

Ephesians 13-10-27b

We continue our study now in the Book of Ephesians, my favorite alias letter. It's actually the letter to the Laodiceans, alias Ephesians. It's running under another name, but it does appear that this was a letter that was designed to be circulated, to be given to other churches.

I may not have mentioned this in the introduction, but there are cogent reasons why we are virtually certain that this was not written to Ephesus, which I won't go into. But Paul spent years in Ephesus. He knew people there personally.

And normally when he writes a letter to a town where there's a church and he knows people personally, there will be a greeting section at the end, or he will make reference to, do you not remember when I was with you I told you these things, and so on, as he does in Thessalonica. And there are no references of that nature at all in this letter, which is exceedingly strange since he lived there for something like three and a half years. At any rate, it is a letter that I think was addressed to a more general group.

I think this and Colossians went together. And we're going to see briefly a connection to Colossians in this study that we now undertake. But we are down in verse 19 where of the three things that Paul prays for, this is the third, that you will come to know what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.

This is where we begin to see the variety in the Greek language. When he says exceeding greatness, we talked about hyperbolon, right? This is just, you know, now people say stuff like off the chain and off the hook and, you know, just beyond all bounds. But this is over the wall.

This has been thrown in places where other stuff cannot follow. It is surpassing is probably a good translation. Exceeding is what you have in the text.

But this surpasses and it goes over. And then it is greatness. And this is megathos, megathos.

We talk about megatons. We talk about megathis and megathat, you know, megavitamins. And this MEGA is well known as something that means it is a big amount.

So this is, you get two different measures here. Hyperbolon, this is sort of a directional travel kind of a thing. You are going to throw it over and beyond.

MEGA is sort of a quantitative substantial reference. So this is what they used to talk about the 16-inch guns of the battleship New Jersey because those 16-inch guns can shoot a long ways and what they shoot is huge. These rounds, it is like a car flying through the air these incredible distances.

And you can hear it beyond the flash and bang and so on of the discharge. If you are under that trajectory, you can hear the round traveling through the air. Well, this is the idea, surpassing

greatness.

It is surpassing in its height and it is surpassing in its amount. So these are two, we don't just blow by these words thinking, wow, that is really a lot. It is a lot of grace.

It is a lot of power. It is directionally and in terms of altitude, it is high and great. And in terms of its substance and the amount and the quantity of it, it is megatons, so to speak.

But this is specifically the height and the weight, if you will, of his power. And this is dunamis, dunamis. Now, dunamis, again, the epsilon becomes a Y when you bring this over into English and this is where we get dynamic, dynamite and so on.

You are familiar with this. This is going to be different than the second power we find in this verse. This first one is from dunamis.

This is a specific kind of power and it is power in the sense of capacity or ability. What are you able to do? I might be able, I am not, but I theoretically, hypothetically, might be able to bench press 300 pounds. That would be an ability.

Maybe Hulk Hogan or Arnold in his prime or something, you could bench 300 pounds. He doesn't walk around doing that all the time. It is what he is able to do.

It is a potential. It is a capacity. It is a characteristic that a bulldozer can push so much dirt so far in a day.

A dump truck can carry so much dirt so far on a tank of gas and with its hydraulics and so on. This is a capacity. You may or may not see it in action.

It may or may not be used, but this is what it is able to do. That is dunamis. Dynamite, if you see it, it hasn't done its thing yet.

If you are looking at a stick of dynamite, then it has not exploded, has it? It has the capacity. I watched Things You See. I saw a little bit of a documentary on how they made Mount Rushmore with the face of Washington.

It is intriguing because originally it was different. Originally, there was a face on the other side of Washington, and they started carving it out, and the rocks fell apart, and they had to blast that off and put him over on the other side. I think it is Jefferson.

I think they did Washington, and then they were going to do Jefferson. Jefferson was going to be on Washington's right, but it didn't work out, so they had to put him on the left. Everybody remarks now on how visionary it was of the sculptor to have Jefferson looking up and beyond because he is the visionary architect of the Constitution.

It is just a happenstance. It is what they had to do because his face fell off the other side. They had to use this piece of rock they hadn't blasted away yet, so it just ended up that his face is kind of looking up, and it is a happy but apocryphal story that he is just visionarily looking off.

But how did they do that? They are talking about how they drill down through this granite, stick dynamite in there, and blow these big chunks of rock off. When you look at Rushmore, what I find interesting, and it is just the perversity of one's nature where you might be tempted to just sit there and look at the faces, but I am looking down at the bottom. I am looking at the multiple thousands of tons of rock because they didn't haul it away.

