

Ephesians 13-09-22b

We resume our study now in the first chapter of Ephesians, we're at chapter 1 verse 3. We're looking at this section verses 2 through 14 and we're going to pick up the pace just a little bit. Let's read this section because remember when these letters were originally delivered this is how people heard them, they didn't have a text, they didn't have the ability to sit and mark up and look back and forth. It was read, it was verbal.

In fact there is very strong evidence that these letters even as they were quote unquote written were actually spoken, they were dictated. The Apostle Paul would have been pacing perhaps in a prison cell, there's a tradition that says that he was in prison when he wrote this letter. And he would have been pacing back and forth in a small room whether imprisoned or under house arrest or perhaps somewhere else and would have been speaking these thoughts out loud and an amanuensis would be setting them down.

And so it was spoken into the air when the letter, kind of like a recording, an old 78 or a reel-to-reel tape or a 8-track or a cassette or a 45 or a LP or now we have CDs and DVDs and those are quickly becoming passe and you just have bits that exist on digital recordings. But you take the spoken word, you take sound that's in the air striking someone's ears, you convert it into something that's transportable and then you convert it back to sound on the other end. This is what recording and playback equipment does for us in the modern age.

In those days it was done with parchment or papyrus and a pen and someone would read it at the other end. So someone would stand up in front of the group at the church and read it. And in their language and in those cadences of Greek this is what it sounded like.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world in order that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will.

To the praise of the glory of His grace by which He made us accepted in the beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence. Having made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself.

That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ. Both which are in heaven and which are on earth in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.

That we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also having believed you

were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of His glory.

You can see the interweaving of these themes that we saw introduced in the first couple of verses, can't you? You see God's glory, His glorious purpose, the reflection of His character, the manifestation of His grace, these benefits, these spiritual blessings that originate in heavenly places and come to us when we meet in the meeting ground. That mediatorial space, that sphere that links heaven and earth. Heavenly blessings cannot come to us in the earth except in and through the mediator.

We enter into this sphere in Him, in Christ. God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ dispenses those blessings, makes those benefits available in that space. We meet God in Christ.

We gather and experience God's blessings in Christ. Outside of Christ these things are unavailable. It's like being outside the camp in Israel.

You don't get the benefits of being God's people. You don't get the benefits of the tabernacle and the Shekinah, presence of God. You don't get the benefits of the leadership that God has established, the community, the fellowship, the protection, the provision that come from being in the camp when you're outside the camp.

You disqualify yourself. You are removed, you are expelled, you are quarantined, you are separated. It is a death, being separated from the community of God's people.

And you strive for restoration. You strive for renewal, for cleansing, for a reestablishment of that fellowship because in and among the people of God are all of God's blessings. So these are themes.

Now what is it that we have in Christ? We've read these verses and I'm going to quickly point out you can circle all of the in hymns. Let's find these ten things I mentioned earlier. First of all in verse 1, sanctified and faithful in Christ Jesus.

That's number one. The realm of sanctification and faith for us in this dispensation is in Christ. If you're not in Christ, faithfulness, separatedness are meaningless.

This answers a question, you think well is this just theology, is this just abstraction? How many times have you heard people, how many times have you maybe had the question in your own mind, well what about the Jews? You know the people of God over there in Israel and people banging their heads on the wailing wall and these guys walking around with the funny hats and the curls on each side of their face and you know studying Torah and aren't they the people of God, aren't they, they've been preserved down through history, you don't have Hittites and Amorites anymore but you've still got the Jews, you've still got the Israelites and don't they have a special standing, they're worshipping God, it's the God of the Old Testament. What does your Bible

tell you right here? In Christ Jesus, in Christ Jesus. If any man be in Christ, he's renewed, he has fellowship.

There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, one mediator. God is not mediated through Moses, God is not mediated through the prophets. So this gives us a wonderful grasp of current events.

What should our attitude be toward the nation of Israel? Well about like any other nation, that's not a gathered nation in the name of God, they're not a Christian nation, they don't recognize the Lord Jesus nationally as the Messiah, they don't have messianic congregations as the norm and as the defining element in their society. Nation of Israel is just a nation, it's a Middle Eastern nation, it's friendly to the United States, great, treat them accordingly. Don't get the notion that there's some sort of mystical blessing associated with them, they're just a nation.

