-placement. While the son-placement is through Jesus Christ, it is “unto the Father.” Here the preposition *eis* indicates the focal point of the relationship established by the Father through Christ. It is as a result of one’s realization of his son-

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placement, and the actions of the Holy Spirit in establishing spirituality, by which the believer cries out “Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15).

**κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν (*kata tēn eudokian – according to the good pleasure*)**

The prepositional phrase describes God’s attitude toward his act of predestination (see diagram).<sup>40</sup> The preposition *kata* is unusual, as its object, in this case *tēn eudokian* is viewed from a superior position to the noun subordinate to which the phrase is attached. In other words, God’s act of predestination is the result of His good pleasure, not the cause of it. God was and is well pleased with predestination, as so should we be. It is one of those aspects of His divine program, which correctly understood produces assurance that God’s program will come to pass as He planned it.

Note then, that good pleasure precedes predestination in the logical order of words:

1. Good pleasure (*eudokian*)
2. Predestination (*proōrisas*)

The next descriptive phrase will add to this list, and will begin to build an understanding of the intricate and subtle way in which God’s plan for the believer is structured from the very nature of God Himself. Further revelation in this sentence will give even more evidence of how God’s plan was produced, and how it is related not only to His nature, but to the personal decision making process of the Trinity.

At this point, we may well ask, “Why does Scripture go into so much intimate detail?” The answer is not a simple one.

1. It is based on the fact that Paul was writing to an assembly which was relatively mature, an assembly which he spent nearly three years teaching while extending his ministry throughout the province of Asia. Ephesus was his base of operations.
2. Since the Ephesians were relatively mature and well grounded in doctrine, Paul, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, began to instruct them in the details of God’s decree program, a program which Paul also presents from a slightly different perspective in Romans 9.
3. The decree program is not simply an academic doctrine of Scripture, it is highly practical, as it brings about truth that will humble and subordinate the believer to God and His desire. Paul’s writings are not designed to satisfy intellectual questions, but to encourage the believer to humility as he lives according to God’s desirous will.

**τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ (*tou thelēmatos autou – of His will*)**

The word will, *thelēmatos*, comes from *thelēma*, referring to His desirous will out of which God’s good pleasure comes. It is that aspect of the will of God that comes out of the very nature of God, and which is shared equally by each of the Trinitarian Persons.<sup>41</sup> While it is here associated with God’s good pleasure, showing that good pleasure comes from and belongs to it, *thelēma* is a very broad term. We add it to the progression of thought presented previously:

1. [Desirous will (*thelēma*)]
2. Good pleasure (*eudokian*)
3. Predestination (*proōrisas*)

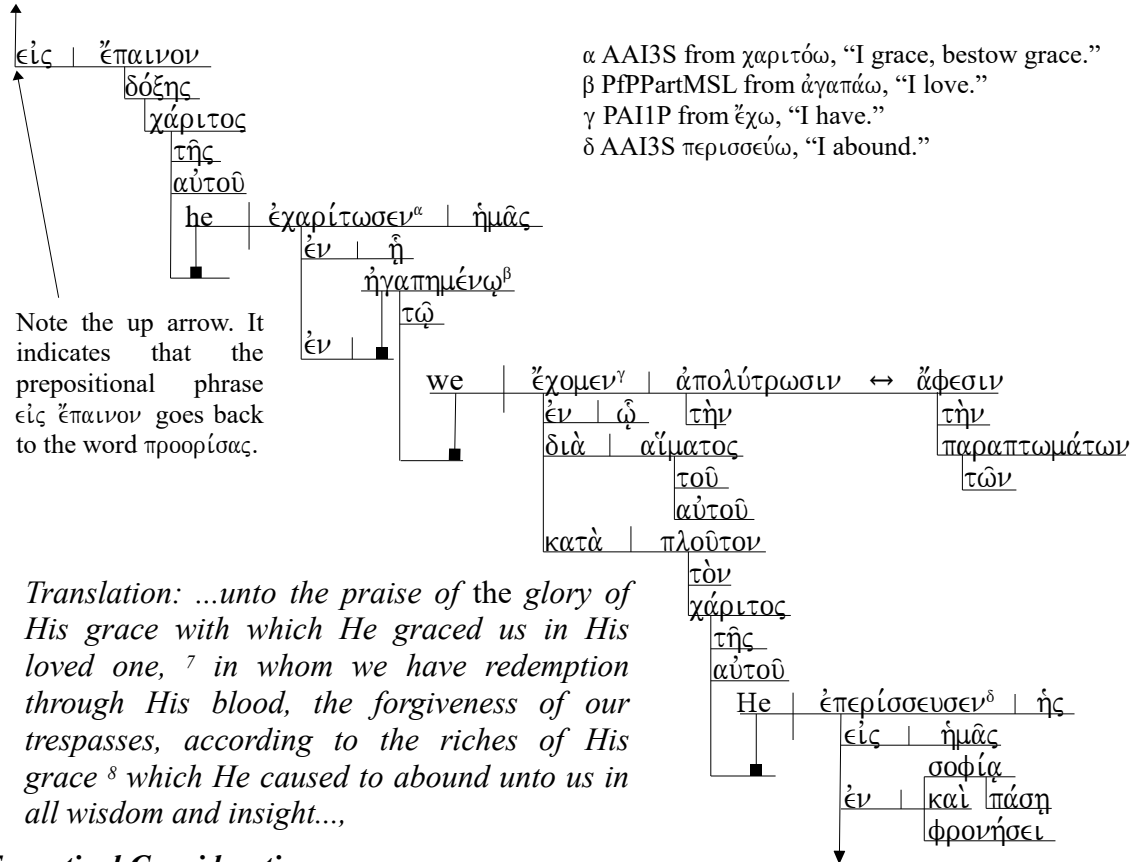
I placed desirous will in brackets because we have not yet discussed its relationship to election or purpose. For a complete list of logical order, we must also examine certain verses in Romans 8 and 9, which we will do when we study Ephesians 1:9-11.

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From here, we continue to part two of this sentence. It continues the thoughts of this first part, since the first prepositional phrase of part two, εἰς ἔπαινον (*eis epainon*), relates directly to the word *having predestined*. See the diagram.

**1:3-14 Part Two**

1:6-8...εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἐν ᾗ ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ 7 ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων κατὰ τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ 8 ἧς ἐπερίσσευσεν εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ φρονήσει...



**Exegetical Considerations**

**Note:** I began part 2 of this diagram with the prepositional phrase *eis epainon*, which modifies the participle *having predestined*, to show the importance Paul placed on that participle, as well as the complexity of his sentence. Paul's thought flows from point to point, indicating God's redemption program in its fine detail. The apostle cared not for simplicity, but expected his audience to come to understanding through careful consideration of the word meanings and the relationship between them.

**6. εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ (*eis epainon doxēs tēs charitos autou* – *unto the praise of his glory*)**

An adverbial prepositional phrase indicating ultimate result of God's act of *having predestined us* (*proōrisas hēmas*). The previous *eis* phrase (*eis huiōthesian* – *unto son placement*) indicates only the proximate result. Note that the ultimate result is not glorification, but praise. It is praise that has its object in a quality of glory, but not the ultimate glory of God.<sup>42</sup> The word praise (*epainon*) simply means

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an expression of great approval or appreciation for the quality of a thing or person. It is not simply the appreciation, but the *expression* of that appreciation. Here the thing to be praised is glory (*doxēs*).

The noun glory (*doxēs*) is an objective genitive from *doxa* (δόξα) indicating the thing being praised. But it does not refer to the glory of God, but to the glory of His grace. This is important, for it identifies the meaning of the word *glory*, a word with several different contents, specifically four.<sup>43</sup> Paul means here, “the state of being magnificent, *greatness, splendor.*”

So, it is God's grace that has a quality (δόξα is anarthrous, that is, without the article) of being magnificent. Grace is that magnificent mental attitude of God the Father by which He provides for the objects of His grace all that He requires of them.<sup>44</sup> Grace here does not primarily mean favor, as it is so often defined, but provision. In this context, it refers to the provisions for the predestined believer coming out of the Trinitarian decree. That is to say, through the rest of this verse, and through verse 11, at least, Paul proceeds to expand on the idea of God's gracious provision for us who have been predestined as a result of God's election.

**ἐν ἧ ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς<sup>45</sup> (*en hē echaritōsen hēmas – with which He graced us*)**

Here begins a relative clause referring back to God's grace (*doxēs*). This relative clause carries the weight of the rest of the sentence, down through vs. 14. Through at least vs. 11, it brings into focus the way in which God's attitude of grace worked its way out in the decree and its results. Here, the *en* is an instrumental, not a locative, and should not be translated *in*. It could be translated *by*, though that English word seems to carry more of personal agency concept. Rather, it seems that *en* refers to God's provision based on His attitude of grace, which attitude is viewed as an instrument of His gracious provision.

**ἐν τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ (*en tō ēgapēmenō – in His loved one*)**

Here we have a locative *en* with a perfect passive participle as its object. Given that the participle is articular (has the article), it could be translation “the one who has been loved.” Since it is a perfect tense participle, the indication is that the one who has been loved is in a state of on-going love. For this reason, it perfectly fits as a designation of the Lord Jesus Christ as the one loved by God the Father.

The doctrine is clear. In this case, God the Father's grace insphered in the one whom He loved, the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ Himself is the one who in which the “us” of the context receive grace provision.

**7. ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν (*en hō echomen tēn apolutrōsin – in whom we have redemption*)**

Here we have another relative clause, this time referring back to “his loved one,” the Lord Jesus. It is in Him we have the grace benefit, the redemption through His blood. The word redemption (*apolutrōsin*) means deliverance upon payment of a ransom.<sup>46</sup> Grace provided deliverance. The grace is applied here, not to salvation, but to the act of deliverance on the cross. Paul does not apply grace to salvation until later in this book (2:5). This distinction is vital to Paul's discussion. Before grace can be applied to salvation through faith, it is applied to the provision of redemption. These are two distinct applications of God's grace.

**διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ (*dia tou haimatos autou – through His blood*)**

The ransom payed was through Christ's blood. The phrase “through His blood” is idiomatic, referring to Christ's death. Redemption is not identical to salvation, with which it is sometimes confused. The redemption took place only one time, when Christ died through shedding His blood. Salvation occurs every time an unbeliever believes the gospel of salvation, the message of Christ's death for sin and His resurrection on the third day.

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Christ did not provide salvation on the cross, He provided redemption. This act of redemption was sufficient to eliminate the penalty for all men, not just the elect. The fact salvation is applied to the elect alone does not eliminate the fact that redemption was sufficient for all men's sins and trespasses (1 John 2:2).

**τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων (*tēn aphesin tōn paraptōmatōn – the forgiveness of our trespasses*)**

The noun *forgiveness* stands in apposition to the noun *redemption*, and more specifically identifies its meaning. This is needed, because the word *redemption* simply means deliverance, so the nature of that deliverance must be identified contextually. The noun *trespasses* is an objective genitive, identifying what is forgiven.

There is more than one Greek word translated by some form of *forgive* in the New Testament. Forgiveness (*aphesin*) is a noun form of the verb *aphiēmi*, meaning to lift up, to take away, or forgive. Doctrinally, forgiveness is the taking away or removal of the consequences of trespasses or sins.

Colossians 1:14 has “the forgiveness of sins” (τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν). Trespasses and sins are related, but not identical (Ephesians 2:1 - τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις). Trespass is the broader term, as it may include acts of sin, as here, but it may also refer to unrighteous acts that do not fit the definition of sin. Acts of sin are unrighteous acts that are willful violations of a known requirement. If the requirement is not known, a trespass is not a sin.

The word *trespass* refers to an offense. The Greek word is *paraptoma*. It means a personal violation of the of God's standards of righteousness, either by mistake or on purpose. Consequently, *trespass* causes irreconcilable differences between the perpetrator and the one offended.

Derived from *para*, alongside, and *pipto*, to fall, *trespass* can have both moral and non-moral connotations. In the Septuagint it was used of an act that resulted in a ruined relationship between God and Israel (Ezek. 15:8; 22:4). In the papyri<sup>47</sup> it is used of a man who mistakenly overstays the time he had intended to spend in his orchard.<sup>48</sup> Trench refers to its use by Philo where a man who reached a particular level of godliness and virtue fell back into a prior state.<sup>49</sup> In the New Testament it means to fall away, being at fault, either through willful activity or by mistake. In several contexts it indicates that which disrupts personal relations. Hebrews 6:6 refers to falling away from God. In Romans 11:11 Paul uses it of Israel's rejection of Christ. And it is *trespass* which requires reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:19).

However, in Galatians 6:1 it is used in the more general sense of a mistake or error. As such, a *trespass* is a fault which needs restoration. A meek individual will realize that such an act requires some boldness, while at the same time self-consideration lest the one restoring falls into the same error.

Doctrinally, *trespass* is, therefore, either an intentional or unintentional unrighteous act that severs personal relationships, causes an offense, and so produces the need for redemption. or in some cases restoration. As such, it can *include sin* in some contexts, as here.

**κατὰ τὸν πλοῦτον τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ (*kata ton plouton tēs charitos autou – according to the riches of His grace*)**

This is an adjectival prepositional phrase referring back to redemption, or, more properly, what redemption is, the forgiveness of trespasses. Redemption/forgiveness follows and is resultant from the riches of God's grace. The word *plouton*, translated here riches as a plural, is actually a singular noun which emphasizes an abundance of wealth, in this case, the abundance of God's grace.

God's grace is a resource of such enormity that it is impossible for God's provisions to fall short in amount provided. This is a direct parallel to John's statement “grace instead of grace” in John 1:16.

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8. ἡς<sup>50</sup> ἐπερίσσευσεν εἰς ἡμᾶς (*hēs eperisseusen eis hēmas – which He caused to abound unto us*)

Paul's description of grace continues with this relative clause. The verb is the aorist of περισσεύω, forms of this verb, when intransitive, as here, often carry a causal force, and so we have translated it. The verb means to cause to exist in great abundance.

The prepositional phrase *eis hēmas* (*unto us*) is adverbial. The word *us* refers to those who are predestined unto son placement, rather than to mankind as a whole.

ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ φρονήσει (*en pasē sophia kai phronēsei – in all wisdom and insight*)

God's abundant grace is in the area (locative of sphere) of all wisdom and insight. These gracious provisions have spiritual rather than intellectual reference. The maturing believer can have wisdom and insight into spiritual matters that are not available to the unbeliever.<sup>51</sup>

Note that both nouns, wisdom and insight, are without the article. The word *all* in these kinds of constructions indicates quality as well. It might be paraphrased as *all kinds of*.

Not only so, but the two nouns indicate quality, not specific identity, which would be the case if the noun *wisdom* had the article and *insight* did not. Nor are they specifically distinguished, which would be true if both nouns had the article. This conjunction of the two nouns in this manner indicates that qualities which are associated with the predestination to son placement. This close association helps us to understand what wisdom means.

Sometimes wisdom in Paul's writings refers to the objective content of revelation. Such is the case in 1 Corinthians 2:6 and 7. But not here, as wisdom, in association with insight takes on the idea of the subjective functional ability of an adult son. Wisdom (*sophia*) is quite common in the New Testament some fifty-one times. Friberg defines *sophia* as "the ability to use knowledge for correct behavior."<sup>52</sup> DBAG says that *sophia* is "the capacity to understand and function accordingly."<sup>53</sup> Both these definitions come close to the subjective definition of the Greek word. Other applications of this word must be studied in individual contexts.<sup>54</sup>

The closely associated word *insight*, *phronēsis* (φρόνησις), occurs only twice in the New Testament, here and in Luke 1:17. However, several other forms of this same root occur,<sup>55</sup> helping us to contextually define the basic meaning as intelligent insight. The word emphasizes the thinking process related to abstract, and in Ephesians, spiritual ideas. Insight and wisdom taken together indicate that God's goal for the maturing believer is the ability to think through and come to intelligent spiritual understanding of the truth that God has revealed in Scripture.

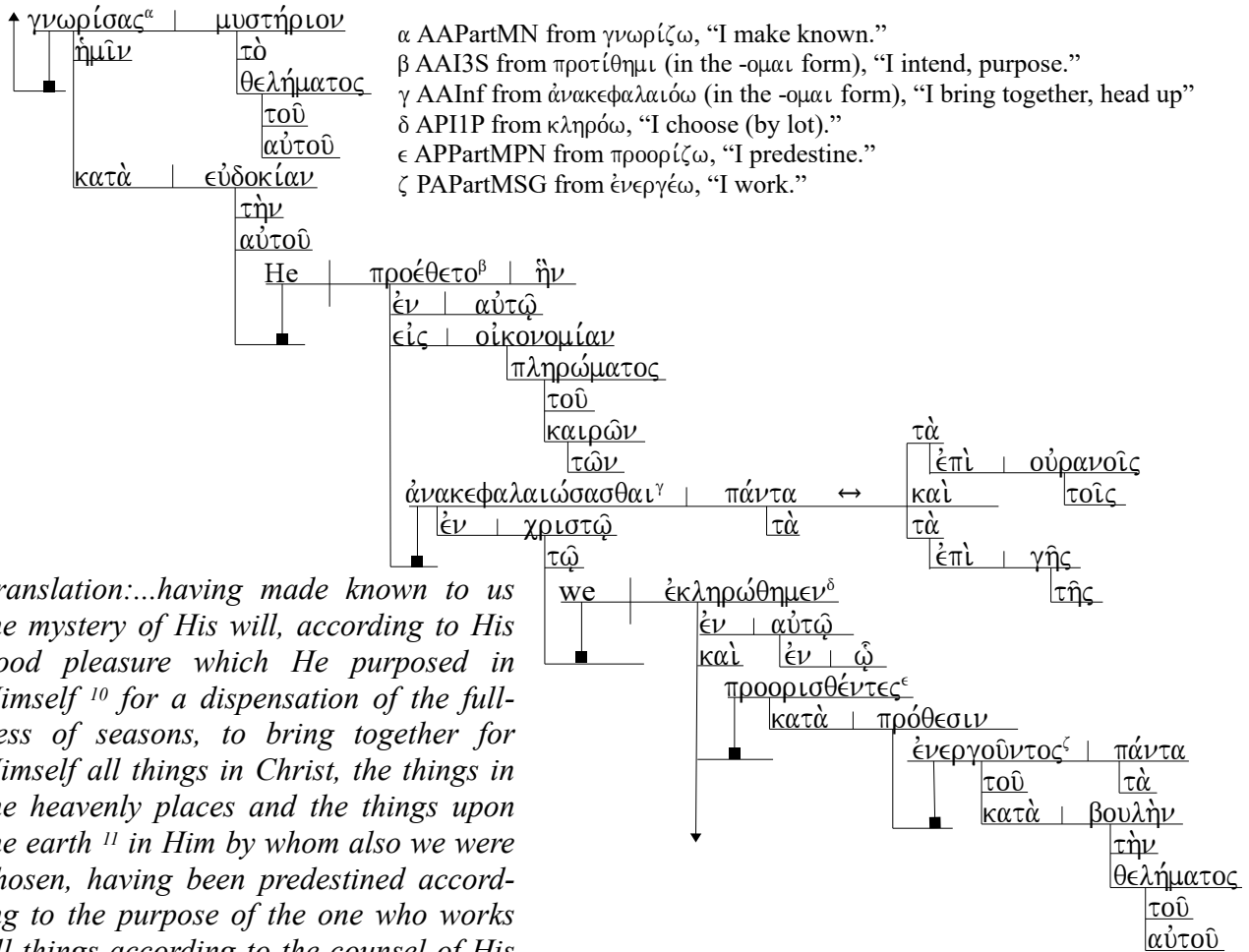
Now, beginning in vs. 9, we come to the third part of this sentence, in which Paul comes to his doctrinal climax, followed in the fourth part of the sentence beginning in vs. 13 which describes the result of God's decree program in the salvation life of the believer, and which also segues into the next sentence, which contains thanksgiving and prayers of Paul for the Ephesians.