It all fell down to the bottom, and I am thinking, what is under there? What used to be there before they took half of this cliff away and just dumped it all down on the bottom? But they did it with dynamite. But when you see a stick of dynamite, it hasn't done its thing. It has got the potential to blast that stuff off.

That is what it is capable of. But you have got to plan where and how you are going to use it. You don't just invoke dynamite any old time in any old place.

You don't want it going off at random. They used to have trouble with it because it has got nitroglycerin stabilized with some solids, but it is sort of an unholy mixture in there, and the nitro can kind of bleed out. The liquid can kind of come out in the old-style dynamite, and it would pool, and you are back to having very unstable liquid nitroglycerin instead of these sticks of dynamite you can throw around and put in boxes and cart in trucks and things.

Capacity, what is it able to do? So, what is the prayer? I pray that you will come to know the surpassing, throw it over the wall, substantial greatness, substantial amount, the megathos of His dunamis, the overarching, infinite capacity God has to do things. His power is limitless. The things that we see that God has done do not exhaust what He is able to do.

You can see somebody set a record, the fastest time that has been run, doing the most and the shortest or the greatest, or there are world records for cup stacking and tractor pulls and all kinds of things. Well, somebody did that one time, and that is the best and the most that they can do or that anybody has ever done, the fastest man in the world or some such thing. But the examples we see of what God has done do not reflect what He is able to do because His power, His capacity to do things is surpassingly greater and substantially beyond what we currently understand.

And Paul says, I want you to have a better appreciation for just how vast that is. Make sense? The surpassing greatness of His power toward us who are trusters. Remember when Jesus went to Nazareth and the people were rejecting Him, and, ah, we know your mother and brothers, and He could do no mighty works there? What do you mean Jesus could do no mighty works? How does that happen? It doesn't say He chose not to do any mighty works, or He was disgusted and

refused to do any mighty works.

It says He was not able to do them. Something restricted and limited what Jesus was able to do in that community. And this should be a phobia for us.

This should be a scary... This is the season of Halloween. We're coming up here on All Hallows' Eve and the spookiness. I'll tell you one of the spookiest things I've seen, something new this year, when the girls were doing their pumpkins yesterday.

You know, when I was little, your mom would hand you a butter knife and you'd get a pumpkin and you'd hack out a couple of eye holes and you'd stick a candle in there and that's your jack-o'-lantern. But now it's all sophisticated. You can get these maps and put a portrait of Mount Rushmore or the entire cast of the Harry Potter pantheon.

There's just all kinds of fancy things you can do. But the scariest, eeriest, uncomfortable feeling inducing thing I've seen is what Elizabeth did with her pumpkin. That thing is just not right.

And you carve a great big mouth in it, but you don't put the little teeth. Instead, they've got plastic glow-in-the-dark teeth, and these teeth look like real human teeth. They're bigger, but you know how your teeth get kind of clear toward the edges and they're more dense in the middle? And they've got little fine cracks and things in them.

These things look like somebody pulled horse teeth or something and they put little spikes on them and you jam them up into the pumpkin. The pumpkin has got white human teeth and they glow in the dark and it's the crawliest thing. I just can hardly look at it.

It's just not natural. That's not a jack-o'-lantern. That's some kind of freaky demon-possessed piece of squash or vegetable.

It's just not right. I don't even like looking at it. So I took a picture of it and sent it to Patty because I knew she would appreciate it.

But this idea that this power is expressed toward us who believe, who are the trusting ones, is important because it's not for everyone. Jesus could do no mighty miracles. Why? Because the people were not qualified to see them, to receive them, to benefit from them.

There is an essential characteristic before God's power is going to be revealed so that we can know it, and that is the eyes of the heart being enlightened, God, the Holy Spirit, energizing and contacting and communicating in and through our human spirit, our network contact. But to know about it is one thing, and to experience the height and the substance and the scope of it is only going to come experientially. You're only going to have that epinosis knowledge of it if you are a truster, and if you're not a truster, it is not going to happen.

It's not going to be an experience. It isn't going to be effective. We're going to be the people up in

Jesus' hometown, and He isn't going to do, and it isn't because He can't.

It's because we have put ourselves in a position where it isn't going to happen. So this really is not only great in the abstract, but it has a direction. Come to know this surpassingly great power specifically toward us who are trusters.