Why? Because they're not in Christ. They're not in Christ and they won't be until we leave. They won't be.

So there's nothing magical, there's nothing special, there's nothing mystical, they don't have any special standing before God. God is preserving the line. You know, soda can come up through a straw and you want the soda because it tastes good? The straw is just an avenue so that that stuff can eventually hit your taste buds.

Well, the current nation of Israel is just a straw, it's just there as a conduit, it's a way to establish a place where eventually God's people, Israel, are going to reform, but they won't be regathered until God gathers them. And they will not be meaningful in the spiritual sense until they are in Christ. There is one mediator between God and men and that is the man Christ Jesus.

And if you don't recognize the man Christ Jesus, you are just as lost and hell bound as any godless skull-drinking cannibal on some far-off Pacific island. You are no closer to God because you're in the land, because you have a Jewish heritage, your name is Levine, it doesn't matter, in Christ, in Christ. So the first thing is sanctification and faith is in the sphere of, in the realm of Jesus Christ.

That's verse 1. Secondly, verse 3, as we saw, every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. When we are in that sphere, when we are in that realm, in that relationship, that status of in Christ, every spiritual blessing is ours. You are rich beyond your wildest dreams.

And I mean literally beyond your wildest dreams. Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, it hasn't entered into our hearts what God has reserved for those who love Him. And in this age, those who love Him are in Christ, experientially, day by day, pursuing it, seeking it, cultivating it, maintaining it, improving it, entering more fully and completely into it.

This has got to be our goal. What's your goal? You want to get more money? You want to have a

nicer house or a nicer car? You want a better job? This is your goal? Our goal is to be fully, completely, centrally in Christ. This is where every spiritual blessing from the heavenlies, the only place you are going to encounter it and meet it and lay hold of it and possess it and inherit it is in Christ.

This in Christ thing is huge. You can't say, well, you know, I went to camp when I was 13 and I got saved. Or I was, you know, I was sitting in the living room and my mother led me to Christ.

Or I was sitting here or there or the other place and I got saved. It has nothing to do with it. Everything in Christ is a present status.

The only thing initial salvation does is get us into the realm where we can now experience the daily salvation that is ours in Christ. So that's number two. Sanctified and faithful in Christ, that was verse one.

Every spiritual blessing that originates in the heavenlies, that resides in the heavenlies, that is possessed and enjoyed in the heavenlies is ours in Christ and only in Christ. That's verse three. The next one we see in verse four.

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. More on the foundation of the world shortly. But, chose us in Him.

Now, dead seas of ink have been spilled about being chosen, about being elect. Elect before the foundation. God chose me before the foundation of the world.

No. The sphere of the Lord Jesus Christ has been established since before the world began. Christ was chosen to be the Savior.

Christ was chosen to be the mediator. The blessings and the benefits associated with Christ were planned and designated and decreed before the world ever started. Everything about the Lord Jesus Christ was figured out, if you will, by God the Father before the world began, before the foundation of the world.

Specifically designated. God knew before the foundation of the world that there was going to be the Old Testament people, summed up in the latter days of the Old Testament age, expressed in the nation of Israel. Not exclusive to Israel.

What about everybody that believed before Jacob? Are they Israelites? No, but they're Old Testament saints. They're a people of God, ultimately expressed in the nation. God knew that there would be an interruption, knew that there would be a hiatus in His plan and program for that group, and there would be a special called out people that would be body and bride for His Son, the victor of the cross, victorious over sin and death, the Savior, the Mediator, the Redeemer, the One who atones, fulfillment of all of the Old Testament types and shadows.

God said, not only is He going to be that Savior, not only is He going to succeed and be obedient, but I'm going to reward Him. I'm going to give Him a people that are uniquely His own, that are specially related to Him. They will be in Him and He will be in them.

That is not true for the Old Testament saints. It's not true for Abraham, not true for Moses, not true for David, not true for Daniel, not true for Joshua, not true for Joseph. It's true for us.

We are unique. We are special. We are a peculiar people, a specialized people, a gift from God the Father to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Him we experience these things. This was all decided before the world began. And we are chosen in Him.

Why does it say in Him here? If the Calvinist doctrine were correct, we don't need the in Him. He chose us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame. The Reformed view here leaves out in Him.

We are chosen in Him. All those in Him share His choosing. Everything we have, our sonship with God, our family relationship to God is in Him.