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**1:3-14 Part Three**

1:9-11...γνωρίσας ἡμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν αὐτοῦ ἣν προέθετο ἐν αὐτῷ <sup>10</sup> εἰς οἰκονομίαν τοῦ πληρώματος τῶν καιρῶν ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ χριστῷ τὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς <sup>11</sup> ἐν αὐτῷ ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἐκκληρώθημεν προορισθέντες κατὰ πρόθεσιν τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐνεργούντος κατὰ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ...



**Exegetical Considerations**

**9. γνωρίσας ἡμῖν (gnōrisas hēmin – having made known to us)**

One way in which God caused us to abound in wisdom and insight was making known the mystery of His will (see diagram). The participle *gnōrisas*<sup>56</sup> is derived from the causal form *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω), to cause or make someone to know. God has graciously made known the mystery of His will.

**τὸ μυστήριον (to mustērion – the mystery)**

The word mystery (derived directly from the Greek *mustērion*), has changed meaning in English. We think of it as something one needs to solve, or something that is either unknown, or unknowable. But that is not the meaning of the Greek word. It actually means something that has been made known that

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was *previously* unknowable. There is nothing mysterious about a Pauline mystery, except that it cannot be found in earlier revelation.

**τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ (*tou thelēmatos autou – of His desirous will*)**

The appositional genitive of *His desirous will* indicates of what Paul's knowable mystery consists. The basic form for *will* is *thelēma*, a word which refers to God's desirous will in this context. Paul used the same word in this chapter two times previously, in 1:1, and 1:5. Vs. 5 told us that God's good pleasure produced His act of predestining, and that His good pleasure came out of His *thelēma*, His desirous will.

Now we learn that His causing us to know the mystery that consists of His desirous will is also according to His good pleasure. It seems that God's good pleasure is an important element in the decree program. See the next prepositional phrase.

**κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν αὐτοῦ (*kata tēn eudokian autou – according to His good pleasure*)**

The word *kata* indicates that God's good pleasure is the basis for His act of making His desirous will known. It pleased God to do so. Therefore, desirous will logically precedes good pleasure. Since God's good pleasure comes forth from His desirous will, it behooves the student to understand the meaning of the Greek word *eudokia*.

*Eudokia* occurs only 9 times in the New Testament. Three of those are in the Gospels of Mark and Luke. The rest are all found in Paul's epistles. But only the two times here in Ephesians, 1:5 and 1:9, and one time in Philippians 2:13 refer to God's good pleasure. The Philippians 2:13 passage is relevant to the passage before us, as it refers directly to God's working out His program in the believer:

...it is God who works in you both to will and to work on behalf of His good pleasure.

God's working in the believer to will (desire) and to work on behalf of His good pleasure is an aspect of His providential working out of His counsel (Ephesians 1:11), that is, His determined plan.

The verbal form, from which *eudokia* comes (*eudokeō*, to be well pleased), occurs some 21 times in the New Testament, and is used of both man's good pleasure and God's good pleasure.. However, the verb does not speak directly to the doctrine at hand, though it appears to refer to God's providential outworking of His good pleasure derived from His counsel in some passages: Matthew 17:5; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Galatians 1:15; Colossians 1:19; 2 Peter 1:17.

**ἣν προέθετο ἐν αὐτῷ (*hēn proetheto en autō – which He purposed in Himself*)**

That with which God was well pleased brought about His purpose. The relative pronoun's antecedent is *eudokia*, good pleasure. This is significant because God's program from His desire became His purpose because He was and is well pleased with it. This He purposed "in Himself,"<sup>57</sup> a way of identifying God the Father's purpose as being under His control alone. The implications of this becomes clear, the more we study purpose in the New Testament.

We will examine the word purpose again, then, and more closely, in Ephesians 1:11, at which time we will need to examine its use in two other passages in Romans which, along with 1:11, firmly anchors God's purpose in the logical order of decree, and how it works out in time.

At this point, we can simply indicate that the logical order so far is:

1. Desirous will (*thelēma*)
2. Good pleasure (*eudokia*)
3. Purpose (*protithēmi, prothesis*)

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Verse 10, however, will indicate one aspect of God's purpose in time, which indicates how the information God makes known to mankind effects Christ's control over the current program.

10. εἰς οἰκονομίαν τοῦ πληρώματος τῶν καιρῶν (*eis oikonomian tou plērōmatos tōn kairōn – for a dispensation of the fullness of seasons*)

God's purpose was for (resulting in) a dispensation of the fullness of seasons. Much difficulty arises out of this phraseology, since the word *dispensation* is regularly misunderstood, and the word *seasons* is often translated *times*.

The word *dispensation* (*oikonomia*) is a culturally rich word referring to the function of a household. The word itself is derived from house or household (*oikos*) and the verb to distribute or dispense (*nemō*). It is the Greek word from which the word economy is derived, but it is a mistake to translate it by economy, as some do. The basic meaning is the act of dispensing goods to a household, and without the cultural background attached the word becomes virtually meaningless.<sup>58</sup>

In the culture of the day, a family head, or household master, often a rich man, maintained slaves, one of which he appointed to as a dispenser (steward) of his goods. Those goods could very well be money, although other commodities could be included in the dispenser's responsibilities.<sup>59</sup>

The word dispensation itself has three closely related applications. First, and most basic, is its application to the act of dispensing the master's goods. It is used this way in Ephesians 3:2, for instance. Second, it is applied to the owner of the goods, as in 1 Timothy 1:4. Third, it is applied to the function of the dispenser, as Luke uses it three times in Luke 16:2-4.

These three applications are closely related, and in at least two instances, the first and third applications are so closely associated as to be inseparable (Ephesians 3:2 and Colossians 1:25).

Only the Luke passage applies the word *oikonomia* in its basic cultural setting. The Lord is using it as an illustration of the responsibility of the dispenser in a household, which consists not only of the master's immediate family, but of his business interests as well.<sup>60</sup> But Paul's use is purely metaphorical. He uses the cultural setting to teach a doctrinal truth by comparing the culture of his day to the activities of God in distributing a certain aspect of revealed truth.

In the passage before us, Ephesians 1:10, the word dispensation is metaphorically applied primarily in the third sense, the function of the dispenser, who appears to be the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who dispensed the doctrine of the fullness of seasons. While we reject the term administration as a viable translation of the word *oikonomia* there is an aspect of administration inherent in the on-going function of the dispenser, the so-called steward.

The word fullness (*plērōmatos*) has caused much comment. Abbott-Smith correctly identifies this word as "the result of the action involved in πληρώω (*plēroō*)."<sup>61</sup> *Plēroō* means to fill or complete. *Plērōma* carries the idea of total fullness, or total completion. The meaning, then, is that the seasons have been brought to total completion from God's perspective. This act of completion took place as a result of the counsel of God, and is thereby complete, though it is still being worked out in time.

The Greeks used the word season (*kairos*) much in the same way as we do today. It means a designated and describable period of time, though it does not emphasize the duration of that period, which is indicated by the word *chronos*, time. The translation "times" obscures the meaning, for Paul is indicating the various seasons that are brought to completion in God's decree program.

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So we have learned that God's purpose in Himself was for there to be a dispensation for the completion of seasons. All of this ultimately relates to the "mystery of His will," that is, His purpose in the making known truth concerning the completion of seasons in turn shows the current result in time, which is identified in the next infinitive clause "to bring together for Himself all things in Christ." This appears to be a function of Christ Himself, who continually administrates God's program of seasons to bring them to completion. This administration cannot be limited to mankind alone, but is much broader.

**ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ χριστῷ (*anakephalaiōsasthai ta panta en tō christō – to bring together for Himself all things in Christ*)**

As we continue, we shall see that one of the results of the counsel of God is identified by this infinitive clause, "to bring together for Himself all things in Christ." The epic scope of the counsel program is expressed in the rest of vs. 10. God indicates His purpose to bring *all things* in the heavenly places and on the earth together in Christ, for the next two prepositional phrases stand in apposition to the word *all things* (*panta*), which is the object of the infinitive *anakephalaiōsasthai*, *to bring together for Himself*.

We have added the words "for Himself" to indicate the very nature of the verbal idea. It is in a reflexive form,<sup>62</sup> indicating the action is performed for the benefit of the actor, in this case, God the Father. See the parsing for this infinitive in the Greek diagram above.

The infinitive "to bring together" is usually thought of as an infinitive of purpose, but, because of the progression of the sentence, it is better understood to be an infinitive of conceived result. The question arises, why was such an event necessary? The answer is that all things, as a result of the entrance of evil into the universe, have suffered the corruption of that evil, and must be brought together under the single control of one person, God the Father Himself.

"In Christ" is the sphere in which the bringing together all things takes place. The "locative of sphere" construction often shows the superiority and control of one person over others. In this case, Christ is elevated to the control position over all things, which He administers on behalf of the Father. Notice that the word Christ is used alone of the second person of the Trinity, not Jesus Christ, or Christ Jesus. The emphasis is the regal authority of the God-Man, not only in His messianic activities over Israel,<sup>63</sup> but over all creation. This is a resultant position that includes the humanity of Christ, a unique relationship of a human nature over the creation.

**τὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (*ta epi tois ouranois kai ta epi tēs gēs – the things in the heavens and the things on the earth*)<sup>64</sup>**

Some have attempted to indicate the dispensation (Christ's administration) of the fullness of seasons relates only to the millennial state. This is not the case, as these words indicate. On the Father's behalf, the God-Man Christ is in control of the entirety of creation, all things in the heavens, and all things on the earth. The use of the plural heavens and the singular earth to refer to the entirety of creation goes all the way back to Genesis 1:1, where the entirety of creation is in view.

**11. ἐν αὐτῷ ἐν ᾧ (*en autō en hō – in Him by whom*)**

The traditional translation "in Him in whom" does not seem to work here. The phrase "in Him" refers back to Christ as controller of all creation. Now, the "by whom" translation is superior here because of the passive nature of the following verb *eklērothēmen*. Paul views Christ as the agent of that verb, a regular use of the preposition *en* with passive voice verbs.

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**καὶ ἐκκληρώθημεν (*kai eklērōthēmen – also we were chosen*)**

The KJV incorrectly translates this verb “we have obtained an inheritance,” thus making the verb appear to be in the active voice with the direct object consisting of the noun *inheritance*. This obscures the actual meaning of the verb, which does not mean *obtain* at all. Furthermore, the verb is in the passive voice, not the active, and it has no direct object noun. The noun inheritance does not occur here! The verb *eklērothēmen* itself means we were chosen. Together with the phrase *by whom* this verb indicates that Christ Himself is the agent who chose us. The root meaning of the verb is *to choose by lot*, though that does not seem to be its meaning here. Rather, it probably means *chosen to be heirs*, which is a *secondary* meaning of the verb. This, however, is by interpretation, and the verb should simply be translated *were chosen*.

Today, in modern culture, one becomes an heir by being included in a document called a will. The heir inherits upon the death of the maker of the will. But this does not fit the culture of either the Old or New Testaments. In the Old Testament a person became heir when he was identified as the “first born” by his father. “First born” in this context did not mean born first, but was a position applied by the father which made a person his heir. This is illustrated by the situation between Jacob (Israel) and Esau. While Esau was born first, Jacob received the blessing of the first born, and became his father’s heir.

In the New Testament, the word for this process is, unfortunately, translated adoption in most versions. In fact, it is the word for son-placement (υἰοθεσία), an act by the father of recognizing the adult relationship of the one who he names his heir. Furthermore, the one placed as son did not wait until the death of his father for his inheritance. As a recognized adult, he began receiving it immediately upon the act of son-placement. He was a full partner with his father in the running of the family, and all its business activities.<sup>65</sup>

For the above reasons, the best view of this act of being made an heir by Christ refers to the reception of all the benefits of the salvation package which one receives upon entering the family of God. As Christians, believers today do not need to wait for their spiritual inheritance. It is not for the future, but for the “now.” All the spiritual benefits believers have in Christ are readily available, which includes the entirety of the Christian life grace package.

This approach to inheritance is consistent with the next participle, *proōrīsthentes* (*having been predestined*).

**προορισθέντες (*proōrīsthentes – having been predestined*)**

This is the second time Paul presents this verbal idea in this sentence. Back in vs. 5 Paul states concerning believers, “having predestined us unto son placement through Jesus Christ unto Himself.” This places predestination as a doctrine that deals with spiritual maturity, as well as spiritual benefit. Here, in vs. 11, it is the benefit that is being emphasized, specifically the act of being made heirs. As heirs, that is as being placed as sons, believers have received their inheritance. God has placed a hedge in Christ around those who have been made heirs, outside of which it is impossible to go.

Paul does not mean to imply, as some have assumed, that a Christian cannot fail in fulfilling his position as an adult son. This same doctrine is presented in seminal form in Romans 8:29, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son.” This conformity to the image of His Son will take place.

Paul is not speaking of on-going perfection here, but of both the privileges and the ultimate outcome of the position of the heir. Christians can, and should, enjoy the position as sons. But even if such is not

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experienced, the outcome will be the same. The fullness of the salvation package will come to believers, even if they rebel against God in this life. Paul will expand on this fullness in chapter 2 vs. 7. The ultimate conformity to the image of Christ will take place in those future ages.

**κατὰ πρόθεσιν (*kata prothesin – according to the purpose*)**

God's act of predestination Paul says is according to God's purpose. One's purpose is what the person is taking steps to accomplish. It is not simply intention, as it often is in English, but in the New Testament it is the results of one's determination. Unlike human beings, whose purpose may or may not come to pass, the purpose of the divine being is always fulfilled, which is why the correct doctrine is that God's predestination to the conformity of Christ will take place. God's purpose cannot be set aside, nor go unfulfilled. Indeed, it is in the word purpose when applied to God, that we find the specific expression of His sovereignty. While the rulers of this earth, the kings and despots of come and go, may call themselves sovereign, there are not truly, in any real sense of the word. God is the only true sovereign in the universe. This is not only because of Who He is, but because of What He does.

**τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐνεργούντος (*tu ta panta energountos – of the one who works all things*)**

The reason that God's purpose is always fulfilled is because it belongs to *the one who works all things*. The foolish concept of the deistic God who created, and then left the creation to its own devices, is just that, foolishness. God is active, working to complete His decree program. Note that God does not just work some things, He works *all things*. While the hugeness of creation is the object of His work, not the minutest element escapes His control. The atoms of creation, and the sub-atomic particles of which they consist are controlled by God. The very energy that binds creation is an expression of the work of God. Whatever the smallest particle that the mind of the scientist can conceive, if it exists at all, exists as part of God's sovereign program, and God actively controls it.

**κατὰ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ (*kata tēn boulēn tou thelēmatos autou – according to the counsel of His desirous will*)**

This working of God is “according to the counsel of His desirous will.” Again we see the Greek word *kata*, indicating subordination. God's working is subordinate to His decree, expressed in the word *counsel*.

In English we have two related words, counsel and council. A council is a meeting of individuals. In government, it is made up of people who come together to produce a plan or series of plans by which to govern.<sup>66</sup>

In modern times, the word counsel has come to mean advice as the result of a consultation, such as expressed in a statement like, “He was unwise to reject my counsel.” The definition of the word counsel in Scripture is now considered archaic. It means the plan or determination that is arrived at as the result of a meeting, a council. The Greek word is βουλή (*boulē*)<sup>67</sup> related to the verb βούλομαι (*boulomai*), which primarily means to decide or determine, and refers to God's determinative will.

In Paul's metaphorical use of the word *boulē* he implies that the persons of the Trinity met in a council which results in a counsel<sup>68</sup>. There is a similarity between a human governmental council and what the Trinity did to formulate the counsel of God, the plan coming from a consultation of the three persons.

Why was this necessary? It was necessary because of the nature of the Trinity, consisting of three individual persons who share the same essence and attributes. What makes each person an individual? Each person is self-conscious, and each is able to make independent decisions, since each has His own determinative will (*boulomai*).

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This is not a problem since all three of the persons share one desirous will. Note that the counsel of God belongs to His desirous will (*thelēma*). This desire is shared by each of the three persons equally. They all desire the same things. However, it is possible that each individual could determine a different way of producing the same results. Therefore, we have the counsel (*boulē*) of God. In some sense, the three persons created a council which produced a counsel. According to this counsel, the persons decided which person would make which decision to perform the desirous will. For example, which person determined the available spiritual gifts (*domata*)? According to Ephesians 4:7-8, it was Christ, “*But to each of us was given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. <sup>8</sup> Therefore He says, After He ascended into a high place, He led captive a group of captives, and He gave gifts to men.*” Note that the passage says that Christ gave gifts (plural) to men (plural). But, as it turns out, Christ did not determine who would receive each gift.

In the decree, it was determined that the Holy Spirit would decide who gets which gift. 1 Corinthians 12:11 says, “*But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.*” The words “all these things” refer back to spiritual gifts. The phrase “as He wills” the word “wills” translates a form of the verb *boulomai*. Translate it “as He determines.”