We're not talking about God's power in flinging the galaxies into space. We're not talking about God's power in parting the Red Sea or taking the top off Mount Carmel or invoking plagues on Egypt or sending a worldwide flood or a land-wide flood. This is God's power specifically in a direction.

This is a particular category, particular expression, manifestation of this vast power and potential that God has. It is toward us who are trusting. We are uniquely qualified to receive a unique expression of God's power.

Now, how did we end the first session this morning? Talking about, I would like to know how to be in this group. I'd like to know, I'd like my life to count and matter and mean something. I want to be an effective, active, healthy part of the body of Christ.

Well, here's where the power comes from, and it only comes if you are a truster. Now, trust always has an object. I don't just, I'm just a trusting soul.

That doesn't really say anything. If you say you're a trusting soul, it usually means you trust people and usually indiscriminately and unwisely. Oh, you know, there's such a trusting soul, you could put wool over their eyes any day of the week.

If we're a truster, we trust in something, and it is this wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him. When we receive it, when we come to know it, we accept it. We lay hold of it.

We seize it. We bring it to ourselves and we say, I am going to act on this. I'm going to live in the light of this.

That's what it is to be a truster. Not just any old trust, not trusting in Christ for salvation some long years ago. This is today the wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him that is energized in my human spirit by God's Holy Spirit is something I am going to place my confidence in.

I am going to live in its light. How does this work? Well, sometime later today, somebody does something that's not quite according to Hoyle, not quite what it ought to be, not quite what you expected. Maybe they do something really ugly.

Maybe you see something in the news that puts pressure on your soul. You find out that, once again, they're going to try to make a uniform change in the Marine Corps, and it just starts goofing with the placid waters of your happiness. What's your response? Well, we have a knee-jerk response that every human being has.

I don't like that. I'm going to be angry. I'm going to be bitter.

I'm going to start talking and start expressing bile, and I'm going to criticize and rant. Anybody can do that. But the surpassing, weighty power of God expressed toward us who trust gives us another option.

We can step back. We can say, you know, Jesus said that in the latter days, troubled, perilous times would come. Paul the Apostle told us that in the latter days, men would be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, and all of these other bad characteristics.

I am not taken by surprise. This is consistent. This is to be expected.

And look at the examples we're given in Scripture. We're studying Old Testament Scripture where the northern kingdom of Israel is on a rapid decline spiritually, and there were faithful believers in that mix, 7,000 that didn't bow the knee to Baal. What did they do? Did God care for them? Did God ensure that the righteous did not go hungry and their seed did not beg bread? Did He make provision? Did He provide encouragement? He did, and He will for us because our fate is not tied to this citizenship.

We have a heavenly citizenship, as we saw in our Scripture reading this morning, our memory verse. So in the same way, this shouldn't be an abstract. Now, it's tempting to just exegete every word here, but I want to step back and look at what this means because this is the point of the spear idea.

I will tell you now that if I were organizing the Bible, the chapter 2 break shouldn't be here. This is one of several really unseemly chapter breaks. Paul is not finished here, and it's not time for a new chapter.

It shouldn't be there. The chapter break ought to be between verse 10 and 11, in my humble opinion, and we're going to see why. So with just the little bit of exegesis that we've done here and the grasp we have of these concepts that Paul has introduced about God's power and to whom it applies, let's get the gist of this.

This letter would have been read. Somebody would have received it in Laodicea, and they would have said, hey, we just got a letter from the Apostle Paul. Everybody show up at my house on the Sabbath or on Sunday or on Tuesday or the next day.

As soon as we can get everybody together, let's come in. I'm going to read this letter from the Apostle Paul. The ink's not even dry on the parchment, so everybody get together.

So all the believers would have assembled. A guy like me would have stood up, unrolled this letter, and read it. And they didn't get the chance to stop and think about each word and look it up in a lexicon and so on.

They would have gotten the message in a continuous flow. So we want to step back and kind of do that here. I pray that you will come to know the hope of His calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and the exceeding greatness of His power, His dunamis, toward us who are trusters.

These are the people who put down what they were doing and came to hear this letter because they understand that Paul is the messenger of heaven. He's like the Old Testament prophet bringing the word of God. Remember the Ambassador for Christ passage we looked at out of O.S.'s book this morning.

This is the idea. He is, we are God's messengers to you. So they're hearing the message of the Lord.

Us who are trusters, this is us. This is us in the room. This is who Paul is writing to.

According to the working of His mighty power. Now the word working here is *energeia*. And in the New Testament it is exclusively used of the invisible power of God.