He is our Father because He is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ and we are in Him. Remember those notes we took there in verse 2 and verse 3? God, our Father, benefit to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we are in Him, God is truly our Father just as He is the Father of Christ.

It's in Him. Our choosing is in Him. Guess what? All of this talk about election and predestination and all the benefits that accrue thereunto are meaningless if you're not in Him.

You can be a believer and not be in Him. You lose all the benefits of choosing. You lose all the benefits.

It doesn't matter in that respect that you are quote unquote saved. If you're not abiding in Him, all of the things that come from the vine no longer make it to the branch. It's a dead branch and it will be snapped off.

That's what God did with Israel. Read Romans 9, 10 and 11. Branches were broken off because of unbelief, because of faithlessness.

You abide by faith. You're the wild olive branch grafted in. You are the branch abiding in the vine.

So, in Him. Chose us in Him. That's the third thing, verse 4. We are elect.

We are chosen. We are designated. We are given a special destiny in Him.

It's a positional truth, but to experience it, we've got to have an experience in Him. We have to be

living in Him to derive the benefits. So, we were chosen in Him.

And this is sort of like saying, I'm going to create the 82nd Airborne Division. And anybody that's in this division is going to get a parachute and the opportunity to jump out and be a light infantry that goes to their destination in planes. It's an airborne division.

It's the 82nd. I've already designated them. This is their mission.

This is their function. We're going to create a Marine Corps. And they're going to be the amphibious landing force for the nation.

The Navy's going to carry them where they go. They're going to prosecute warfare by attacking beaches and establishing a beachhead so that the Army can follow. They're going to be an amphibious assault force.

And they're going to have all their own stuff. They're going to have their own air. They're going to have their own artillery.

They're going to have all their own stuff. That's a special function for the Marine Corps. Now, when you become a Marine, guess what? You are now heir to and party to all of those missions and functions because you're now a part of that organization.

When you are assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, now you are an airborne troop. Now you get a parachute and you get all of the training to jump out. Why? Because that's what that organization, that group, has been chosen and designated to do long ago.

Long before you joined, that was its function. Chosen before the foundation of the world. Who existed before the foundation? Who existed in the beginning? It's the Word, who was with God and who was God.

It's His choosing that we enter into when we enter into Christ. Same thing now in verse 5. This is our fourth statement. Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ.

In, by, and with. This is your dative locative instrumental in Greek. By Jesus Christ.

We're not just chosen. Not just chosen for salvation. We're chosen for a specific function.

This is a function that was not available, wasn't a designated part of being an Old Testament saint. Adoption as sons. Why can we be adopted? The Lord Jesus is God's Son.

God the Father is His Father and He is now our Father because we are adopted in Him. By Jesus Christ, our destiny, our fate, is to be adopted children of God. Only in Him.

Do you want the benefits of God being the Father? Do you want the benefits of being an adopted son? You know, in this country, when you're adopted, every single benefit of a biological child is

yours. And then some. That legal status is binding and permanent and overrules all other considerations.

When you're adopted, that is a legal status respected everywhere in every facet of life. We have been predestined unto adoption as sons. We are the adopted sons of the Creator God of the universe in Him.

By Jesus Christ. That's our fourth benefit. The fifth benefit is in verse 6. According to the good pleasure of His will, verse 5, to the praise of the glory of His grace.

It's according to His will. It's for the purpose of His praise. He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

We have been made acceptable. We are accepted. We are not rejected.

We are not judged. We are not separated. We are accepted.

If you reject a thing, you push it away. You push it out. I reject that.

It's gone. It's out. If I accept it, it's in.

Pretty simple concept. But, notice back in verse 4. He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him. How? In love.

We are holy and without blame before Him in love. Notice in the Beloved in verse 6. Love is an operative, active policy of benefit. How do we define love? Love is sacrificial toward self and what? Beneficial toward others.

Benefit. We seek to be a blessing to others, even if it costs us something, even if it is at our expense. We sacrifice.

Benefit. Now, notice in verse 4. We should be holy and without blame. Holy and without blame.

Who is this letter to? The holy and faithful? The sanctified and faithful up in verse 1? How did we achieve that? Where does it come from? It's a benefit. We experience God's love in Him. We are able to maintain faith and sanctification, blamelessness, holiness in Him.