The various persons of the Trinity are working the plan, the *boulē* of God. Nothing is left to chance. The detailed doctrine of the *boulē* of God provides a complete presentation of the counsel of God.<sup>69</sup> By comparing the various passages one can see that there is a sequence in God’s thinking that He presents by revelation through the apostle Paul. See the order of the decree words in the chart on the following page:

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OMNISCIENCE	πανοιδα ( <i>panoia</i> )	GOD KNOWS ALL WITHOUT LIMITS
DESIRES, WISHES	θηλημα ( <i>thelēma</i> )	DESIROUS WILL - EPH. 1:11; 1:9; 1:5
ACT OF DETERMINATIVE WILL	βουλομαι ( <i>boulomai</i> )	ACT OF DETERMINATION EXPRESSED IN COUNCIL TO DETERMINE COUNSEL OF ACTS 2:23
DETERMINATION, COUNSEL	βουλη ( <i>boulē</i> )	COUNSEL ARISING FROM COUNCIL - EPH. 1:4; HEB. 6:17; ACTS 2:23; ACTS 4:28
GOOD PLEASURE	ευδοκια ( <i>eudokia</i> )	WHAT GOD DETERMINED BROUGHT HIM GOOD PLEASURE - EPH. 1:5, 9
ACT OF CHOOSING	εκλεγομαι ( <i>eklegomai</i> )	WHAT GOD HAD CHOSEN WAS ACCORDING TO HIS GOOD PLEASURE - RO. 9:11; EPH. 1:9
PURPOSE	προθεσις ( <i>prothesis</i> )	WHAT GOD HAD CHOSEN BECAME HIS PURPOSE - RO. 9:11; EPH. 1:11; EPH. 3:11
FOREKNOWLEDGE, PREVIOUS ACQUAINTANCE	προγνωσις ( <i>prognōsis</i> )	WHAT GOD HAD PURPOSED HE FOREKNEW WITH AN EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE - RO. 8:28, 29; ACTS 2:23; EPH. 1:5; 1 PET. 1:20
PREDESTINE, FIXATION OF LIMITS	προοριζω ( <i>proōrdzō</i> )	WHAT GOD PURPOSED HE LIMITED OR RESTRICTED, AND THUS PREDESTINED BASED ON HIS FOREKNOWLEDGE - EPH. 1:11

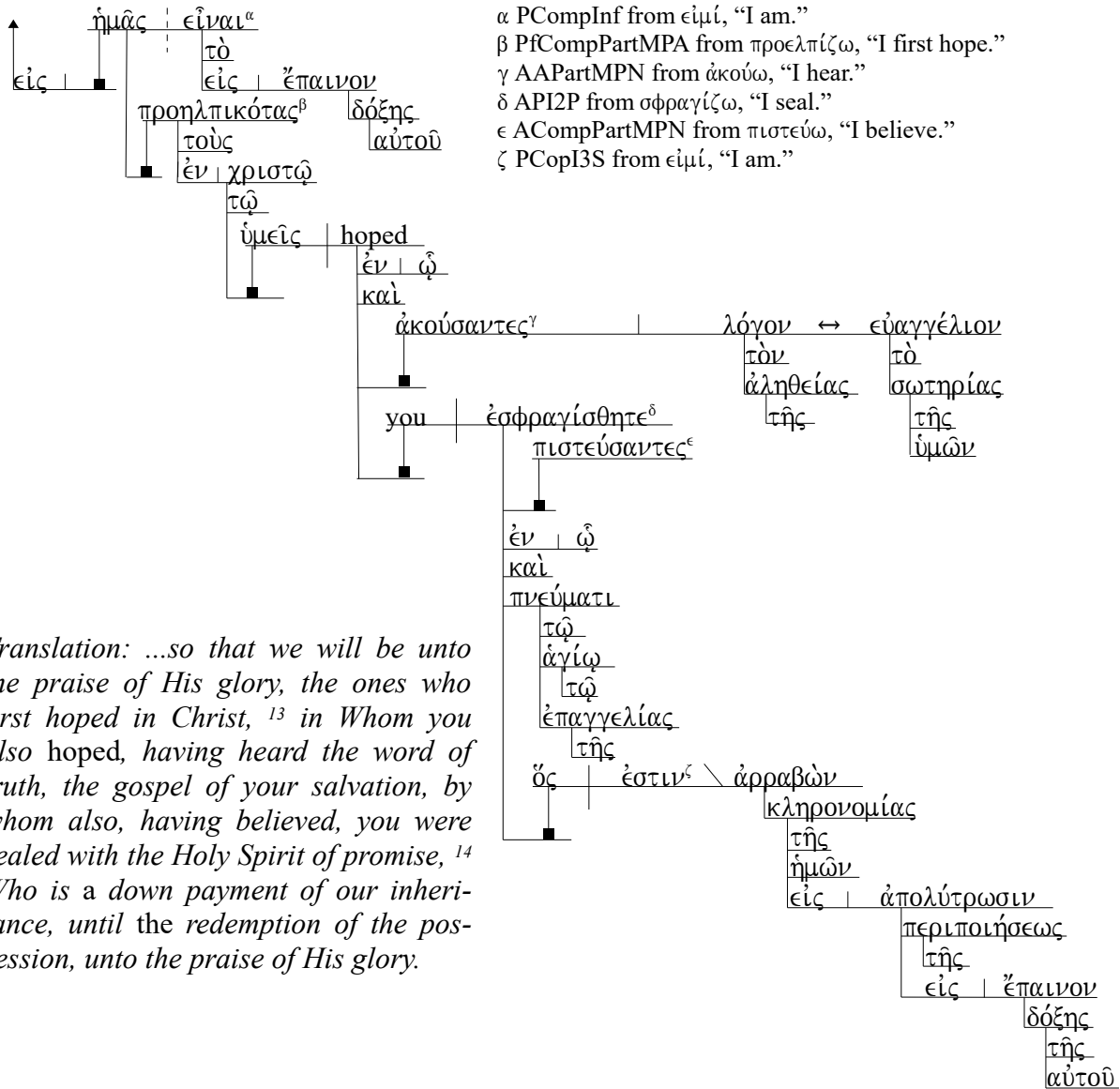
In the above chart, omniscience is the only eternal attribute included for two reasons: (1) from omniscience the process of determination flows, and 2) omniscience must be distinguished from foreknowledge, which is based on a different type of knowledge altogether. For a more detailed discussion of omniscience and foreknowledge see the appendix entry “The Two Kinds of Knowledge.”



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**1:3-14 Part Four**

1:12-14...εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης αὐτοῦ τοὺς προηλπικότας ἐν τῷ χριστῷ <sup>13</sup> ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν ἐν ᾧ καὶ πιστεύσαντες ἐσφραγίσθητε τῷ πνεύματι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῷ ἁγίῳ <sup>14</sup> ὃς ἐστὶν ἀρραβὼν τῆς κληρονομίας ἡμῶν εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως εἰς ἔπαινον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.



*Translation: ...so that we will be unto the praise of His glory, the ones who first hoped in Christ, <sup>13</sup> in Whom you also hoped, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, by whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> Who is a down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, unto the praise of His glory.*

**Exegetical Considerations**

**12. εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς (eis to einai hēmas – so that we will be)**

The statement, “of the one who works all things according to the counsel of His desirous will,” has a purpose expressed in the words “so that we will be unto the praise of His glory.”<sup>70</sup> Technically, the purpose refers back to the verbal idea *works*, indicating the purpose for which God works His decree program.

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To whom does the pronoun *hēmas* (we)<sup>71</sup> refer? As noted, it functions as the subject of the infinitive *einai*. Various ideas as to the antecedent of the pronoun exist. Some have thought that it refers to all men, others to all believers throughout time (which they sometimes call “the elect”), others to only those of the current age. Given the breadth of the passage dealing with decree, one is tempted to refer it to all men, including unbelievers. But this would be a direct violation of the context, as the apostle identifies the antecedents of the pronoun with a participle. See the note below on “*the ones who first hoped in Christ*.”

**εἰς ἔπαινον (*eis epainon – unto the praise*)**

As in vs. 6 above, the word praise (*epainon*) means an expression of great approval or appreciation for the quality of a thing or person. Again, praise is not simply the appreciation, but the expression of that appreciation. Nor is praise to be confused with thanksgiving, as some may have done. The old saw, “We praise God for who He is, we thank Him for what He does,” is an accurate description of the difference between the words.

**δόξης αὐτοῦ (*doxēs auto – of his glory*)**

The thing being praised in this statement is God’s glory.<sup>72</sup> Unlike vs. 6 above, here the word glory does not refer to the state of God’s magnificent grace. Rather, it is an expression of the personal glory of God, the magnificence of His being. DBAG expresses this as referring to “a transcendent being worthy deserving of honor, *majestic being*.” It refers to God’s personal glory, the praise of the greatness of God Himself in all His majesty. Herein then lies the purpose for Paul’s explaining in all its detail the counsel of God. The believer should praise God’s glorious majesty, His ultimate sovereignty over His creation in all its detail. This is the second step of praise unto God’s glory. The final, and ultimate statement of the praise of God’s glory we find in vs. 14.

**τοὺς προηλπικότας ἐν τῷ χριστῷ (*tous proēlpikotas en tō christō – the ones who first hoped in Christ*)**

This entire participle expression is descriptive of the word *we*, in the prepositional phrase “so that we might be.” Paul refers to the believers in Christ during the present age as the ones who will be to the praise of God’s glory.

The participle *proēlpikotas* comes from two Greek words: *pro*, before, previously, first, and *elpidzō*, to hope. Paul includes himself in this group, which causes us to think that by interpretation the apostle is referring to the earliest disciples in the resurrected Christ. Some have suggested that Paul is referring to Jewish disciples exclusively. Perhaps, but before Paul became a believer, others such as the Gentile Cornelius and his family also became believers, and should also be included. However, the Ephesians themselves are clearly not included, as Paul refers to them in the next verse as ***also having heard the word***.

Another question arises. Why does Paul use the idea of having hoped (*elpidzō*) rather than having believed (*pisteuō*)? The words do not mean the same thing, yet some have supposed that Paul uses them interchangeably, and give this as an example of having done so.<sup>73</sup> Yet, it is clear from other Scripture that the terms are not identical. But there is a close relationship between them, as can be found in Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (NKJV).

The writer of the Hebrews is not giving a lexical definition of the word faith, but he is providing what might be called a doctrinal or theological description.<sup>74</sup> Faith is described in two ways in this verse: 1) it is the substance of things hoped for, and 2) it is the evidence of things<sup>75</sup> not seen.

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The first and second parts of this description are actually parallel statements. Note Paul's teaching in Romans 8:24-25 concerning hope, "For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?"<sup>75</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance." According to Paul's logic, hope is also directly related to not seeing. If one sees something, there is no need for hope; the object is observable: the result are that one waits for something he does not see, he has hope.

The second part of this description identifies biblical faith as faith an unseen object. This is consistent with such passages as John 20:29, "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed."

When an unbeliever believes, he is looking toward something that he himself has not seen. The gospel of salvation, which Paul mentions in this very sentence, consists of things not seen today, the death and resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-5).

So hope is not, as in the modern parlance, wishing for something to come to pass,<sup>76</sup> but believing that it exists, even though it is unseen. In the biblical sense, hope is closer to expectation than to wishing. Saving faith is of this quality. It is not faith in the visible, but in the invisible that saves the unbeliever.

So, the verbs to hope and to believe are not synonyms. Hope describes the doctrinal nature of true faith in a very specific way. Faith is the substance of invisible things one is expecting.<sup>77</sup>

**13. ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς (*en hō kai humeis – in whom you also*)**

Paul addresses his readers directly with the pronoun you (*humeis*). This is Paul's normal way of distinguishing his readers from himself and others which he includes with himself, in this case, the "we who first believed." The Ephesians became believers a number of years after Paul.

"In whom" refers back to Christ in the previous phrase. In the expression "in whom you also" the "also" is referring back to the elliptical idea "you *hoped*." It could be paraphrase "you hoped in whom you also were sealed." Observe the Greek diagram above.

**ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας (*akousantes ton logon tēs alētheias – having heard the word of truth*)**

This participle expression also goes back to the elliptical verb *hoped*. The idea is that they hoped after having heard. Some have thought this an almost unnecessary phrase, since it's self-evident (tautological). But Paul includes it so as to express something about the nature of the thing they hoped.

The object of their hope, was the word of the truth which they heard. The Greek *logos* means communication here. The genitive *of truth* describes the nature of the communication. Paul was not speaking a fable when he presented the specific facts of the gospel of salvation. They were verifiable specific historical truth<sup>78</sup> (1 Corinthians 15:5 and following).

**τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν (*to euangelion tēs sōtērias humōn – the gospel of your salvation*)**

This entire phrase stands in apposition to *logos*, word, more specifically identifying the word of truth which Paul presented to the Ephesians.

Paul does not simply say, "the gospel," as he uses the word with a variety of contents in his teaching.<sup>79</sup> Rather he specific which gospel with the words "of your salvation."

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ἐν ᾧ καὶ (*en hō kai – by whom also*)

The word order in the Greek is awkward. This phrase, *by whom also*, goes with *you were sealed*, though it occurs just before *having believed*. See the Greek diagram. Again, the word *whom* has as its antecedent Christ, the one who performs the act of sealing.<sup>80</sup>

πιστεύσαντες (*pisteusantes – having believed*)

This is a causal participle. The Ephesians were sealed by Christ because they believed the gospel of salvation.<sup>81</sup> Belief, or faith,<sup>82</sup> must have an object, which Paul previously identified as “the gospel of your salvation.”

ἐσφραγίσθητε (*esphragisthēte – you were sealed*)

Paul states that the Ephesians were sealed by the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the previously stated agent of this passive voice verb.

The verb *sphragizo* (to seal) was used literally of leaving a mark, often in either wax or clay, for a designated purpose. In Babylonian times seals were carved into cylinders, and rolled onto clay. Fairly early in history the signet was used by individual to set his mark upon an object such as wax on a document. It was either set into a ring, or worn around the neck or waist and was the equivalent of a signature. But seals were used for other things.<sup>83</sup>

When placed on a letter, a seal was to be broken only by the addressee. When placed on a door, or a tomb, such as the one into which Jesus was placed, it was used as a legal barrier, not to be broken except by legal authority.

One can see that the idea of a legal guarantee became quickly associated with the act of setting a seal. The idea of guarantee became so strong, that the metaphorical use<sup>84</sup> of the word seal, as in the verse before us, was used in that very way. The specific comparison is identified in the next note.

τῷ πνεύματι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῷ ἁγίῳ (*tō pneumati tēs epaggelias tō hagiō – with the Spirit of promise the holy one*)

Here we find the identification of the metaphorical seal. The Holy Spirit himself is that seal. How is the Spirit compared to a seal? The obvious comparison is that the Spirit was given as an indwelling presence in the body of the believer. As such, since He cannot be compelled by any circumstance to depart that indwelling, He is a guarantee of the salvation state received by faith.

This is supported by two facts:

1. He is the Spirit “of Promise.”<sup>85</sup> Or more accurately, “of the promise.” A promise is statement that commits to a future accomplishment by the one who promises. As we shall see, the Spirit Himself guarantees the accomplishment of the promise of the salvation package.
2. The peculiar construction of the words “the holy one” also supports the unique guarantee of which the Spirit consists. This construction emphasizes the holy nature of the person of the Trinity we call the Holy Spirit. Be not confused. The Spirit is not holy specifically because He is righteous. While His righteousness is a fact, it is not the emphasis of the word *holy*. *Holy* means separate from, and when used of this Trinitarian person, it is a statement of His uniqueness. There are many spirits in existence, but only one is the Holy Spirit. This Person is the unique Spirit, unlike any other spirit-being and separate from them, since He Himself is God. It is His divine nature that guarantees His work as the seal of the believer.

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**14. ὅς ἐστιν ἀρραβῶν (*hos estin arrabōn – who is a down payment*)**

Thayer correctly defines the word *arrabōn* as “money which in purchases is given as a pledge that the full amount will subsequently be paid.” Again we see the emphasis on a future event, a promise by God in the Person of the Holy Spirit, Himself being the down payment of a future amount. Of what that future amount consists is identified in the next part of this verse, again with a future emphasis of that for which the believer waits.

**τῆς κληρονομίας ἡμῶν (*tēs klēronomias – our inheritance*)**

Another indication of future expectation is the word *klēronomias*, inheritance. An inheritance is always future from the point of view of an heir, though the certainty of “our inheritance” is the theme of this portion of Scripture. The word is articular, indicating a specific inheritance. The specific inheritance is expressed in the next two phrases.

**εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν (*eis apolutrōsin – until the redemption*)**

The specific inheritance is found in the words “until the redemption of the possession.” Clearly this is a future aspect of redemption that is distinct from that which Paul presents in vs. 7 above, which deals with the present deliverance from the consequences of trespasses. In both verses, redemption refers to deliverance. Here, as a noun of action, redemption has an object, which one sees in the next genitive noun, *tēs peripoiēseōs*, of the possession. The phrase then means “resulting in (*eis*) the deliverance of the possession.”

**τῆς περιποιήσεως (*tēs peripoiēseōs – of the possession*)**

This noun is an objective genitive, identifying what is redeemed. Strangely, the KJV translates this word “purchased possession,” perhaps as an attempt to associate it with the idea of redemption found back in vs. 7, where the death of Christ is the act that produces the deliverance. But, in fact, the word does not mean purchased possession, but simply something that is possessed though whatever means. And one ought not confuse the redemption of vs. 7 with the redemption of vs. 14. As noted, they are not the same, though many expositors read them as though they were. Simply stated, the believer, body and all, is God’s possession.

The likely interpretation is that the possession consists of the physical body and person of the believer which is redeemed upon the resurrection. It is highly likely that the body is included, but one must not limit the resurrection to the body. At the time of that future deliverance, the entire person, body and all, is delivered not from the consequences of sin (vs. 7), but from the presence of sin in his present earthly state. The person, residing in the physical body, is no longer subject to the deprivations of the mind and body.

**εἰς ἔπαινον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ (*eis epainon tēs doxēs autou – unto the praise of His glory*)**

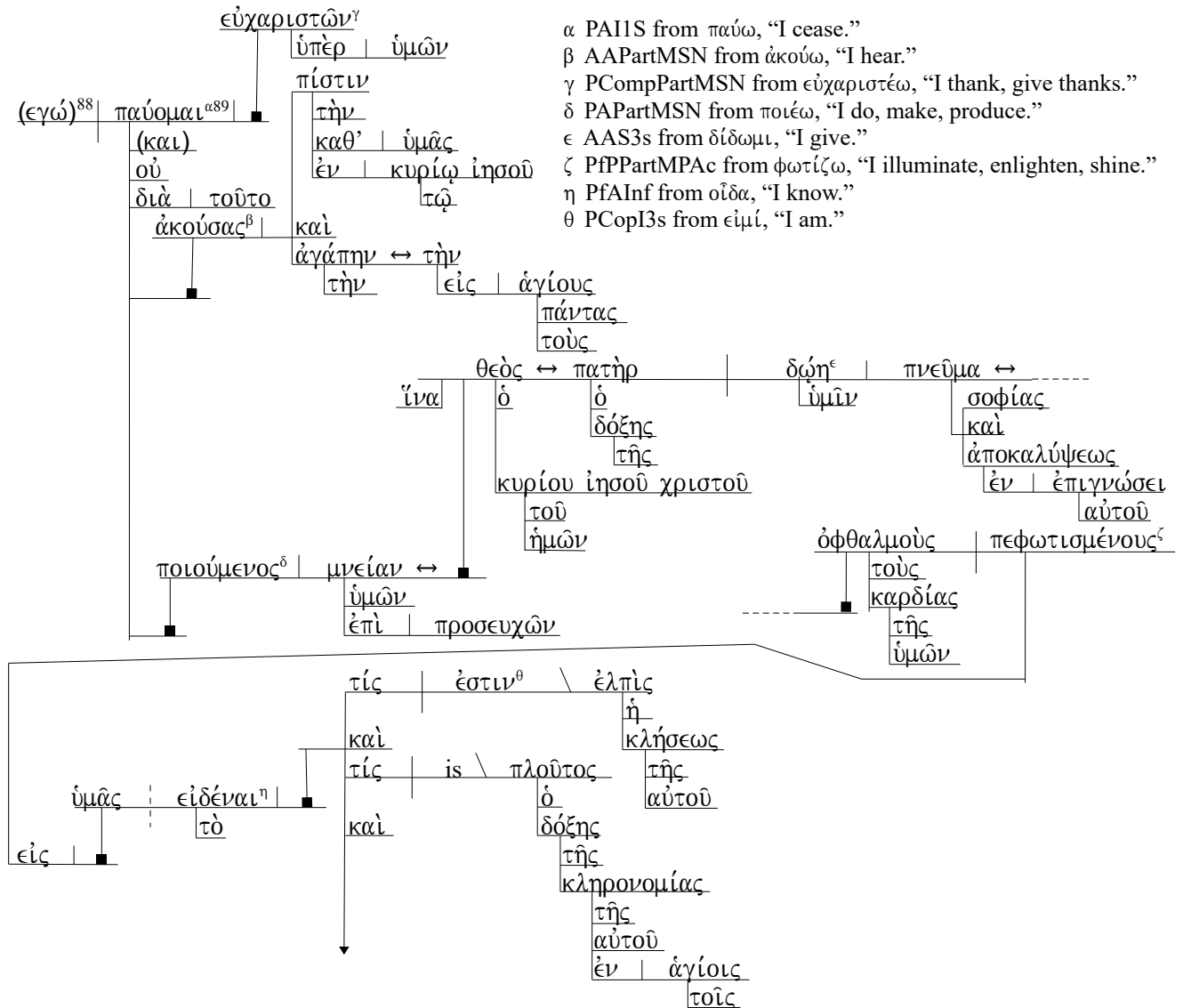
Paul finishes this sentence with a statement of result. See the note on this phraseology in vs. 12 above, where it is subordinate to an infinitive of purpose, and therefore adverbial. But here it stands subordinate to a noun of action, redemption, and is adjectival, indicating the ultimate result of that redemption, in this case, the deliverance of the possession, the physical body of the believer.<sup>86</sup>

From the perspective of this context, the result of the redemption of the believer is praise of God’s glory, not to any praise of the believer. In a sense, this final expression of the amazing sentence that began in vs. 3 summarizes the result of God’s *entire determined program* as it works out in the life of the individual Christian. His ultimate conceived result is not simply the salvation of the individual, but the completion of His program on earth, which culminates in the resurrection of the physical body.<sup>87</sup>

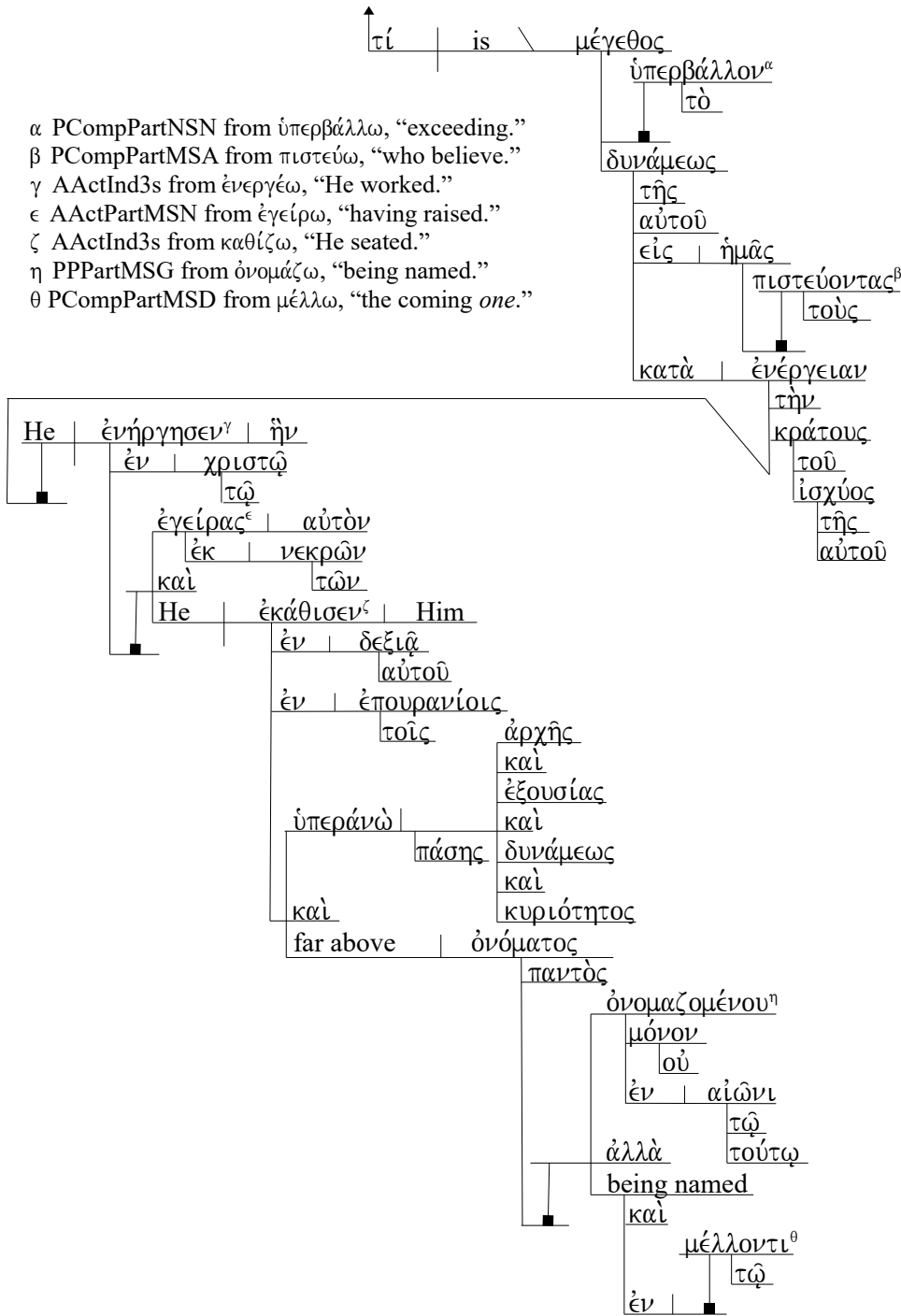
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1:15-21 διὰ τοῦτο, ἀκούσας τὴν καθ' ὑμᾶς πίστιν ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ ἰησοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην τὴν εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους, <sup>16</sup> οὐ παύομαι εὐχαριστῶν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, μνεΐαν ὑμῶν ποιούμενος ἐπὶ τῶν προσευχῶν μου, <sup>17</sup> ἵνα ὁ θεὸς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ ὁ πατὴρ τῆς δόξης δῶῃ ὑμῖν πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψῃ ἐν ἐπιγνώσει αὐτοῦ, <sup>18</sup> πεφωτισμένους τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εἰδέναι ὑμᾶς τίς ἐστίν ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς κλήσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ τίς ὁ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τῆς κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις <sup>19</sup> καὶ τί τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ εἰς ἡμᾶς τοὺς πιστεύοντας κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ <sup>20</sup> ἣν ἐνήργησεν ἐν τῷ χριστῷ ἐγείρας αὐτὸν ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις <sup>21</sup> ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ κυριότητος καὶ παντὸς ὀνόματος ὀνομαζομένου οὐ μόνον ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι.

Ephesians 1:15-23 deals with the topic, "The Sovereignty of God Manifested through the Saint."



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*Translation: Because of this, I also, having heard of the faith of each of you in the Lord Jesus and your love which is for all the saints,<sup>16</sup> do not cease giving thanks on behalf of you, while making mention of you in my prayers,<sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, might give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,<sup>18</sup> the eyes of your heart having been en-*

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lightened so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,<sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe, according to the working of the might of His strength,<sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ, having raised Him from dead people, and seated Him at His right side in the heavenly places,<sup>21</sup> above every ruler and authority and power and lordship, and every name being named, not only in this age, but also in the coming one.

***Exegetical Considerations***

**15. διὰ τοῦτο (*dia touto* – *Because of this*)**

The translation for this phrase is commonly “therefore.” *Therefore* is a logic word, that points back to a previous thought. In this case, it appears that the demonstrative *touto* is not looking back to an antecedent (one of its uses), but looking forward to a postcedent, the next phrase. Paul seems to be saying, because of this thing, referring to the next clause concerning having heard from some of his associates about the Ephesians.

**καὶ γὰρ, ἀκούσας (*kagō akousas* – *I also having heard of*)**

Note the crasis, *kagō*, “And I.” The combining of words such as *kai* (“and,” “even,” or “also”) and *ego* (“I”) is common in Greek. Some have attempted the translation “I also,” which would imply the addition of others in having heard of the faith of the Ephesians, obviously not what Paul meant.

The aorist participle *akousas* indicates antecedent action, and is often translated “after having heard.” Paul had spent almost three years in Ephesus, and some have thought that this expression implies that he was writing to some other place. However, he had not been in Ephesus for about four years, and was probably receiving reports from others.

However, the force of this participle is not temporal, and should probably not be translated “after having heard.” Rather, the participle is causal with the meaning of “because I heard.” What Paul heard produced the thanksgiving and prayers of vs. 16.

**τὴν καθ’ ὑμᾶς πίστιν ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ ἰησοῦ (*tēn kath humas pistin en to kurio iesou* – *the faith of each of you in the Lord Jesus*).**

Evidently the reports Paul received were detailed. He mentions that he had heard of the faith of “each of them” (*kath humas*) in the Lord Jesus. This is not saving faith, but living faith. Living by faith consists of obedience to what one believes, the body of faith to which one holds. This was a characteristic of the Ephesian’s lifestyle.

The adjectival prepositional phrase “in the Lord Jesus” (*en to kurio iesou*) is to be taken not as the object of faith, but as the area (locative of sphere) in which the living faith resides. The focus of the Christian life is on the relationship of the believer to the Father “in the Lord Jesus,” and so must be taken here. Some<sup>90</sup> have suggested an instrumental translation of “by” for *en* here, but that is unnecessary, and would only fit if the Father were the specific grammatical subject of the clause, which is not the case here.

**καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην τὴν εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους (*kai tēn agapēn tēn eis pantas tous hagiou*s – *and your love which is for all the saints*)**

How did Paul know that the Ephesians had love for all the saints? What, exactly, had been reported to Paul? It was, undoubtedly, the visual expression of the attitude of love. The one reporting had seen evidence of love, not simply the statement or claim that people were loving one another.



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Love carries the idea of sacrificial effort on behalf of another. This consists of an effort to minister to other believers in whatever way God desires of us. This can be as simple as giving of one's time for the benefit of another, to working on behalf of another's spiritual or physical benefit. Each Christian has a spiritual gift bestowed by the Holy Spirit. A spiritual Christian is able to use that gift on behalf of other believers. Spiritual Christians desires to use their gift by looking for opportunities to serve other believers.

16. οὐ παύομαι εὐχαριστῶν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν (*ou pauomai eucharistōn huper humōn – do not cease giving thanks on behalf of you*)

Here we have a figure of speech called *litotes*. This figure emphasizes something by denying the opposite. By saying "I do not cease giving thanks"<sup>91</sup> Paul emphasizes his regular habit of giving thanks to God on behalf of the Ephesians. Unlike the Corinthians, who were often carnal, the Ephesians took their Christian living seriously, for which God was to be thanked on their behalf. The phraseology makes it clear that God was the object of Paul's thanksgiving, not the Ephesians. It was on their behalf, or because of them, that Paul was thanking God. He knew who produced the righteous life in the obedient Ephesians, through whom God was working.

μνηεῖαν ὑμῶν ποιούμενος ἐπὶ τῶν προσευχῶν μου (*mneian humōn poioumenos epi tōn prosuchōn mou – while making mention of you in my prayers*)

The present participle *poioumenos* ("making") is temporal, and should be translated "while making." The idea is that Paul is giving thanks at the same time as he is making mention of the Ephesians in his prayers.

The reason for the extended expression "while making mention of you in my prayers" is two-fold: 1) Paul is distinguishing thanksgiving from prayer. They are not the same, though it is often incorrectly said that thanksgiving is a kind of prayer. Dr. H. LaVerne Schafer's comment is well taken here, "Prayer can be interrupted by other forms of communication to God without confusing them with prayer itself."<sup>92</sup> 2) The idea of prayer must be carefully considered. That consideration follows beginning in verse seventeen, and proceeding through the rest of the chapter. The careful student of Scripture will come to realize that prayer is not what is generally practiced under that word today. Prayer is an aspect of worship in which the one praying may invoke God's spiritual ministry to the believer.

In general, prayer does not deal with physical needs, but with spiritual ones. Other types of communication to God may include physical needs, though this is not the primary focus of the believer's communication with God. Such terms as supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving are often thought to be "types of prayer," though the biblical writers carefully distinguished them.<sup>93</sup>

As noted, Paul identifies the content of his prayers for the Ephesians beginning in verse seventeen.

17. ἵνα ὁ θεὸς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ (*hina ho theos tou kuriou hemōn ihsou – that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*)<sup>94</sup>

The content of Paul's making mention of the Ephesians consists, first, of an identification of the recipient of his prayers. The nominative word God, of course, refers to God the Father, the recipient of direct worship in Paul's prayers. It is God the Father who is the prime mover in the doctrine of illumination. Nevertheless, the phrase indicates that the Father is "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ," which has caused consternation among expositors.

Arian theologians and others have used this as a proof text that Jesus is not God in the same sense as the Father. Others have used the statement to teach that Paul and others were inconsistent, sometimes

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viewing Jesus as God, and other times, not. However, the Ephesians would not thought either of these things. The solution lies partially in the meaning of the word “God” in passages mentioning both the Father and the Son, as well as the relationship between these two individuals after the incarnation.<sup>95</sup>

Paul used the word God to distinguish the persons in of the Trinity other passages. See Romans 6:8-10 “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,<sup>9</sup> knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.<sup>10</sup> For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.” This statement distinguishes the two persons by function, as does the next verse, “So, you also reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This is not a denial of the deity of Christ, but a distinction between persons, and their relationship to the problem of indwelling sin.

**ὁ πατήρ τῆς δόξης (*ho patēr tēs doxēs – the Father of glory*)**

So there can be no confusion as to what Paul meant, he places the word Father<sup>96</sup> in apposition to the word God, and more specifically identifies which person of the Trinity to whom he refers.

Many ideas exist about the phrase “of glory,” though it seems contextually clear. Note that the original has “the glory.” The article is significant, as it casts our mind back to previous uses of the word glory. In other words, it is an article of previous reference. It is an expression of the personal glory of God, the magnificence of His being. See the discussion of this word in verses 12 and 17 above.

This statement is clearly an expression of Paul’s worshipful attitude toward God as he prays. He is not simply talking to God, but is bringing the Ephesians into God’s presence and viewing God as worthy of his highest veneration.

**δώη ὑμῖν πνεῦμα (*dōē humin pneuma – might give to you a spirit*)**

Why did Paul find it needful to pray for this spirit on behalf of the Ephesians? The word *didōmi*, from which this verb is derived, does not imply a free gift, though it may be used of such. The contextual implications is that the believer must be relatively mature in order to receive *this* act of giving. The context expects an understanding of God’s sovereign counsel, as well as an understanding and participation in salvation. In other words, the conditions are faith for salvation and relative maturity.

The word spirit has caused some problems in interpretation. It clearly does not refer to the Holy Spirit,<sup>97</sup> which the believer already has. Nor does it relate to the internal human spirit in an objective sense for the same reason.<sup>98</sup> Human beings are born with a human spirit. Some have thought it means “attitude” much in the way we use the word spirit today. But that view doesn’t fit the context.

We must ask the question, “What is God giving in this context?” In the final analysis, God is giving enlightenment. So the word spirit must relate in some way to enlightenment. The best understanding is that the word “spirit” is the broader term of which the phrase “the eyes of your heart having been enlightened” is the specific expression. In other words, the spirit is enlightenment so that the believing human being can understand.

It appears that the word spirit refers to the capability of the human spirit to understand advanced spiritual information, as identified by the following expressions “of wisdom, and revelation.” Because the word spirit is used here, and is the direct object of the potential giving by God, Paul is not praying that the Ephesians receive wisdom and revelation. The implication is that they already had those two things. How is that possible? It is because of the way Paul uses those two words in his writings.

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σοφίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως ἐν ἐπιγνώσει αὐτοῦ (*sophias kai apokalypseōs en epignōsei autou – of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him*)<sup>99</sup>

Wisdom, in Paul's usage, does not refer to the ability to use knowledge, though that is one of the meanings of the word. Rather, it refers to the information of a usable nature already available to the Ephesians through the written and spoken word.<sup>100</sup> They did not need to receive this already revealed wisdom, but they did need the ability to spiritually understand that wisdom.

Furthermore, the word revelation is not referring to the *act* of revelation, but to the *content* of the revelation of the word of God already revealed. That these two words carry the idea of current information already available is identified by the prepositional phrase "in the full knowledge of Him," the pronoun "Him" referring to God the Father.<sup>101</sup> Only through an understanding of God's revelation of Himself can one comprehend a full knowledge of His person and work.

One obtains this full knowledge of God through illumination in three areas, which are presented in verses 18 and 19.

18. πεφωτισμένους τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν (*pephōtismenous tous ophthalmous tēs kardias humōn – the eyes of your heart having been enlightened*)<sup>102</sup>

Here we are introduced to the doctrine of spiritual illumination, the doctrine of supernatural intervention so that the content of wisdom and knowledge might be spiritually understood. This doctrine is multifaceted, having many elements, more than we can cover here.<sup>103</sup>

This participle, *pephōtismenous*, with its related words, indicates the detailed content of the object of *dōē*, the means by which God *will give* the Ephesians understanding (a spirit of) of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Himself is by illuminating the eyes of their heart. In other words, the participle seems to stand in apposition with the word spirit, and more specifically identifies what this spirit of wisdom and revelation is.

All believers, at one time or another, have experienced this kind of enlightenment. Sometimes it comes from simply studying a passage of Scripture, using the objective principles of normal interpretation. Other times it might come from someone's teaching of the word. In any case, true spiritual understanding requires an act of God's illumination. While this goes beyond simply understanding the meaning of the message academically, it does imply diligence in academic study, which appears to be a condition of this act of God. If a person does not carefully handle the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15), there is no possibility of enlightenment.

The phrase "the eyes of your heart" is clearly a metaphorical statement. The heart is used in its most often meaning of mental ability. The heart is the seat of knowledge and understanding in the New Testament doctrine of man. The eyes metaphorically refer to seeing with understanding.

Certainly the Epistle to the Ephesians is full of spiritual information that is difficult to understand and correctly use when applicable. Paul is reminding them in this letter of some of the advanced spiritual truth he had taught them during the three years he was with them (Acts 20:31). The epistle is a virtual outline of what he taught, with added explanation, all done in written form.<sup>104</sup>

So, we may define enlightenment as the act of God by which He gives the ability to understand spiritually God's truth as provide in His revealed wisdom (practical truth) and revelation (a broad term for the general content of revelation).

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εἰς τὸ εἰδέναι ὑμᾶς (*eis to eidenai humas – so that you may know*)

In this case, the prepositional phrase indicates purpose.<sup>105</sup> Here is stated the ultimate purpose for spiritual illumination, that these Ephesian believers should know some things. The infinitive *eidenai* is from *oida*, the word which does not emphasize practical knowledge, but learned or intuitive knowledge. Paul is praying for a reception of knowledge which, when learned, provides correct thinking about God and His perspective on what is important.

Observe that Paul's prayers were not for them to receive spiritual things from God, for the believer in this age has already received every element of God's provision that he needs. The substance of Paul's prayer is that God will bring the mature Ephesian saints knowledge in several spiritual areas, identified by three parallel clauses starting in this verse, and extending through verse 19.

τίς ἐστὶν ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς κλήσεως αὐτοῦ (*tis estin hē elpis tēs klēseōs autou – what is the hope of His calling*)

This is the first statement of what God wants believers to know about Himself.<sup>106</sup> This element of knowledge deals with the doctrine of calling. The noun calling, used eleven times in the New Testament, is one of three words used of the doctrine of calling in the New Testament.<sup>107</sup> Paul uses the noun three times in Ephesians, here and in 4:1 (where we will study the doctrine in more detail) and 4:4. Note that he uses a similar phrase “the hope of your calling” in 4:4, q.v. The emphasis 4:4 is on the ones who received the calling (“your”), whereas the emphasis here is on the one who does the calling (“His”).

“Hope” (*elpis*) carries its normal meaning of looking forward to something with expectation. In both here and 4:4 it is the expectation that comes out of and is a result of God's calling an individual to salvation, and all that follows.<sup>108</sup> Paul speaks of walking worthy of one's calling in 4:1. The potential for the Christian life which comes out of God's calling a person to salvation includes the full expectation of God's grace program for daily living.

From the believers perspective, calling occurs at the moment he responded in faith to the Gospel of salvation and entered into a saved position. This produced a present hope, an expectation all the benefits one learns from Scripture, including victory in the Christian life, as well the ultimate expectation of going to be in the presence of the Lord.