This is the sphere. This is what qualifies us and keeps us qualified. What are we trying to figure out here? How can I stay in Him? I get it.

I've got these 10 in Hims and look at all of these benefits, these spiritual blessings from the heavenlies. Relationship with God the Father. Grasp now and forevermore of eternal life, life that partakes of the divine.

Every possible conceivable and inconceivable benefit is mine in Him. I really want to know about

this in Him. I want to be sure that experientially, hour by hour, day by day, I am in Him.

Well, one of the things we see is this is a sphere of love and it is a sphere of blamelessness. If I start accruing blame, if I am no longer sanctified, guess what? I am qualifying myself for ejection from this realm. I've got to be sure that this sin thing doesn't pop me out of the sphere, the realm of in Him.

And it will. 1 John 1.7 and 1.9. We walk in the light as He is in the light. We are in Him.

And He is in us. We have fellowship, each with the other. And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, keeps on cleansing us.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We used to hear about this, some of us years ago. There might be an in fellowship and out of fellowship.

Think of it more along these lines. Do you want to be in Him or not in Him? Right now, an hour from now, a day from now. Do you want to be in Him with all of these benefits and potentials and opportunities and responsibilities and activities? Be a blessing to others, be blessed.

We want to be in Him. Walking in the light is being in Him. It's not in, fellowship is not some sort of abstract.

It's in Christ. It is being the new creation. It is experiencing redemption daily.

Not a historical event. Well, I got saved when I was X years old. It is, I am saved now.

I am being delivered from myself and from the world around me. I am delivered into opportunity and potential in Him. So, we are accepted.

Verse 7, in Him we have redemption through His blood and the forgiveness of sins. Is this not 1.7 and 9 from 1 John? In Him we have redemption. The forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.

How rich is His grace? That's how rich our redemption and forgiveness is. It is as limitless as God's grace. It's bottomless.

It is without end. It is without limit. It is beyond any extent we can imagine when we are in Him.

In Him we have redemption. If we step out of that sphere, out of that realm. If we begin living not in Him.

If we begin associating and cultivating a life that is not in Him. All of these things diminish and ultimately disappear. And now we are not experiencing redemption.

We are not experiencing forgiveness. And guess what happens when you are not redeemed, you are not cleansed. And now it is the judgment side of God's character instead of the grace side.

That is number 6, we are redeemed. So what have we seen so far? Verse 1, we are set apart and faithful in Him. Verse 3, every heavenly blessing, every spiritual blessing we have in Him.

Verse 4, which is number 3, we are chosen in Him. We are elect in Him. Fourthly, verse 5, we are adopted in Him and through Him.

Fifth, verse 6, we are accepted, we are made acceptable in Him. In the Beloved. He is Beloved, we are now Beloved.

This goes way beyond God so loved the world. Compare God loved the world with God loved His Son. That's the acceleration, that's the magnification and the exponential increase in the benefits of God's love that we receive when we are in Him.

Sixthly, we are redeemed in Him. We have redemption and forgiveness. Redemption and forgiveness, this is an ongoing experiential thing.

We say, well, you know, look, I've got life. I've got problems, I've got issues, I've got obstacles. I'm experiencing pain, there's suffering, there's opportunities.

I don't know which one to take, I don't know how to proceed. There's confusion, there's obfuscation, there's resistance, there's politics, there's things going on in the world and in the nation and in my community. I've got all of these things just cluttering up the area.

It's fine to talk about all this redemption and sanctification and all that, but I've got a life to live here. This is nothing but story problem details. God has given us a story problem.

To solve the story problem is not to succeed. To find a way through the problem is not success. To understand the principles by which you solve the problem is to succeed.

Why do we give kids story problems in math? Train leaves Chicago, another one leaves New York, traveling less than 50 miles an hour, they're this far apart, when will they meet, how far will they have traveled? Rate-time-distance formula applies. Why do we give somebody that? Because they need to know about the trains that leave Chicago and New York? Is that the purpose? Understand trains? What is the purpose of a story problem? To grasp the truth that you apply in that story problem and that truth is relevant in many other situations. Well, need to call grandma and let her know when we're going to be there.

We're traveling at 60 miles an hour and we're 120 miles from Claremore. So when will we get there? Hmm, two hours, give or take. It's a truth I learned solving a train formula about Chicago and New York, but I apply it today, it's helpful to me now.