καὶ τίς ὁ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τῆς κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις (*kai tis ho ploutos tēs doxēs tēs kleronomias autou en tois hagiois – and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints*)

Here we have more difficult phraseology to the modern ear. Keep in mind that this is a second expression of that which God wants the believer to know in order to gain a full knowledge of Himself.

This element of knowledge builds on the expectation of the believer as a result of God's calling. The believer is to realize that God will ultimately gain an inheritance that is composed the saints of the current age. The word riches indicates the great value of the glory of His inheritance. The word glory means the magnificence of His inheritance. The phrase “in the saints” is often translated “among the saints,” and refers to the location where God's inheritance abides. Paul uses the word saints of believers in this context to emphasize the position of being separated to God, both now and in the future.

Christian confidence in God is the point here. There is a certainty involved in God's future inheritance that is composed of saints. There can be no doubt as to the outcome of this aspect of God's program.

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19. καὶ τί τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ εἰς ἡμᾶς τοὺς πιστεύοντας (*kai ti to hyperbal-lon megethos tēs dunameōs autou eis hēmas tous pisterontas – and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe*)

The third element of information that tends to the believer's maturity is expressed in this clause. The Christian is to know what is the exceeding greatness of God's power.<sup>109</sup> "The exceeding greatness" refers to the extreme great amount of power that God uses for believers.

Now, power must be carefully defined, as it has been mistaken for God's might. Many use the word "omnipotence" when they should use the word "almighty" when referring to God's attribute. In the Bible, God is never called all-powerful, but He is called, in both testaments, all-mighty. Power flows from, and is the application of might. Like God's might, His power is inherent in His nature. But power is might in operation, and is applied in exactly the right amount to get done whatever God wants done. This will become abundantly clear when we study the next part of vs. 19.

But first, we must recognize the object of God's application of power. Paul says that God's power is "to us who believe." The word translated to is *eis*. It indicates in whose interest God's power is expended. This expression could be paraphrased "for the benefit of us who believe."

Throughout time, God has applied His divine power in many ways. We see examples of it during Christ's earthly ministry, where He exhibits His deity by signs and miracles. But the correct amount of God's power is applied to us who believe, especially in the ability to live the Christian life through Spirit control, which Paul will present in Ephesians 3:16. But it is also correctly understood as part of God's working of the counsel of His will on our behalf.

God maintains His powerful care for us, so that as we go through life we are assured that every event and circumstance is in God's control. He applies His power exactly where it is needed to bring His plan for us to fruition. Nothing catches Him by surprise, and nothing happens to us, whether good or bad from our perspective, that is not part of that plan. While we as believers do not see all the expressions of God's power, we must believe that they are there, and that God is working His will in our lives. This realization produces even further dependence on Him, and a lack of anxiety on the part of the spiritual believer.

κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ (*kata tēn energeian tou kratous tēs ischuos autou – according to the working of the might of His strength*)

Beginning here, Paul describes God's power carefully and provides the perfect example of the application of His power in vss. 20-21.

By way of description we find that God's power to us is "according to the working of the might of His strength." The prepositional phrase beginning with "according to" (*kata*) indicates that God's working (operation) of His power is subordinate to and dependent on His might. Power is to be associated with God's activity of working, something that He does consistently in working out the counsel of His will (1:11).

The Greek word for might *kratos* (κράτος) is the word which expresses the natural basis and source for God's expression of power. It is the root of the word almighty (*pankratōr*), used 9 times in the New Testament of God. It is this attribute of God that is eternal, not His power, which is expressed only as an ability that comes out of His almighty nature. It is unfortunate that the word omnipotence, meaning all powerful, has been confused with almighty, as it makes the lesser word (power) the greater word. But power is not constant, as is might (*kratos*), for power is applied to a greater or lesser degree as God

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works. He controls His power, much as a workman controls the power of a variable drill motor. God never uses too much or too little power to get whatever job done that He needs to do.

The final phrase in this description is “of His strength,” referring to God’s might. His might is *of* His strength. Now, strength is an expression of God’s might in its potential. Some have asked the silly question, “How strong is God?” The correct answer is that God’s strength is not able to be measured because it is associated with His almighty nature, which makes the question irrelevant. But when strength is applied it becomes controlled might, *kratos*. This controlled might is called power.

As with all of God’s attributes, His might is infinite (unlimited), free to be used or not used as He determines. It is also eternal (unaffected by time), unchangeable, and mobile, which means God can *change the use* of His might as expressed in power.

**20. ἦν ἐνήργησεν ἐν τῷ χριστῷ ἐγείρας αὐτὸν ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν (*hēn enērgēsen en tō christō egeiras auton ek tōn nekrōn* – *which He worked in Christ having raised Him from dead people*)**

The antecedent of the feminine relative pronoun *which* (*hēn*) is the feminine noun *working* (*energeian*), the working which belongs to the might of His strength. The working of the might of God’s strength produced the application of the Father’s power to us who believe. The overall emphasis of these phrases in vss. 19-20 is that the believers to whom Paul writes received the benefit of the expression of this power that produced the resurrection of Christ. This believers can apply today, for those who believe today also receive the benefit of Christ’s resurrection.

Here we have, then, the perfect historical example of God’s working of the power of His might. The resurrection of a dead person is the best post-creation event to express the inherent power of God. No human was around to experience the initial creation. The creation is evidence of God’s power after the fact. But the resurrection of Christ was within the experience of the generation who saw Him die. Indeed, Paul indicates who the eyewitnesses of Christ’s resurrection were in 1 Corinthians 15:5-8. Of this resurrection power the Ephesians also benefit, though they did not witness the resurrection personally. They were in the same position as believers today. But the application of the power of God’s might does not end with the resurrection, for there is a further related example expressed in the next clause.

**καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις (*kai ekathisen en dexia autou en tois epouraniois* – *and seated Him at His right side in the heavenly places*)**

While ascension into heaven by the resurrected Lord was also witnessed and is further evidence of the God’s expressed power, it is only implied and is not what is mentioned here. The fact that Christ was seated at the right side of God is the point which Paul makes because it was the ultimate goal of the ascension. The specific point is that God seated Christ, a way of emphasizing that the entrance into the throne room in heaven was permanent.

Much has been said about the fact that Christ was seated to the right of God, not nearly enough attention has been given to the simple fact of His being seated. That is the salient verbal point that Paul is making. A human being does not sit in the presence of the Father in normal circumstances. As the divine person, there is no question of Christ right to sit in God’s presence, but the humanity of Christ is the emphasis here. An actual human being entered into the heavenly places and took a permanent position in the presence of the Father. This was only possible because of the absolute perfection of Christ’s actions as a human being.<sup>110</sup>

The fact that the Lord in His humanity sat at the right side of the Father an expression of His human importance. It has been repeatedly pointed out that the right side is the side of privilege. It is, in fact, the

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position of equality. God the Father elevated a human being to a position of equality with Himself. The only way a human being could be permanently in the presence of God is if that person was equal with God the Father. This is not referring to the divine person of Christ. It refers to His exalted humanity.

Let us be very clear about this. God the Father did not seat God the Son at His, the Father's, right side. God the Father seated the Lord's humanity at His right side. Another way to say the same thing is that the First Person<sup>111</sup> did not seat the Second Person at His right. And the reason for this fact is simple: THE SECOND PERSON WAS ALREADY THERE!

Believers often misunderstand what happened at the moment of incarnation. The Second Person did not "leave heaven." He, in an inexplicable way, changed the emphasis of His personal presence. But the Person did not, all of a sudden, become less than omnipresent. The Person did not, all of a sudden, cease to inhere the spirit essence. The Person did not cease to be ubiquitous.<sup>112</sup> The Person did not cease to be eternal. In other words, He did not cease to be God.

The individual Persons of the Trinity have an ability to emphasize their individual presence in a specific place within creation without changing their nature in any sense. During Christ's sojourn on earth, the person was emphasizing His presence in a physical body without removing His presence from the rest of the creation. Now, if you can understand how He did that, you're way ahead of me. But the fact remains, Christ did not cease to be in heaven at the incarnation, for as a person who inheres the essence, His person remains omnipresent within the creation, of which heaven is a part.

Therefore, God did not seat the divine person at His right side, the Second Person re-emphasized His presence at the right side of the Father. The Father seated the *humanity* of Christ at His right side.

Lest we wonder in what ways the human Christ is equal with the Father, Paul tells us in the following verse.

21. ὑπεράνω<sup>113</sup> πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ κυριότητος (*hyperanō pasēs archēs kai exousias kai dunameōs kai kuriotētos* – *above every ruler and authority and power and lordship*)<sup>114</sup>

The key to understanding the structure of this phraseology is the repetition of the word *pas* (πάς). It occurs in two forms, *pasēs* (πάσης) in the first part of this sentence and *pantos* (παντός) in the second part, but in both cases it should be translated *every*, since it is singular.<sup>115</sup> The plural translation of the word is usually *all*.

The first use of *every*<sup>116</sup> governs four singular words: ruler, authority, power, and lordship. The second use of *every* governs a phrase: "name being named," which is further explained by the expression, "not only in this age, but also in the coming *one*." See below.

The words ruler, authority, power, and lordship indicate beings in various levels of government. Paul took the words from the governmental uses of the words in the Roman Empire. In other lists, the words are clearly applied to spirit beings, as they are later in this same epistle (3:10 and 6:12). Two questions arise: 1) Does he refer here to human being or to spirit beings? and 2) Are these words ranks in a specific order?

The best answer to the first question above is that the word every (*pas*) includes all beings, not just humans, nor just spirits. This seems to be supported by the use of similar words in Philippians 2:8-11. Given the context referring to the humanity of Christ, this interpretation fits very well.

The second question above is more problematic. When referring to spirit beings in Colossians 1:16, Paul seems to put them in a specific order from greater to lesser in position. But it is not the same order

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as here, and even the wording is somewhat different. Paul seems to use the word *power* in this Ephesians list where he uses *thrones* in the Colossians list. In comparing the lists from other passages<sup>117</sup> it seems that the Colossians 1:16 list the one to follow as far as top to bottom ranks are concerned.<sup>118</sup>

The point, however, is certain. God the Father seated the humanity of Christ above all governmental ranks, human and divine, so that the perfect human being has ultimate power and authority above all created beings.

**καὶ παντὸς ὀνόματος ὀνομαζομένου (*kai pantos onomatos onomadzomenou – and every name being named*)**

The word name here does not specifically refer to a person's individual name, per se, but rather to reputation or recognition of the person. Given the context, one should understand this in the sense of a person of importance, one whose fame is based on some kind of rank.

The participle “being named,” is not filler. It means that the name, the acknowledgment of the individual's fame, is wide spread, being repeatedly expressed. The reason may be political rank, social standing, or even fame because of historical importance (i.e. George Washington). It makes no difference. Christ in His humanity has been raised above every one of them.<sup>119</sup>

**οὐ μόνον ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι (*ou monon en tō aiōni toutō alla kai en tō mellonti – not only in this age, but also in the coming one*)**

The word age refers to a specific period of time. It is not, however, a technical word. And as such an age may not be exclusive to a time period. Like sports seasons, ages can overlap. This is because an age is a period of time determined by a certain idea or association. Ephesians two speaks of the age of the *kosmos* (the world system), a different age than the present evil age, since the *kosmos* has been in existence since the beginning of organized civilization. The present evil age (Galatians 1:4 [τοῦ ἐνεστώτος αἰῶνος πονηροῦ - *tou enestōtos aiōnos ponērou*]) runs at the same time as the age of the world system (Ephesians 2:2), but they are distinct.

Two distinct ages are mentioned during which times these names are being named. In other words, the fame of these important names continue beyond the age in which they are first named.

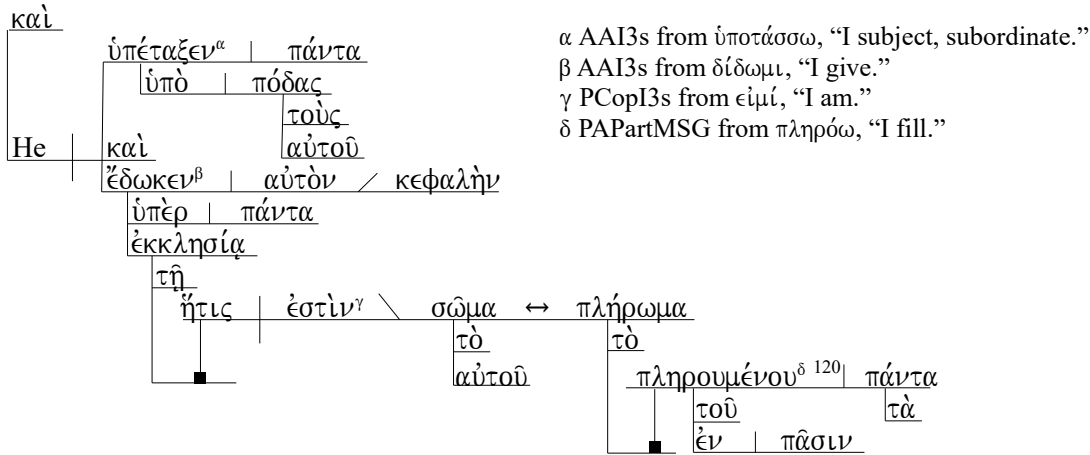
“This age” (τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ) undoubtedly refers to the present evil age (Galatians 1:4), the current period of time that is characterized by satanic influence. Today many are remembered from the past, going back in history. The famous are still with us, including some of the ancient potentates, as well as people who withstood them. Some were godly, but many were not. We still speak of the ancients of history, whose fame is so pervasive that it crosses the centuries. Christ is seated above all the famous of today, going back as far as one can think.

The future age, undoubtedly the kingdom age, often called the millennium, will remember these famous individuals as well, they are of such great importance, whether they be human beings or spirit beings, that they will not be totally forgotten. This is the coming age of which the Lord spoke in Mark 10:30 and Luke 18:30 (τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ - *tō aiōni to erchomenō*).



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1:22-23 καὶ πάντα ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸν ἔδωκεν κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ <sup>23</sup> ἣτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πάσιν πληρουμένου.



*Translation:* And He subjected all things under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup> which is His body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in all ways.

**Exegetical Considerations**

22. καὶ πάντα ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ (*kai panta hupetaxen hupo tous podas autou – And He subjected all things under His feet*)

The *kai* here appears to be introductory, though many continue this verse as part of the previous sentence.<sup>121</sup> Nevertheless, the association between the previous statement that the Father seated the Lord Jesus at His right side is strong. But there is also a major progression of thought, for which reason most translators begin a new sentence here.<sup>122</sup>

The Father’s act of subjecting all things under Christ’s feet is another aspect of His elevating Christ’s humanity. The all things cannot be limited to all things on earth, but must also include all the realms of activity and authority throughout the heavenly realms. We know from other Scripture that spirit beings have various governmental function throughout the creation. All these were subordinated to Christ at this time. Again we state, this cannot be a reference to His deity, but to His humanity. The perfect man sits in a position of authority over all creation.

καὶ αὐτὸν ἔδωκεν κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ (*kai auton edōken kephalēn huper panta tē ekklēsia – and gave Him as head over all things to the church*)

This parallel statement identifies one specific area of Christ’s authority. In accordance with His sovereign plan, the Father associated the Lord with the saved of this age in a unique way. Here we have the introduction of a metaphorical association between Christ and believers, the body of Christ with Christ as head of the body. Paul will use the metaphor of Christ as the head of the body two more times in Ephesians (4:15 and 5:23), as well as in Colossians 1:18 and 2:19.

The word *ekklēsia* means simply assembly. Many have gone to great lengths attempting to show an association between this word and its derivation of “called out ones” in some spiritual sense. But that is not how Paul uses the word, nor would that idea come immediately to the mind of Paul’s readers. The meaning of this word assembly, and to attempt to assign meaning from its etymology abnormal. Words

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gain meaning from use, not their etymology. Indeed, *ekklēsia* here is explained by a metaphor which has great significance.

The “assembly” in question here is not local, but universal. When used of a local group, *assembly* is the a better translation than church. Indeed, the English word church<sup>123</sup> is itself a peculiar word. In modern dictionaries, such as *Webster's Collegiate*, the first definition for the word is “a building for public and esp. Christian worship,”<sup>124</sup> which has nothing to do with the way the New Testament uses *ekklēsia*.<sup>125</sup> In the New Testament, the word *ekklēsia* has nothing to do with a building. It always refers to people assembled.<sup>126</sup>

**23. ἥτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ (*hētis estin to sōma autou – which is His body*)**

This simple relative clause identifies the *ekklēsia* as Christ's body. Paul uses the convenient metaphor of a collection of human beings identified as a human body (*sōma*) to teach several doctrines, including here, the headship of Christ. In 1 Corinthians we find it associated with the function of its individual members of the body through various spiritual gifts.

**τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρουμένου (*to plērōma tou ta panta en pasin plēroumenou – the fullness of the one who fills all things in all ways*)**

Here the word body is described more specifically by apposition with the word *plērōma*, translated fullness, used here in the sense of completeness. Beginning with *ekklēsia* Paul identifies it with *sōma*, which in turn he specifies by *plērōma*. In each case, Paul means Christian people viewed collectively, not a series of abstract concepts. The word *plērōma* views the body in its completeness from God's perspective. God sees the *ekklēsia*, the entire body, filled with every person who will become a believer during this age.

The expression “the one” refers to Christ as the controlling head of the body. He is the one who fills all things in all ways. The question is, How does Paul use the verbal idea of filling? The participle *plēroumenou*,<sup>127</sup> “the one who fills” is a form of the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω), which has many uses in the New Testament. Here Paul appears to be using the word in the same sense as he does later in 4:10 and 5:18, where it means to control. Here Paul uses it for Christ's control of all things with reference to the church, the *ekklēsia*. In 4:10, Paul uses it in a broader sense of Christ's control over the universe.

Concerning His body, the Lord leaves nothing to chance, which is indicated by the prepositional phrase, *en pasin*, “in all ways.” Christ controls all things in all ways.<sup>128</sup>

Having taught this wonderful truth, Paul changes his tack concerning God's sovereignty starting in 2:1, where he identifies the need for the salvation of the individual sinner, and proceeds to explain the means by which the sovereign God meets that need.