Your circumstances, our challenges in this life, it isn't just something to get through in a happy and successful way. The goal, the reason God gives them to us, is to teach us truths that we are going to retain, that we are going to apply in other circumstances in this life and more importantly in the life to come. This is training, this is school.

Don't get bogged down in the story problem. Well, but it's a train and there could be crossings. Utterly, we miss the point.

We get distracted, we get too involved. I've talked before about getting involved in a movie and getting so wrapped up in it that you're trying to help. Here's Rocky trying to beat the Apollo Creed and you're just sweating.

You're there, uppercut, uppercut, jab, cross, and he's getting all latex bruised on his face and they can't see anymore. It's like, watch out Rocky, here he comes. It's a movie, it's a story.

Somebody made it up. Don't get so wrapped up in the thing that you forget that you got popcorn burning in the microwave. You know, the dog needs to be let out and if you don't do something about that, now reality is going to set in.

Don't be distracted by the story problem. In him, this is reality, this transcends being in this house or in your car or in your job or in your work or in your relationship. In him, this is the truth that transcends and we have to make ourselves remember it and be aware of it.

Ask God to impress it on us. Ask Him to task the Holy Spirit with keeping it in the forefront of our thinking because we have sanctification and faith in Him. We have every blessing in Him.

We are chosen in Him. We are adopted in Him. We are accepted in Him.

We are redeemed and forgiven in Him. Verse 10, We are unified in the dispensation of the fullness of times. He might gather together in one all things in Christ.

All these people want to be one with the universe and join the great consciousness and the id. There is an instinct to be a part of something greater than ourselves that is part of the image of God. It's a leftover.

It's an echo. Even in unbelievers, they recognize and acknowledge that there's something bigger than ourselves. Unbelievers, their biggest gratification is, I want to be a part of something beyond myself.

I want to be in green peace. I want to save the whales. I want to stop global warming.

I want to this, that, and the other. Save an animal. Stamp out poverty.

Help the puppies. No fur. Whatever it might be.

Something bigger than myself. We derive a sense of meaning and purpose and validation and worth from being part of something beyond ourselves. It's natural.

This is the thing to be a part of. God is in the process of gathering all things in Christ. I want to be in Christ.

That's where all things are being gathered together. This is the nexus. This is the intersection point for everything in the universe in Christ.

And we're already there. We're there in a way the Old Testament saints never were. They will be one day, but not yet.

It's us. We're the first to get there. We who were the first to hope in Christ, Paul's going to say here shortly.

We who were the first. We get there first. This is the greatest thing.

They released the new iPhone last week, and people waited in line like five days of camping out and having people bring them food because they wanted to get their phone first. What numbskulls. I'm the first to get the new iPhone.

Well, so what? What, you can talk to people better on it than you can on your old flip phone? They have a commercial mocking people with an old flip phone. Hey, there's a lot to be said for some of those old phones. They're simple.

They're reliable. Be careful about trying to be the first and the most in some temporary short-lived. Do these people not kick themselves three months later and say, why did I sit in line for five days to get this phone? And remember the last time they came out with a phone and the antenna around the edge was shortened out and shocking people and they had to send it back in for repair? You don't necessarily want to be on the bleeding edge anyway.

Wait for the .1 release to come out where they fix all of the things that they didn't find until after they distributed it. In Him, all things are gathered in heaven and on earth. In Him.

Look, it's mentioned twice in verse 10. In Christ. In Him.

Why? It's important. Things in heaven, in Him. Things on earth, in Him.

You want the company of angels? Remember they used to have that big angel fad. Everybody was all boogered up about angels. Angels are gathered in Him.

All things in heaven, all things on earth, in Him. We're already there. We are the first to hope in Christ.

It's terrific. What a privilege. We are ahead of the curve.

That's something to be thankful for. That's something to exploit. In Him.

Verse 11. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance. What is an inheritance? This is something you get without working for it.

You get it because of who you are. Do you work for an inheritance? You get it because it's a family thing. Inheritance comes through family.

Inheritance, the previous generation accrued and accumulated stuff and now it's your turn. It's given to you as a bequest, as a gift, as an opportunity to take something and move it further forward. We have an inheritance in Him.

Guess what? You have no inheritance if you don't abide in Him. Your part, your meros, will be smoking in the lake of fire instead of a possession and an opportunity and a potential to exploit in the ages to come. So we have an inheritance.