## *Endnotes*

- 1 A noun clause, found in Mediterranean languages. It is not Semitic, as some have thought.
- 2 For a fuller treatment of Paul's life and work see the following: Ramsay, William: *St. Paul the Traveler and Roman Citizen*; Coneybeare, W. J. and J. S. Howson: *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*; Smith, David: *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*. More modern works are available, but add little to the older scholarship.
- That Paul names only himself as author is unusual. He usually names one or more of his companions when he writes, such as Sosthenes, Timothy, etc. Perhaps, being imprisoned in Rome (Ephesians 6:20), he had no immediate companion, though we know he was visited regularly by friends. Some have suggested that he names himself because of the nature of the letter, being intended to circulate, yet when introducing the Epistle to the Galatians, an obvious circular letter, he names "all the brothers who are with me" as writing companions. That Paul intended Ephesians to circulate is a matter of speculation.
- 3 Emperor Claudius had died a few years earlier. David Smith says he died on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 54 AD. If so, Nero was at this time in the sixth year of his reign, making him approximately 23 years old, since he became emperor when he was 17. Nero committed suicide in 68 AD.
- 4 The word *ἀπόστολος* occurs 81 times in the Greek NT. In the Gospels and Acts, the word is used exclusively of the twelve in a non-technical sense. It is not used of Paul until he referred to himself in his epistles, and it is evident that the word had taken on a somewhat different technical meaning than when applied to the twelve. The apostleship of Paul and others not of the twelve is designated a spiritual gift (Ephesians 4:11, *qv.*). Spiritual gifts did not begin as a class of abilities until the events of Acts 2, specifically, until the beginning of the residential ministry of the Holy Spirit. Prior to that, the word apostle is used in its basic meaning of one sent with a message or purpose. But throughout Acts the word apostle is never used in the spiritual gift sense that Paul applied the word later.
- See my notes on the Acts 1:13-26 for a fuller the word apostle as applied of the twelve as distinct from the later gift of apostle.
- 5 Some ancient manuscripts of the Egyptian text type have the words reversed as *χριστοῦ ἰησοῦ*.
- 6 As we will see, the desirous will of God is broader than His determinative will (*βουλή*).
- 7 Paul uses the same phrase indicating source in other epistles. Note 1 Corinthians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 1:1, and Colossians 1:1. All spiritual gifts, which includes the gift of apostle (Ephesians 4:11), have their source in the Father's desirous will, related to His *eternal* nature, and shared by both the Son and Spirit. However, the person who determines the distribution of spiritual gifts *in time* is the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:11 states, "And the one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one his own *gift*, just as He determines."
- 8 Other factors are primarily arguments from context. As mentioned, a few Egyptians, such as Origin, did not have it in their manuscripts. Many liberal critics present internal arguments in order to remove Pauline authorship from this epistle. But many conservative critics affirm Pauline authorship using similar internal arguments. Such arguments, pro and con, tend to be subjective. Early in church history, Pauline authorship was accepted universally. Many early commentators such as Tertullian state that Paul wrote the Letter and sent it to Ephesus.
- 9 Philip Shaff called Marcion a Gnostic, but others dispute that. See Shaff's *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II, "Anti-Nicene Christianity," page 483, "Marcion was the most earnest, the most practical, and the most dangerous among the Gnostics...." If not a Gnostic, he certainly seems to have been influenced by some of them.
- 10 While these are not nouns, and cannot then be described as following the Granville Sharp rule, nevertheless, the two adjectives refer to the same group of people. The "Granville Sharp Rule" states that two nouns connected by *kai* (and), the first having the article "the" but not the second, the two nouns refer to the same person or thing. This might better be called the Principle of the Governing Article.
- 11 Called a locative of sphere, in this case indicating the one, Jesus Christ, because of whom the Ephesians are faithful. Three phrases actually exist in the New Testament: 1) in Christ, 2) in Jesus Christ, 3) in Christ Jesus. Context must determine one's understanding of these phrases.
- 12 One technical matter. The assumed elliptical verb "be" probably takes the place of optative Greek verb. Optatives were little used by the middle *koine* period. Furthermore, the older form of Greek greeting was not *χαρίς*, but *χαίρειν*, meaning "to rejoice," but used simply as "greeting." Only James uses the word in this way as an introductory to his epistle. For other places where *χαίρειν* means "greeting" see also Acts 15:23; 23:26; 2 John 1:10, 11.

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- 13 Apposition is the construction where two nouns referring to the same individual or thing are connected without a conjunction. The second noun narrows the meaning of the first noun. If I were to say, “My grandson, Benjamin, graduated from college this week,” the noun Benjamin more closely identifies to which of my three grandsons I’m referring.
- 14 Paul uses *eulogētos* of God as its subject here and in the greeting 2 Corinthians 1:3, as well as in Romans 1:25 and 9:5. He also uses it of the Lord Jesus Christ in 2 Corinthians 11:31. But only here, in Ephesians 1, does Paul expand on the use of this adjective form by using both the verb and noun in the same sentence, and then associates the well-speaking of God concerning believers with the statement of election in the following verse.
- 15 *Hortatory* is grammatical jargon that means something designed to encourage action or thought. In English a hortatory can be expressed by such phrases as “let us” (usually written or spoken “let’s”), or “you should.” While not as strong and pointed as the imperative mood, a hortatory can come close to the strength of an imperative, and the English “let” is used for Greek third person imperatives in English translation, since no such imperatives exist in English.
- 16 Why is the Greek Old Testament called the Septuagint, and designated by the letters LXX? The word Septuagint is from the Latin word for the number 70, *septuaginta*. It is so called because tradition says that 70 (or 72) Hebrew scholars translated the Hebrew text into Greek. This is undoubtedly a myth, supposedly perpetrated in a letter by a man named Aristeas. The Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, were translated some years before the rest of the OT, probably in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. The rest of the OT was translated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. The LXX designation is because the Romans, whose native language was Latin, abbreviated the word *septuaginta* with the Roman Numerals for 70, LXX. By the way, this Letter of Aristeas is interesting for another reason. It states that the librarian in Alexandria requested that a Greek translation of the OT be made for the Library of Alexandria, and as a result 70 or 72 Hebrews scholars (6 per tribe) were sent from Jerusalem to Egypt to do the work. The Letter of Aristeas was written about 200 BC, though it claims to be written during the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (reigned 281-246 BC). It is, however, the earliest reference to the Library of Alexandria yet found. Most scholars find the letter problematic, at best. It’s probably a false writing (the technical term is *pseudepigrapha*, meaning not written by the person to whom it is attributed), something that was somewhat common in antiquity.
- 17 The word translated *every* means “every with limitations found in the context,” in this case, identified by the word *spiritual*. There are always contextual limitations placed on this Greek word. Another word, sometimes translated *all* or *every*, *holos*, implies a lack of limitations, and is used only in special situations. It can be, and should be, translated *whole* in many cases.
- 18 The word *substantive* is a technical grammatical term which means an adjective (or other word) used as though it were a noun.
- 19 *Epouranios* often describes things or persons in heaven as distinct from the earth. Note the following:  
1) **John 3:12, If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?**  
This is an interrogative first class condition, “If I have told you earthly things (and I have).” The Lord had discussed the kingdom of God with them, which they had misunderstood because of the false teaching about it that was rampant at the time of His earthly ministry. Evidently, the disciples had a difficulty distinguishing between true and false doctrine, and therefore continued believing error concerning the earthly Kingdom. Given that fact, how could they believe heavenly truths?  
2) **1 Corinthians 15:40, There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another.**  
Two kinds of bodies are in view, presumably both being resurrection bodies. Some will be resurrected to remain on the earth, while others (believers of this age) will be given bodies consistent with their heavenly abode.  
3) **1 Corinthians 15:48, As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.**  
The word translated “the *man* of dust” is *χοϊκός*, a substantival adjective referring to the dust of the ground. The phrase could be translated “the dusty man,” meaning the man who consists of dirt of the earth. It occurs again in the next verse.

## Endnotes

### 4) 1 Corinthians 15:49, And as we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *Man*.

*Heavenly* occurs 5 times in Ephesians, each time referring to places in the physical heavens. There is no reason to dispute that meaning in 1:3, except to support an untenable doctrine that the decree concerning humanity took place outside the creation, and therefore in eternity. There is no biblical evidence that the decree is “eternal,” though theologians have been spreading that bit of misinformation, on a regular basis for decades, at least.

20 Galatians 1:4. This approach is consistent with other passages of Scripture on the doctrine of revelation as it relates to the transmission of the information from the mind of God to the ultimate human recipients. This process is called, for lack of a better term, inscripturation. See 1 Corinthians 2:14 and following.

21 One of the great errors of theology is the idea that God’s decree is eternal. This makes no sense, because if it is eternal then God could not have been active in decreeing. An eternal decree would be part of God’s very nature, and would give no opportunity for God to make any decisions. But if God decreed “in heavenly places” the act was not eternal, but took place within the created universe, at a specific time.

22 The commentator in *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, Salmond, holds this view, though he does not use the idea of Spirit baptism. His exact wording is, “...the ἐν χριστῷ is best taken here in the definite Pauline sense which it has as an independent phrase expressing a distinct and profound idea—that of fellowship or union with Christ...” Vol. 3, pg. 243. He calls it an “independent phrase” because he realizes that if it is interpreted strictly by contextual considerations, it cannot simply mean “union with Christ.” He is mistaken. The phrase does not refer to union with Christ in the “definite Pauline sense.”

23 The verb *exelexato* is the aorist active (“middle” form) of *eklegō* (used 21 times in the NT), which is the verbal form of *eklektos*, election, and speaks directly to that doctrine which I will introduce here.

24 That choosing always involves distinguishing between two or more possibilities is aptly illustrated by the following passages:

1. The *Eklektos* Family – Luke. 10:38-42 Mary’s choice was best. She chose between two possibilities. Luke states:

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. <sup>39</sup> And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” <sup>41</sup> And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and *troubled* about many things. <sup>42</sup> But one thing is needed, and Mary *has chosen* that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

Mary chose to sit and listen to the Lord rather than to be up and about serving, which was the better of the two options.

2. The *Haireomai* Family – Hebrews 11:23-26 indicates that Moses chose God’s way, rather than the way of the world:

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king’s command. <sup>24</sup> By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, <sup>25</sup> *choosing* rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, <sup>26</sup> esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

Moses chose not to be associated with the position of privilege and possible ruling power, and chose to be associated with the lowly Israelites.

3. The *Procheirontoneo* Family – In Acts 14:21-23 the apostle chose elders (plural):

And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, <sup>22</sup> strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” <sup>23</sup> So when they *had chosen* elders in every assembly, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

The choosing of elders was very serious business, and Paul needed to choose between the qualified and unqualified for such a position.

## Endnotes

- 25 I include the Greek text of 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 for the Greek student: “ἡμεῖς δὲ ὀφείλομεν εὐχαριστεῖν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν ἀδελφοὶ ἡγαπημένοι ὑπὸ κυρίου ὅτι εἴλετο ὑμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας <sup>14</sup> εἰς ἃ ἐκάλεσεν ὑμᾶς διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἡμῶν εἰς περιποίησιν δόξης τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ.” This is taken from the Robinson-Pierpont Majority Text.
- Here is a literal translation, “But we ourselves ought to give thanks to God always concerning you, brothers having been loved by *the* Lord, because God chose you from *the* beginning for salvation by sanctification of *the* Spirit and by belief of *the* truth, <sup>14</sup> unto which He called you through our gospel, for *the* obtaining of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- The verb *haireō* is found here in the *-omai* form rather than the *-ō* form. The word originally meant simply *to take*, in the sense of taking something for one’s own use in the *-omai* form. The spelling *eileto* as found here is the aorist indicative third person singular form of this verb. This is the basis upon which God chooses people for salvation. He simply takes them from among others for His own use.
- As noted, the word for chose (*eileto*) is a form (aorist) of *haireō*. Rather than being a topic of controversy, God’s election for salvation of individuals should be a cause for thanksgiving. The word translated ought (*opheilomen*) carries the idea of obligation on the part of the one giving thanks.
- 26 I enclose the majority text of Acts 22:12-14 for the Greek student: ἀνανίας δὲ τις ἀνὴρ εὐσεβῆς κατὰ τὸν νόμον μαρτυρούμενος ὑπὸ πάντων τῶν κατοικούντων ἰουδαίων <sup>13</sup> ἐλθὼν πρὸς με καὶ ἐπιστάς εἶπέν μοι σαοὺλ ἀδελφέ ἀνάβλεψον. καὶ γὰρ αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ ἀνέβλεψα εἰς αὐτόν. <sup>14</sup> ὁ δὲ εἶπεν Ὁ θεὸς τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν προεχειρίσατό σε γινῶναι τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἰδεῖν τὸν δίκαιον καὶ ἀκοῦσαι φωνὴν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ.
- Here is a literal translation: “Now a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, as witnessed by all the Jews living in Damascus, having come to me, and as he stood, he said to me, Brother Saul, See again. And the same hour I looked up at him. And he said, The God of our fathers previously chose you to know His will and to see the righteous one, and to hear *the* voice from His mouth.”
- The verb previously chose is *procheirontoneō*. to previously hand pick. It is made up of two parts *pro*, before and *cheirontoneō*, to pick by hand, from the noun *cheir*, hand. It emphasizes the deliberateness of the choosing of Paul for His specific purposes. The prefix *pro*, before, identifies this hand-picking as being part of God sovereign decree. There may have been other candidates for this hand-picking, but God’s choice fell on Paul before the foundation of the world.
- 27 Salmond, *Expositor’s*, Vol. 3, pg. 248.
- 28 Greek grammarians are generally muddled on this idea of the reflexive function, confusing it with voice. Indeed, they generally refer to the form *-ομαι* as a middle voice, which makes no sense. The verb form which is identified in the verb by an *-ομαι* conjugation pattern ending for the first person singular rather than an *-ω (-ō)* ending can be 1) transitive active, 2) transitive passive, 3) intransitive copulative (*γινόμεαι*) or 4) intransitive complete. Of these four uses, only 1) and 2) can rightly be termed voices, for voice is limited to transitive verbs. The case of *ἐξελέξατο (exelaxato)* in this sentence is a prime example. The verb is transitive active (having the direct object *ὑμᾶς - us*), but it carries the *-ατο (-ato)* ending, which is part of the *-ομαι (-omai)* conjugation rather than the *-ω (-ō)* conjugation. Therefore, the word may have a reflexive force of “choosing for oneself.” See Salmond’s discussion of this idea on in *Expositor’s* Vol. 3, pg. 248.
- 29 I have often been accused of being a “Calvinist” because I hold to the doctrine of election. Those who so accuse are often ignorant of what a Calvinist actually is. True Calvinists generally hold to supralapsarianism or sublapsarianism (among other things). Supralapsarianism is the view that God’s decree of election logically came before the decree to create and to allow the fall, while sublapsarianism states that God’s decree of election logically followed the decree to create and to allow the fall.
- I hold to neither, and reject the concept of lapsarianism altogether. The reason is simple. One cannot find those distinctive doctrines in Scripture. Lapsarianism an invention, an attempt to prove something that some believe philosophically rather than because they studied it in Scripture. It places human logic above the careful exegesis of Scripture, and leads to other false doctrines.
- One specific problem with lapsarianism is that one who holds to its false tenants must believe that there are individual decrees of God. Scripture, on the other hand, indicates that there is only one decree, as we will see as we continue through the first chapter of Ephesians.

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I am not a Calvinist, not only because I do not believe the false lapsarian views, but because of other doctrines that a Calvinist must hold concerning salvation, such as the idea that regeneration precedes faith. This is but one example of many where the Calvinists have gotten it wrong, but I will leave it with that.

If one desires to study lapsarianism or other Calvinistic doctrines, (I can't imagine why) find a systematic theology (which often contain attempts at imposing doctrine from outside Scripture). I had to study it because I took a master's degree in theology, but I do not recommend it for the biblically oriented Christian. Stick with the Word of God, and avoid systematic theologies if possible.

By the way, systematic theology is not the same thing as categorical Bible study where one attempts to systematically study Scripture according to individual doctrines, such as the Doctrine of Christ, or of the Bible, or of Salvation, etc. Such study is strictly biblically based, but this is not so in the *traditional* systematic theology approach.

Systematic theology also cites sources outside Scripture to verify truth. I do not mean legitimate background, language, historical, and cultural studies. I mean that a systematic theology will cite literature, such as Shakespeare, Tennyson, etc., as well as the humanistic philosophers and scientists equally with the Bible in attempting to prove its points. (Some more modern systematic theologies do very little of that, to their credit, but the Bible-based student must observe carefully, and be certain that you study Scripture as the sole authority for God's truth.)

30 In my library I cannot find one reference that understands *before the foundation of the world* to mean anything other than *before the creation of the universe*, or some such phraseology. Likewise, every theological work which I possess, with no exception, speaks of the decrees (plural) as being eternal, a clue that they take this phrase as meaning "outside of time" or something akin to it. It appears that there is almost a "knee-jerk" reaction to the phrase "before the foundation of the world" in assuming that it means "in eternity." However, it does not, nor can it be made to mean such a thing. Such a reaction may be the result of believing in the lapsarian views, which, even if one assumes an eternal decree, do not occur as propositions in Scripture.

The lapsarian views are promoted as though they were the only legitimate approach to the decree. However, the lapsarian views are irrelevant, since the decree occurred in time after the creation of the universe. The lapsarian views the "order of decrees" primarily as the relationship of the decree to create the universe, to the decree to allow the fall (the lapse), and the decree to save, as though they were three distinct decrees. They are not, as there is only one act of decree mentioned in Scripture. Furthermore, the decision to create the universe is not included in the decree. See the next paragraph. Even Lewis Sperry Chafer falls into the trap of this terminology.

Not one passage of Scripture refers to a decree to create. Not one passage refers to a decree to allow the fall of Adam. Neither are creation nor the fall of Adam discussed anywhere in Scripture, either the Old or New Testaments, with reference to the Trinitarian counsel.

But, some will say, God must have decreed to create the universe. I do agree that God determined to create the universe by calling it into existence, though I would not call that a decree, a formal term which indicates a consultation between the persons of the Godhead. That act of determination to create is not ever identified with the decree of which Paul is speaking here. As we will see, the decree taught in Ephesians one, Romans nine, etc. relates strictly to mankind, not to the physical creation at all. It cannot, since it is a plan determined in Trinitarian counsel about mankind made after the creation took place.

31 A. T. Robertson says concerning foundation that it is an, "old word from *kataballō*, to fling down, used of the deposit of seed, the laying of a foundation." Adam and Eve were the seed for the human race. See A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, under Ephesians 1:4.

32 Grammarians call this "an accusative of general reference." Technically, accusatives cannot function as subjects, especially as subjects of any form of the state-of-being verb *eimi*, the verb with which we are dealing here. It is normal in Greek, as well as in English, for objective pronouns to be used as subjects of infinitives. We do the same thing in English when we say something like, "Mother wants *me to go* to the store." The phrase *me to go* uses the objective pronoun *me* as the subject of the infinitive *to go*. That whole phrase is the object of the verb "wants."

33 Another expression used by grammarians for *katēnōpion* is "adverbial preposition." The prepositional phrase is an adverbial genitive of place. See Brooks and Winbery, pg. 13.

34 The Greek student will recognize the aorist as referring to past tense. But time is only a reality in the indicative mood, and infinitives, participles, and non-indicative mood verbs such as subjunctive and imperative mood verbs

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loose their time relationship. The action of the verb, participle, etc., is only potential, and may or may not occur in the future, depending on the reliability of the one performing the action. In God's case, infinitives (and other "futuristics") will come to pass if God has determined them to come to pass.

- 35 See the note on the aorist above. With human activity, the action of any infinitive, no matter what the tense, is only potential. That is, it may or may not come to pass. This, in fact, is true of any verb form outside the indicative mood. However, when an infinitive is used of God, it may be potential or not, depending on the purpose of God which is being presented in the context. God acts both potentially and non-potentially in time, which is His prerogative based on His sovereignty.
- 36 See Salmond's presentation in *Expositor's*, pgs. 250-251 for an extended discussion of this issue from one point of view. Also see my discussion on *κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ* and my Greek diagram, where I have placed *en agapē* with *proorisas hēmas, having predestined us*.
- 37 The use is adverbial, going back to the verb *exelexato*. *Proorisas* is not causal, as some have it, but temporal. See the next note.
- 38 Both ἐξελέξατο and ἀρε προορίσας in the aorist tense, indicating simultaneous action by God, but the act of predestination is grammatically and logically dependent on election, being in a dependent and subordinate clause. Logically, had election not occurred, the application of predestination in the sense of Ephesians 1 could not have taken place. So, by order of logical precedence, election comes before predestination. In Ephesians 1:11, we will find that predestination became God's purpose as the result of election.
- 39 Several Greek words are used for childhood, each with a different nuance. *νήπιός* carried a rather negative connotation, used of babies, pre-son placement boys, and immature Christians, those who are not spiritual, but carnal. The word is used 14 times in the NT. See Romans 2:20, where the foolish are called by this word, translated "babes" in the KJV. See also 1 Corinthians 3:1, Ephesians 4:14, and Hebrews 5:13.
- 40 Robertson in *Word Pictures* makes the nonsensical statement, "Here *eudokian* means purpose like *boulēn* in Eph 1:11 rather than benevolence (good pleasure)." Only bias toward a particular doctrinal position could cause a person to make such a claim. *Eudokian* does not mean purpose, nor does *boulēn* in Ephesians 1:11. The confusion of such terms is rather typical of lapsarian Calvinism.
- 41 This was recognized by ancient authorities during the so-called *monothelite* controversies, which were, in turn part of the *monophysite* errors. *Monophysite* comes from the Greek word *monophysis* meaning "one nature," and was the view that Christ did not have a human and a divine nature, but a nature which was an amalgamation of both, a single human/divine nature. This movement was also called The Eutychian Controversy, after one of its main proponents, a man named Eutyches.
- Monothelite* comes from the words *mono*, one, and *thelēma*, meaning desirous will. The arguments of the *Monophysite* (Eutychian) theologians was that since Christ had only one nature, he could have had only one desirous will, one *thelēma*, thus confusing and combining His two natures into one.
- Scripture clearly distinguishes between the Lord's human will and His divine will, which is one way that we know that Jesus had two natures, separate but equal, each perfect, and each related to only one person, the Lord Jesus Christ. One desirous will, the divine, Christ shares equally with the other Persons of the Trinity, the other desirous will belongs strictly to His humanity. Therefore, after His incarnation, that one person of the Trinity had, forevermore, two distinct natures, each with its own desirous will, one of which, the divine, He shares equally with the Father and the Spirit, the other of which, the human, is separate from them.
- Furthermore, since each individual needed to make individual decisions, we understand from Scripture that each individual person of the Trinity has His own determinative will (*boulomai*).
- For an extended detailed discussion of the *monophysite* controversies, see Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 3, "Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity," pgs. 762-783. For a somewhat different approach, see Alfred H. Newman, *A Manual of Church History*, Vol. 1, pgs. 342-355. See also F. F. Bruce, *The Spreading Flame*, pgs. 312-314. Bruce has only a very brief discussion, beginning with the last paragraph on pg. 312, and continuing through the first two paragraphs on pg. 314.
- 42 John Eadie is typical of those who are not as careful with this phrase as they might be. He interprets it on page 35 of his Ephesians commentary to mean that "the ultimate purpose is God's own glory, the manifestation of His moral excellence." While it is certainly true that the result of God's over-all program (not just predestination) re-



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sounds to His glory (see Ephesians 1:12 (note), that is not the meaning here.

This distinction is supported by the fact that *doxēs* is without the article, whereas one would expect the article following *epainon* (praise) were it the ultimate act of praise of glorification. See the similar phraseology in 1:12, but the articular use in 1:14. Both here and in 1:12, we find two stages, or steps, toward the ultimate act of the praise of God's glory in 1:14.

- 43 BDAG identifies four distinct contents of the word *doxa*. 1) the condition of being bright, or shining, *brightness*, 2) the state of being magnificent, *greatness, splendor*, 3) honor as enhancement or recognition of status or performance, *fame, recognition, renown, honor, prestige*, and 4) a transcendent being worthy deserving of honor, *majestic being*.

Baur, Walter, F. W. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, Third Edition*. Revised and Edited by Frederick William Danker. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1979.

- 44 Grace is not an attribute of God, as it only applies to God's attitude toward created beings, and is not eternal. There was no need in God's eternal state for one Trinitarian person to provide something for another Trinitarian person. But mankind is in great need for God's grace provision, for man is in a state where he cannot provide what he needs to fulfill God's requirements.

- 45 A minor textual problem occurs here which is illustrative of the assumptions of the Wescott-Hort school of textual criticism. The critical text leaves out  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \eta\grave{\iota}$  (*with which*), and, following the Egyptian text type, replaces it with the genitive relative pronoun  $\eta\grave{\iota}\varsigma$  (*of which* or possibly *from which*). This they did on specious grounds. 1) The editors assumed that the Egyptian texts, being older, must be closer to the original. The only grounds for this assumption is prejudice, as the Egyptian text type may have incorporated early errors. 2) According to Metzger in *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, the committee was split on the readings, and followed the majority's opinion. In other words, they voted. (Remember the old definition of a camel, a horse put together by a committee.) 3) The argument that the more difficult reading has preference over the simpler more accurate reading seems to have been a deciding factor. This rule, however, is prejudicial, because it assumes that someone along the line purposely changed the majority text to make it easier to read! This accusation is groundless, since it's much more likely that the critical text incorporated inadvertent errors. To accuse someone of purposely changing a word in the Bible is a serious charge, but the proponents of the Egyptian text type do so regularly by following the foolish rule that the more difficult reading is superior to the simpler reading.

Clearly, the majority text reading *in which*, is better than *of* or *from which*, the latter making no sense. (One might postulate that Paul originally used an accusative (*hēn*) here, for which *hēs* was substituted accidentally, but there is no evidence of this at all!) Metzger explains this strange construction by saying that Paul used the genitive relative *hēs* by attraction back to words found in the genitive in the previous prepositional phrase. What? Paul was so dull he didn't realize that the previous prepositional phrase had ended? Attraction occurs when there is a *close* relationship between words, which we do not find in this sentence.

- 46 The word is from *apo*, meaning from, plus the root *lutron*, a ransom, to set free. It does not mean "to buy *again*" as some well-meaning but misinformed individuals have it, but to release or set free upon the payment of a ransom.

- 47 The papyri are documents written on papyrus, an ancient writing material made from a reed that grows along rivers and streams. "The papyri" as used in word studies refers mainly to secular documents that were produced in ancient times. The vocabulary of these documents written in Greek overlaps greatly the New Testament vocabulary. Often, the NT writers used secular terms, but raised their meaning to conform to the doctrines God wanted presented. Thus the word "trespass" means in secular Greek a somewhat different thing than in the New Testament Scriptures.

- 48 James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, Illustrated from the Papyri and other Non-literary Sources*, (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publish Company, Grand Rapids) 1930, 489.

- 49 R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Mass.) 1989, 260.

- 50 For the Greek student: the genitive relative pronoun  $\eta\grave{\iota}\varsigma$  is attracted to the previous phrase in the genitive  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$ . We would expect to see the accusative form  $\eta\upsilon$  in this kind of construction.

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- 51 Some exegetes relate this prepositional phrase, not back to the abundance of God's grace, but forward to the participle *γνωρίσας*, thus making these two nouns the sphere of the knowledge of the mystery of His will in vs. 9, hence divorcing the phrase from God's grace. John Eadie does so (Ephesians, pg. 44). This seems unwarranted. The most natural connection is back to the previous verb in the indicative mood, rather than forward to a dependent participle. This is Paul's normal word order in such constructions. Furthermore, it weakens the flow of discussion by leaving the abundance unqualified, and applies the words wisdom and insight in an abnormal manner to a participle.
- Perhaps Eadie and others have been influenced by other associations of wisdom and knowledge, as in Colossians 2:3. However, a better influence for this passage would be Colossians 1:9, where wisdom is associated with spiritual understanding.
- 52 Friberg, Electronic edition, under the word.
- 53 BDAG, pg. 934, under the word.
- 54 Friberg gives 4 distinct applications, while BDAG gives 3, both with some sub applications.
- 55 The following various forms related to *phronēsis* are:
- 1) *phroneō*, occurring 29 times, meaning to think in the sense of relating abstractions to one another. Therefore, to regard abstractly, so as to produce a point of view, an attitude or insight. See Galatians 5:10, Philippians 4:2.
  - 2) *phronema*, occurring 8 times, meaning an abstract thought or mental attitude or point of view as the result of the process of *phroneō*. Note *-μα* ending. See Romans 8:6-7.
  - 3) *phronimos*, occurring 14 times, meaning one who knows in an abstract sense; intelligent, insightful. Unfortunately translated *wise* in the KJV. Note *-μως* ending.
  - 4) *phronimōs*, occurring only 1 time, meaning knowledgeably, as in abstract ideas. An adverb, note *-μως* ending. Unfortunately translated *wisely* in the KJV. See Luke 16:8.
  - 5) *phronitizō*, occurring only 1 time, meaning to cause abstract knowledge to be known. A causal verb, note *-ιζω* ending. See Titus 3:8. The KJV translation "might be careful" has obscured the meaning of this verse.
- Taken together, this word family emphasizes mental cogitation, considering information abstractly with a view to correct understanding. It carries the basic concept of intelligent insight.
- 56 This aorist participle is correctly identified by Burton as an aorist participle of identical action. In other words, the act of making known is part the verb *eperisseusen* (*He caused to abound*) back in vs. 8. By using the phrase "identical action" Burton doesn't mean that the verbs have the same definition, but that they refer to the same act from two different perspectives. The verb *eperisseusen* is causal, and results in wisdom and insight. The participle *gnōrisas* (*having made known*) indicates the way or means God caused us to abound. New revelation of previously unknown information, a mystery, is God's act by which He caused us to abound. (Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pg. 64.)
- 57 The verb is in the *-omai* form, usually mislabeled a "middle voice," which in this case is most likely a reflexive use. For this reason we have a somewhat rare use of the personal pronoun *autō* (the form with *ō* as an ending is locative) as a reflexive, meaning *himself*. There are some, however, who relate this pronoun to Christ rather than back to the Father, making it a simple non-reflexive pronoun. Given the change in the verb form, however, and contextually, as well as theologically, the pronoun is best considered referring to the Father rather than to Christ, as it is God the Father who is the ultimate subject of this sentence. For other uses of pronouns as reflexives, see also Matthew 6:19 & 20.
- 58 Modern translators have abandoned the correct translation of *oikonomia*, dispensation, and substituted other words which obscure its meaning. The possible motive for this is the doctrinal use of the word which they reject. Be that as it may, while the words administration and management indicate an element of the function of a dispenser (steward), and such translations have taken over from the word dispensation, none of those words identify the meaning *oikonomia* as closely as the word dispensation itself. One must study the cultural background of the word to fully grasp its use.
- 59 See the author's paper, "A Study of the Concept of Biblical Households" for a thorough discussion of this important cultural and doctrinal word family. It is available free of charge for those interested.

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- 60 In the cultural of the New Testament period, business men did not “go to the office” to do their work, but operated within the context of the household. Hence a “steward” (the Greek word is *oikonomos*, dispenser) had multiple responsibilities, both business and family related.
- 61 George Abbott-Smith, *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh). 1968. pg. 866.
- 62 This is called a *middle voice* form by grammarians, though the form does not directly represent a specific voice. The reflexive function is just one of four uses for this form. Sometimes it is 1) active, requiring a stated direct object in the accusative; sometimes it is 2) passive voice, where the subject receives the action, one of its normal uses; 3) and other times it is complete, indicating neither active voice, passive voice, nor reflexive function; sometimes it is 4) reflexive, requiring the addition of a reflexive pronoun to complete its meaning. Sometimes the reflexive pronoun is given in the Greek text, other times it must be supplied by the interpreter. Only context can determine which use the author intended. It is a great mistake *to determine voice* by observing the form of the verb.
- 63 While the word Christ is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word messiah, more than simply Christ’s messiahship over Israel is in view here. We must not forget that this is a sentence dealing with the counsel of God (vs. 11). Paul often uses the word Christ alone to emphasize Christ’s current state of deity/humanity combined by the joining of two natures. Today, Christ and Christ alone stands in authority over all things, a result of God’s Trinitarian counsel which which controls all things in heaven and earth.
- 64 Note the peculiar grammatical construction here. The neuter plural article, *ta* (*the things*) occurs twice, and is modified each time by a prepositional phrase. The preposition is the same in both cases, *epi*. But the first *epi*, which we have translated according to the English preposition *in*, showing location within, whereas the second *epi* we have translated, again according to the English preposition *on*. The basis for this change in translation is change of the case of the nouns following each *epi*.
- The first prepositional phrase is *epi tois ouranois*, “in the heavens,” with the word heavens in the third case form, the dative/locative/instrumental. However, the second prepositional phrase is *ta epi tēs gēs*, “on the earth,” with the word earth in the second case form, the genitive/ablative.
- Some, such as C. F. D. Moule, dismiss the difference in form as a simple stylistic choice. See Moule’s *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, page 49. This seems unlikely, even if it is based on the parallelism of the passage (which Moule does not mention). It is more likely that the change in form is to signal a different emphasis in place. In English idiom we must make a difference between “in heaven” and “on earth” by using two different prepositions.
- But Greek is not rich in prepositions, and that distinction is more difficult. It is true that the word *en* in Greek roughly parallels the use of *in* in English, but that correspondence is not absolute. It may very well be that the Greek idiom is based not on the use of *epi*, but on the change of form from the third to the second so as to distinguish the two ideas.
- If it is simply a stylistic difference, one must still ask, “How did such a distinction arise?” The most likely answer is that in the Greek mind, the actual cases involved are not signaled at all by *epi*, but by the change in form in the distinction before us. Clearly, even in Greek, things *in the heavens* are distinguished in their location from things *on the earth*.
- 65 The NT concept of son-placement and the OT concept of naming a first-born are not culturally identical, though they have similar functions. During the OT period a father named the first born, often later in his life, from among his sons. He determined which one would be his heir. Upon being named the first-born, however, the son did not receive the inheritance, though he was raised in prestige. And sometimes he became the object of his brother’s jealousy.
- By the time the NT was being written, the culture had changed somewhat. While the Hebrews seem to have continued the practice of the first-born, added to it was the broader cultural activity of son-placement, which was practiced in the Gentile tradition. When a boy child reached an age where his father believed he was mature enough to be trusted, he underwent placement as an adult son and became his father’s heir. His position became one of equality with his father, and became, along with his father, the master of the household. Until son-placement, he was under guardians, but thereafter, he became independent, and began participating in all the privileges of adulthood. He actually received, with some conditions and restrictions, his inheritance at that time. When his father died, he was the sole authority in the household, until he placed one of his boy children as a son.

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- At least this was the ideal, but it seems not to have worked out precisely as it was intended in every situation.
- 66 Their are other kinds of councils which could be described, but it is the governmental council which is most helpful in our discussion.
- 67 Pronounced *boulay*. Some lexicographers mistakenly translate this word purpose, but to the Greek mind, the word purpose (*prothesis*) is distinct. As we study Scripture, we find that the New Testament concept is that the *prothesis* of God (His purpose) derives from His counsel (His determinative plan [*boulē*], His decree).
- 68 Which some theologians refer to as The Trinitarian Council.
- 69 In Acts 20:27 we find Paul addressing the Ephesian elders, to whom he states that he had not held back anything concerning the entire counsel of God. Unfortunately, this passage is often misunderstood to refer to the entire Scripture. Indeed, it is often taught that way by unskilled teachers who are often passing along an interpretation from others. But Paul is referring to the entire decree program, which he outlines here in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians. It was to this doctrine that Paul was referring in his speech in Acts 20.
- 70 εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς – (*eis to einai hēmas*) most often expresses purpose, as here. (See Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pg. 161) The accusative *hēmas*, normally translated “us,” is here translated “we” as it stands as an accusative of general reference to the infinitive *einai*. Infinitives generally take their subject in the accusative case. The same is true in English, where the pronoun subject of an infinitive is in the objective case. In this case, the prepositional phrase could be translated “for us to be,” which would sound awkward in English.
- 71 The pronoun *hēmas* (we) is an accusative of general reference, though we have translated it as a nominative. This prepositional phrase, ...*so that we will be unto the praise of His glory*, is best expressed in an English purpose clause, which indicates the ultimate purpose of God’s working out all things according to His determined program. The more literal translation “for us to be unto the praise of His glory” does not, to the English mind, necessarily express purpose, whereas the phraseology “so that we will be” is a normal purpose (or sometimes conceived result) structure in standard English.
- 72 Praising the glory of God is not precisely the same thing as glorifying God. The verb meaning to glorify (*doxadzo*) occurs only seventeen times in the Greek majority text, ten of which are found in the Gospels of Matthew (1 time) and John (9 times.) Paul uses the word only in Romans (2 times), 1 Corinthians (1 time), and 2 Corinthians (1) time. 1 Peter uses it 2 times and Revelation only once.
- Two statements by Paul identify the mechanisms of glorifying God. In Romans 15:5-6 we read, “Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (NKJV) Here we have the first mechanism, identified by the “one mind *and* one mouth,” which would be better translated “with one accord by one mouth.” It is an encouragement to the Romans to glorify God together when speaking. The basic issue, unity, is demonstrated by realizing the object of glorification, God, should be done as though one person were speaking. So we learn that one mechanism for glorifying God is one’s speech, especially when believers are cooperating, that is agreeing, about who God is. One expresses accurately and biblically God’s perfections of character and righteousness. While this may be similar to praise, it is not identical, since praise has to do with not just God’s character, the entirety of His being.
- The second passage indicates a slightly different mechanism for glorifying God. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 states “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Here two mechanisms are stated, the body and the human spirit. The body is identified because it expresses visually physical activity which may reflect the character of God. The human spirit probably indicates the same thing as Romans 6:20, as it is the source of thought and speaking.
- We may say that biblically speaking a believer glorifies God by reflecting His character in speaking and acting. More specifically, under grace, one glorifies God by living a life with the gracious provisions for overcoming one’s spiritual enemies, the flesh, the devil, and the world system, and also by showing forth the character of God in one’s service to him, both in general situations, and also by using one’s spiritual gift in a way that reflects His character. A correct doctrinal definition of glorifying God, then consists of reflecting God’s character in both our speech, and our actions by obedience to the program of God under which we live. Today, that program consists of appropriating grace provisions for daily living, both in controlling unrighteousness through grace, and acting in the body by serving God through grace.