That's number eight. Number seven, part of what God is bringing together and unifying in this central focus point of the Lord Jesus Christ. Number eight, we have an inheritance in Him.

Number nine, this is verse 12. We who first trusted in Christ, in Christ. This makes a difficulty for those that say salvation in every age has always been by faith in Christ.

Paul says, no, we're the first to trust in Christ, to hope in Christ. In other ages, he who comes to God believes that he is and that he's a rewarder. It's more general.

It's more nonspecific. We have the clear vision of God. The fullness of deity and bodily form is Christ, in Christ.

And in verse 11, we have that inheritance. In verse 12, we who are the first to trust in Christ are to the praise of His glory. The reflection of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

That's our privilege. That's our opportunity in Him. Now remember, we saw this in verse 9, His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself.

Verse 5, the good pleasure of His will to the praise of His glory. In verse 6, the praise of the glory of His grace. This keeps recurring.

The praise of the glory of His grace. We are an embodiment. The Lord Jesus is the fullness of deity and bodily form.

We can be the embodiment and the reflection of the glory of His grace when we're in Christ. That's our privilege. That's our opportunity, uniquely so.

Verse 13, we have another double. In Him, you also, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, two in Hims, in Him and in whom, in verse 13, having believed,

you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Sealed.

I've got a double box of Raisin Bran. You know, it's a big Costco deal. It's a great big box.

When you open up the cardboard, there's two sealed bags in there. Now, what am I interested in? The wax paper bag or the Raisin Bran? It's what's sealed in. The Holy Spirit seals us into something.

We are in Christ. People say, oh, it's the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, and that's great, it's a wonderful thing, but we are sealed into something. We are affirmed and assured that we can never lose this opportunity, this potential.

The only way to get out of that is to leave voluntarily, and we do it all the time. We walk right out. We bust the seal from the inside.

Crime scene tape all over it, but we're inside, and we bust out in Him. After you hear the word of truth, the good news of deliverance, this is not just saving faith in Jesus Christ. This is the word you're listening to this morning.

This is the content of God's word. When you hear it, after having heard it, the good news of deliverance, having believed, sealed with the Holy Spirit. Our faith is what keeps us wild olive branches plugged into that tree.

It is our faith in the revealed word that keeps us abiding in the vine. People like to say, well, look, you can't lose your salvation, you're sealed in. That's true, but that's not what Paul is really talking about here.

We are in Him, and we remain in Him by faith. You hear the word, you believe the word, you trust the word. That's how we maintain it.

Isn't this what we wanted to know? Look at all of these benefits in Him. That's all 10 right there. We've only gone 14 verses, and we've got 10 benefits of being in Him.

How can I maintain those? How can I exploit those? How can I understand and make the most of those? Faith in the revealed word. That's why we emphasize Bible study in our fellowship, in our church. That's why we spend time outside of Bible class thinking about it, concentrating on it, reflecting on it, meditating on it.

The one who doesn't walk in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners, sit in the seat of the scornful, delights in the law of the Lord, meditates in it day and night. He's the tree planted by the rivers of water. In the New Testament, He is the branch abiding in the vine.

He is the sanctified, faithful one in Christ. Isn't this not a great section? Later on in Ephesians, you get to these. You know what comes up in Ephesians.

You know about chapter 4. You know about walk worthy of the calling with which you were called. You remember children obey your parents. Be imitators of God as dear children.

Wives submit to your husbands. Husbands love your wives. All of these things that come up later in the book.

You know why they're later? Because this is the necessary foundation. This is what you have to know and have to do before any of those make any sense, before we have any ability to fulfill those commands. This is the foundation.

We have to be sanctified and faithful in Him or the rest of it. There's no point in even getting there. Well, that's the first 14 verses.

We'll close here in a word of prayer and pick up next week. Father, thank You for this wonderful expression of divine truth, this revelation from Your heavenly realms made available to us through the ministry of the Apostle Paul, preserved for us down through the centuries. We each have a written copy of Your Word.

We have it available to us in an almost infinite number of forms. We thank You that Your Holy Spirit is in our midst and in our hearts and that through His work we can not only understand but make use of these divine truths. We pray that He will impress them on our hearts, that we will be ever mindful and never forget the privileges that are ours in Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray it in His name. Amen.