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- 73 I'm thinking here of some of my advanced Greek students in the seminary. I regularly used Ephesians as the book to be diagrammed and exegeted in those classes, and more than one student presented that supposition over the years.
- 74 Lexical definitions are actually limited descriptions of a word's use, often using near synonyms, or other similar phraseology arrived at inductively based on synthesis. Doctrinal or theological descriptions are also a type of definition, which it is the Bible student's first goal in understanding an author's intent, also the result of thorough induction. It is not an easy task to arrive at such definition, for it requires a broad background in language, culture, and history to determine such meaning. Furthermore, the doctrinal student must be mentally prepared in logic and sound synthetic and analytic study techniques to avoid serious doctrinal error.
- 75 The Greek word translated "things" is not the simple neuter article, which is often so translated. Rather, it is the word *pragma*, the word from which the English word *pragmatical* comes. Its primary meaning is "that which has been done, a deed, an accomplished fact" (Thayer). So this phrase in Hebrews 1 could be paraphrased, "the evidence of things accomplished which are not seen."
- 76 I'm reminded here of my sister's "hope chest" in which she stored things looking forward to the day she got married. She had not yet even met her future husband when she started saving things in this large cedar box.
- 77 The idea of expectation, or better still, having a purpose for faith, is expressed in 1 Corinthians 15:1-2 in the words, "So, brothers, I declare to you the gospel which I proclaimed to you, which also you received and in which you are standing, by which also you are saved, since you hold fast that word which I preached to you -- unless you believed in vain."  
Note that Paul states that the gospel is the means "by which you also you are saved." But he also places one warning before the Corinthians, "unless you believed in vain." The phrase "in vain" actually means "without a purpose." This is Paul's way of saying that effective faith must have a specific purpose, that is, the purpose of being saved. It also limits the object of faith to the facts of the gospel of salvation which he identifies in the subsequent three verses.
- 78 Note the articular τῆς ἀληθείας, indicating specific truth, which is expressed in the following appositive to *logos*, "the gospel."
- 79 For instance, Paul also uses the word *gospel* of his message of maturity in Christ in Romans 16:25.
- 80 Grammatically, *en* must here be translated *by*, since it occurs with a passive voice verb. However, it is common to identify God the Father as the one who seals, and the Lord as the "sphere" in which the sealing occurs. While this is remotely possible, it seems to pass over the grammatical problem of the passive voice verb *esphragisthēte*. The passive voice does not normally look back to a subject as the actor. Rather, the actor is indicated by a statement of agency in a prepositional phrase. There are several ways to do this in Greek, one common way of which is the use of a prepositional phrase with *en* as the preposition, but indicating instrumentality or agency, rather than location, which we have in this case.  
Some have thought that the word "also" indicates that Paul is indicating "in whom" must be parallel to the previous "in whom also." But that phrase goes back to the elliptical verb "hoped," which cannot be passive, and must take a locative of sphere. Not so the second "in whom also," which goes with a passive voice verb. Supposed parallelism cannot trump basic grammatical concerns.
- 81 The participle is aorist, as is the verb with which it is associated. In such cases the aorist participles can either precede the verbal action or be simultaneous with it. But this is a temporal rather than logical idea, and is best observed in narrative passages. In doctrinal passages such as is before us, it is better to think of aorist causal participles logically preceding the verb, but temporally being simultaneous with it.
- 82 The English nouns "faith" and "belief" both translate the same Greek noun. Likewise, the verbs "believe" and "have faith" both translate the same Greek verb. These two words English words cannot refer to two different things, as some may be tempted to assume.
- 83 According to ISBE the following were common uses of seals:  
(1) One of the most important uses of sealing in antiquity was *to give a proof of authenticity and authority to letters, royal commands, etc.* It served the purposes of a modern signature at a time when the art of writing was known to only a few.  
(2) Allied to this is the *formal ratification of a transaction or covenant.*

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(3) An additional use was *the preservation of books in security*. A roll or other document intended for preservation was sealed up before it was deposited in a place of safety.... In sealing the roll, it was wrapped round with flaxen thread or string, then a lump of clay was attached to it impressed with a seal. The seal would have to be broken by an authorized person before the book could be read.

(4) *Sealing was a badge of deputed authority and power*, as when a king handed over his signet ring to one of his officers.

(5) *Closed doors were often sealed* to prevent the entrance of any unauthorized person.

(6) To any other object might a seal be affixed, *as an official mark of ownership*; e.g. a large number of clay stoppers of wine jars are still preserved, on which seal impressions of the cylinder type were stamped, by rolling the cylinder along the surface of the clay when it was still soft.

84 According to ISBE, "The word 'seal,' both substantive and verb, is often used figuratively for the act or token of authentication, confirmation, proof, security or possession."

85 Some take the genitive "of promise" (*tēs epaggelias*) to be a descriptive genitive (which some such as C. F. D. Moule consider to be a possible Semiticism), meaning "the promised Spirit." Not only is this unlikely grammatically, it is unlikely contextually. The word *promise* goes well with the idea of the sealing, that is, God's keeping His promise for the ultimate deliverance of the physical body.

86 The entire phrase *eis epainon tēs doxēs autou* expresses the ultimate point of God's decree program. Note that every previous use of *doxēs* is without the article. Here it is the specific glory, *tēs doxēs*, of God that is being praised. Unlike 1:6, and 1:12, where the anarthrous *doxēs* exists, speaking not of ultimate praise but proximate praise. Some object that the article does not prove that this is the ultimate praise of glory rather than the proximate, and we would agree. But we say it is consistent with that fact, which is confirmed contextually.

87 God's determined program for the believer is to fulfill the creation act, which the fall of Satan and the subsequent fall of Adam perverted. The human being, even in resurrection, even with the new immortal body, was intended by God to be a physical being, a being which is identified closely with the physical creation. Currently that creation labors under the curse of Genesis, but the curse is in the process of coming to an end. For the Christian, that end is applied at the future resurrection and snatching away of his physical self.

Romans 8:19-23 states,

For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; <sup>21</sup> because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. <sup>23</sup> Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. (NKJV)

88 ἔγω is in parentheses because it is actually part of a crasis (κἀγώ), *also I*. The καί is also in parentheses for the same reason.

89 Generally considered a "middle" or defective verb, it is actually active voice. Tradition grammar mistreats words such as this, because they do not have the standard "active ending." However, this verb is not "middle voice," nor is it passive. In fact, it has a direct object, and that makes it a transitive active verb, no matter what ending it has. One of the reasons for an -ομαι related ending is to show an emphasis on the subject of the verb for some reason, which is probably the case here.

90 By "some" I refer to some of my students taking Greek courses in seminary.

91 Dana and Mantey consider it a circumstantial participle, which would make it adverbial, modifying the verb *cease*. See D & M, pg. 228. Rather, it is clearly a substantival participle used as a direct object of the verb per my diagram. See Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pgs. 175-177 for a good discussion of the substantival participle.

92 I took this statement from my 1970 notes from Schafer's course in theology at San Francisco Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary.

93 For a thorough discussion of the various words that deal with this topic, see my presentation "Communication with God."

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- 94 This subordinate *hina* clause is a noun clause standing in apposition to the word “mention” above. *Hina* clauses indicating content are not unknown in the New Testament. See Ephesians 3:16, for example. This *hina* clause is unique, because in apposition it identifies what the content of Paul’s making mention in his prayers actually is. Some have mistaken this as an object clause related to the word “prayers,” a common mistake. The assumption is that “making mention of you in my prayers” is equivalent to “praying for you.” This is the view of Moule (on pg. 145 of his *Idiom Book*). He cites A. R. George as agreeing with him. Burton also takes this view on pgs. 87-88 of *Moods and Tenses*. We agree that it is clearly a noun clause, and that *hina* clauses can be object clauses of verbs. But the use of the participle phrase “*making mention*,” where “mention” is the object of the participle mitigates against such a view. The *hina* clause more naturally identifies the content of the noun “*mention*” by apposition rather than standing as an object clause of an assumed verb (praying) that does not exist.
- 95 In the incarnation the Lord took a subordinate position to the Father. This implies no distinction in being, or inferiority of persons, but only a determined subordination related to Christ’s humanity. It is in this sense that Jesus referred to the Father as, “My God,” in John 20:17. He was about to ascend into heaven in His physical body, expressing His humanity to the Father, a humanity which was designed to be in a subordinate position to the Father. It is precisely in this sense that the Lord said, “My Father is greater than I” in John 14:28, another reference to the ascension. That Paul is using God of the Father/Son relationship is clear from the next appositional phrase in this sentence, *ho patēr tēs doxēs*.
- 96 Greek note: Both the words *theos* and *patēr* are articular, and for similar reasons. *ho theos* occurs because of the following genitive “of our Lord Jesus Christ.” *ho patēr* precedes the genitive “of glory.” These kinds of constructions, unless there is a specific need to do otherwise, have articular constructions. This is common to many western languages, including English.
- 97 For example, John Eadie holds that this is the Holy Spirit. His confused statement is, “The Ephesians had possessed the Spirit as an earnest and seal, and now the apostle implores His influence in other modes of it to descend upon them” (*Ephesians*, pg. 82). This is a strained statement, and I wonder to what “of it” refers. According to Eadie, other men, such as Locke and Middleton, held that “spirit” refers to “a wise disposition,” a better view than Eadie’s.
- 98 It may refer to the human spirit in a subjective sense. In Paul’s terminology, the human spirit is the organ of one’s spiritual understanding. See 1 Corinthians 2:11, where Paul affirms this truth. If Paul is using the human spirit in the subjective sense, then he means the function of the human spirit in understanding. In this sense, God the Father is the one who gives the ability for this function in spiritual matters of wisdom and revelation.
- 99 The anarthrous genitive nouns “of wisdom and revelation” (*sophias kai apokalypseōs*), are undoubtedly objective genitives. But this can only be true if “spirit” is used subjectively in the sense of enlightened understanding.
- 100 This is clearly the meaning of the word *sophia* in 1 Corinthians 2.
- 101 Several commentators (Calvin, Beza, and several others) are confused here, and apply the word “Him” to refer to Christ. Grammatically this is highly unlikely, as the nearest antecedent is God the Father. Likewise, the overall context emphasizes the Father’s work, not that of the Son.
- 102 The participle *pephōtismenous* introduces what appears to be an accusative absolute because the word *eyes*, which is the subject of the participle, is in the accusative case form (this is the view of Dana & Mantey, pg. 95). This is the normal construction with participles used as absolutes. This is the also view of many competent grammatical commentators, including the writer Salmond of “Ephesians” in the *Expositor’s Greek Testament*. Eadie also seems to hold this view. I have also in the past diagrammed this as an accusative absolute. However, there are contextual problems with that assumption. The word order is the key to this participle phrase. In the actual text the accusative word *eyes* (ὀφθαλμοὺς), which is the subject of the participle, follows it, and is attracted to form of the perfect passive accusative participle (πεφωτισμένους). So the better understanding *may be* that this is not actually an accusative absolute at all, but a simple participle with a subject attracted to its accusative form. The inclusion of τοὺς with ὀφθαλμοὺς supports this view. Another possibility, which I seriously considered at one time, and even included in a paper I wrote on this passage, is that this is a loose construction (some refer to it as a broken construction) where Paul is using the participle as an *instrumental* in accusative form. This has much to commend it, as it provides the idea that enlighten-

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ment is *the means* by which the spirit of wisdom and revelation was given. This may be the answer, but I have come up with a third possibility.

The entire accusative participle construction can only refer descriptively or substantively to another accusative word, and the only other word in the preceding context to which it can refer is the word πνεῦμα, spirit. Potentially, then, it could be either a description of the word spirit, which is consistent with the participle's function as a *pure* adjective, or it could be *in apposition* to the word spirit, as a *substantival* adjective, which is how I have approached it more recently. See the diagram.

Interestingly, after changing my mind from accusative absolute to apposition, I found that Abbott in the old *International Critical Commentary* on Ephesians also holds the apposition view.

Irrespective of how one takes the participle, the meaning must be that the spirit here is somehow referred to by the participle, either descriptively if adverbial in the absolute or loose construction sense, or as a substantive in the apposition sense.

- 103 For a full discussion of the doctrine of illumination see my notes on the doctrine of the Bible.
- 104 Paul's written form of the word of God is often abbreviated from his oral teaching with a few details added, though at least one Epistle provides a very full explanation of Paul's basic teaching to new believers. That is the book of Romans, which many today find very deep. But to Paul Romans is full of basic information that every new Christ needed to have, and since he'd not yet been to Rome, he provided a rather full account of his basic doctrine. Ephesians, Colossians, and other of Paul's epistles teach many of the same doctrines expressed in Romans, and are either briefly expressed or somewhat expanded. For that reason, a full understanding of Paul's doctrinal truth requires careful consideration of all his epistles. And, of course, other writers such as John and Peter add details to Paul's understanding in various areas.
- 105 The preposition *eis* with the articular infinitive regularly indicates either purpose or result (sometimes conceived result).
- 106 This is the first of three clauses of an tricolon, and exhibiting an asyndeton association. You don't know the meaning of those two dollar words? A tricolon is three parallel clauses of the same grammatical structure. There are also bicolons (two parallel clauses) and tetracolons (four parallel clauses). An asyndeton is an association between parallel words, phrases, or clauses where the conjunctions are left out. In English we usually place commas between such structures. For example Julius Caesar's famous statement, "I came, I saw, I conquered" exhibits asyndeton structure. Syndeton is the *inclusion* of conjunctions in such statements. For example, "I saw a man and a boy and a dog," instead of saying "I saw a man, a boy, and a dog." Often in English we include "and" between the final two words that are in parallel in an asyndeton structure.
- 107 Both the verb (καλέω) and the adjective (κλητός) occur in a variety of texts. καλέω occurs some 146 times in the NT, but is used quite differently in the gospels than in the epistles. κλητός, on the other hand, occurs only 11 times, used mainly by Paul. Matthew used it twice, Jude once, and John in the Revelation once.
- 108 The genitive phrase *tēs klēseōs*, "of calling," is best thought of as a genitive of result. The structure could be paraphrased, "hope which results from calling." It is sometimes called a genitive of origin, calling which originates or produces hope.
- 109 Power is *dunamis* (δύναμις), which occurs about 120 times in the New Testament. It's importance lies in the fact that it is the most common word to indicate the visible expression of God's almighty nature. Sadly, the KJV wrongly translates it a variety of ways, including might, mighty, ability, deed, strength, and various other ways. It should always be translated power. Sadly, the KJV also translates other words power, the chief of which is *ἐξουσία* (*exousia*), which should always be translated authority. This confusion has greatly clouded the correct view of both words.
- Another interesting use of *dunamis* occurs in Ephesians 1:21, where it refers to a rank of spirit beings. Again, the KJV wrongly translates it *might*, and also incorrectly translates *exousia* as *power* in that verse.
- 110 Dr. J. Vernon McGee made this very point in at least one of his radio broadcasts when he said that there is a man seated in heaven.
- 111 The terms First, Second, and Third Person are simply convenient ways to distinguish the persons. The ordinal numbers first, second and third, are not ranks, but simply places in a list. They imply no inferiority.



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- 112 Ubiquity is a term that means essentially the same thing as omnipresence. However, some of us have adopted the term to mean something slightly different. Technically, omnipresence refers to within creation, while ubiquity we have taken to mean existence of God's being apart from creation. So, before there was a creation, and even now in God's eternal being, the three persons are not limited to the creation, but exist apart from it. They are ubiquitous, as well as omnipresent. Psalm 139, then, refers to God's omnipresence rather than to His ubiquity.
- 113 Used on three times in the NT (see Ephesians 4:10, Hebrews 9:5), *huperanō* is a so-called "improper preposition" because it was still used in the Koine period as an adverb. In the NT it is always a preposition and its object is always in the ablative (Form 2), indicating separation. Often translated "far above" it means high above or high over, and can refer either to position or place. Here the emphasis is on position, and refers to the fact of Christ's being seated in a place of ultimate authority rather than His being raised. For the use of *huperanō* referring to place see Ephesians 4:10.
- 114 Such terminology is used in several of Paul's writings. Note the following passages: Romans 8:38; Ephesians 3:10 & 6:12; Colossians 1:16 & 2:15; Titus 3:1.
- 115 Occasionally the singular of the word *pas* should be translated all. An illustration would be the collective restrictive noun *mankind*. It is impossible to express it "every mankind." Only all mankind will do. Collective singular nouns are of this type.
- 116 Unfortunately, almost all versions translate the first *pas* as *all*, as though it were plural, and the second as the singular *every*.
- 117 Passages other than Ephesians 1:21 and Colossians 1:16 which contain the same words are Colossians 2:10; 2:15; Ephesians 2:2, 3:10, 6:12; Romans 8:31; 1 Peter 3:22.
- 118 For a discussion of the reason for the change in order from Colossians 1:16 to Ephesians 1:21, see the discussion of Ephesians 6:12.
- 119 Many expositors do not deal with this phrase. The ones who do are generally inadequate, such as JFB, who simply says concerning the phrase "every name," "every being whatever. 'Any other creature,'" and references Romans 8:39, without giving a reason for the association with Romans. *Gaebelein's Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible* ignores it, as does Pfeiffer in the *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*. Both of these are rather typical of single volume commentaries that have little value. They say much the same thing as others on those areas where they do comment, but on more difficult phrases they are often silent. We see this same practice in the *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, though it sometimes does delve into more difficult phrases. But not this time, where it skips it altogether.
- Even the fuller commentaries deal with it only briefly, and do not actually provide any information. Lange, for instance, says that the phrase "*every name being named*," "corresponds entirely with 'nor any other creature' (Romans 8:38)," and leaves it at that, giving no other reason for such an association. He provides the Romans verse as his reason for the assumed correspondence, which contains the words "principalities nor powers" (ἀρχαὶ οὐτε δυνάμεις).
- 120 Once again we state that traditional grammarians do not know how to handle verbs or verbals in this form. They call it a "middle voice," but often do not state why the regular "active" form is not used. When they do, their approach is nothing except confusing, and there is no real agreement as to why it occurs in this form. For instance, see Moule's *Idiom Book*, pg. 25. But the form is irrelevant to the voice, since voice is determined by function not form. Here the function of τοῦ πληρουμένου is clearly active voice since it has a direct object, τὰ πάντα, hence the correct parsing is as a Present Active Participle.
- The reason that it is not in the regular form for active voice verbs has to do with the intensive use of this participle. One of the functions of the so-called "middle form" is to intensify the one doing the action. In this case, the articular participle emphasizes the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ, as opposed to the Father, is the specific one who fills, that is, controls.
- 121 See, for example, ASV (1901), Darby's New Translation, and the RSV.
- 122 Two major thoughts are identified by the two parallel verbs *hupetaxen* in this clause and *edōken* in the next. The emphasis of the verb *hupetaxen* (from ὑποτάσσω, [*hupotassō*] to arrange under, to subordinate) is on Christ's rank, not simply His position.

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The parallelism goes further, between the two clauses, where there are antithetical prepositional phrases. Associated with the verb before us, we find the phrase “under His feet,” while associated with *edōken* we find “over all things,” signaling a change in perspective.

Taking the two clauses together we get a strong picture of Christ superior position as a result of His being seated at the right side of God.

123 Speaking of etymology, the English word church is derived from a peculiar source. It comes from the word *kuriōs*, meaning lord. Most scholars believe that the word actually came from a variation of that word, *kuriokos*, meaning “of the lord,” or “lordly.” According to *Webster’s Dictionary*, it traveled quite a bit. In Old English it is written *circe*, while in Middle English it was spelled *chirche*.

In an interesting variation of this etymology, *kuriokos* came through the Old Norse into the Scot’s language as *kirkje*, today the word kirk meaning church, and is applied to the national church of Scotland.

124 *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, Tenth Addition, Merriam Webster Inc. Springfield, 1993, pg. 205.

125 The definitions get worse as one follows them in *Webster*. For instance, the second definition is “The clergy or officialdom of a religious body.” We do not doubt that Webster is correct here. It is clear that the *English word* church has come to mean something that is totally different than the New Testament author’s meaning of *ekklēsia*.

126 Besides the Christian assembly, the word refers to a mob in Acts 19:32 and following. It also refers to the congregation of a synagogue in Matthew 18:17 and James 5:14. When used as a local group of any kind, Christian or otherwise, the word should be translated *assembly*. As a personal choice to maintain distinction and because Paul uses *ekklēsia* in an unusual way, I have chosen to retain the translation church for *ekklēsia* when it refers to the body of Christ.

127 Here, the participle is in the middle/passive form, but is clearly acting as a transitive active, as it has a direct object. Much speculation occurs in commentaries over the form. However, sometimes the “middle” form is sometimes used simply to intensify the subject as the actor. See endnote 118 above.

128 Moule, evidently to avoid this conclusion, takes τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσι to be an elative phrase, that is, an adverbial intensive phrase, meaning “in every way possible.” (See his *Idiom Book*, pg. 160.) Such a view is very convenient, but seems unwarranted. There is no doubt that the participle is used in its normal sense of control, which governs one’s approach to the object τὰ πάντα and the prepositional phrase ἐν πᾶσι.