That's what *energeia* means. Just think electricity. Think radio.

Think wireless. How does the stuff on the internet get into your laptop or your tablet or your phone and you don't have a wire connected to anything? How does it get there? There is an *energeia* that brings it, transports it. It's invisible.

And it's supernatural. Do you know how many times over you would be burned as a witch if you took your technology back just 100 years, 200 years, 300 years? And people started hearing voices coming out of little boxes and you suddenly had knowledge of stuff that was happening far away? You'd be slaughtered as some kind of a mystical aberration. It's *energeia*.

It's an invisible power. So Paul says, look, I pray that you will come to know the magnitude and the greatness and the substantial truckloads of this that are expressed toward us who are trusters according to. This is *kata*.

This means this is the measure. This is the proportion. How much of this do we get? Of this incredible, magnificent, immeasurable, over-the-wall power, infinite truckloads power, expressed toward us who trust, how much of it is available? Well, it is according to the standard of the working of His mighty power.

The working is *energeia*. Mighty is *iskuos*. *Iskuos* is the Greek word for strength.

This is according to the invisible energy of His strength. How strong is God? But this is just the adjective. According to the *energeia* of His *iskuos* *kratos*.

Krator is the ruler. *Pantokrator*, ruler of all things. *Krato* and all of its derivative nouns and so on

have the idea of ruling authority.

This is every different kind of strength you can imagine. The invisible supernatural energy, the iskuos, the inherent application of strength. This isn't potential strength like dunamis.

This is, I have the bulldozer that is capable of moving this huge boulder or knocking this big stump out of the ground. And iskuos is, I am doing it. Watch it work.

Here comes the stump. There goes the boulder. Look at this dirt being moved.

That's iskuos. It's happening now. That strength is power applied.

But that's just the adjective for kratos. And kratos is, theokratia is with it in the theological dictionary. And the idea here is that it is the presence.

This is what the theological dictionary of the New Testament says. It is the presence and significance of force or strength. When you're the lord ruler of a country or a nation, when you're the pantokrator, the lord and ruler of things, your presence awes people because they know what you're capable of.

You hold life and death in your hands. You command armies. You demand tribute.

You launch navies. And your presence is awe-inspiring. People bow.

People back out of the room when they're leaving. They use honorifics and call you your majesty or your lordship or your great high and mightiness or whatever. It's just your presence and the significance of the force and strength that you are able to wield generates awe and respect.

And in God's case, worship. But it is the natural attribute of mightiness. So what have we seen now? Dunamis.

Iskuos. Kratos. Kroteo.

These, every different way that you can describe these things, and they are hyperbolon. They are megathos. Over and above.

Infinite. It's just amazing. And all of this is applied for the benefit of trustors.

That's you. Paul says, I want you to come to appreciate just how great this is, what God is doing for you because you are a trustor. We lose sight of this.

We think, well, I'm just muddling along doing my thing. I make some mistakes. I get some things right.

I'm sure it's being recorded in a book somewhere, but I'm just kind of hoping to stumble through and not have too much pain. I won't probably accomplish any great things. I'm not going to be a

world-famed evangelist.

I'm just going along. I'm just facing the crowd. Paul says, no.

You are unique in the body of Christ. There is a specific destiny for you assigned by God. When the body was being designed, God knew ahead of time that you would be here in this time and this place with your family, with your friends, with your opportunities, with your tasks and responsibilities.

God knew all about it. And your potential is not defined by those things. Don't be fooled.

Your potential is not did the circumstance come out well or poorly. Did somebody nearby appreciate what I did or didn't do? Was it noticed? Did it make an impact? Was it impactful? Was somebody's life changed? Was there some sort of a stone memorial to this particular restraint of my temper or expression of my patience or endurance or bearing up under my forbearance? I controlled my tongue. I didn't say something I was tempted to say.

What's the difference? That's not the definition. That's not how it is viewed in the heavenly realms. This is a nexus.

This is a connection point in the human spirit, in the presence of God's Holy Spirit and the power of God's Word to things above and beyond. Think about this. I've used this example, and most of you are old enough to remember turntables and needles and records.

Some people aren't anymore. I was trying to explain this to one of our transcribers, and they said, What? But you think about the needle going through the grooves, and after you've played a record a few times and it has sat out, and there's dust and a little particulate matter that gets in there, and it makes static, and you've got this old stylus, a little chip of diamond in the groove, and forces beyond your control turn the turntable, and the groove passes beneath, and you're getting knocked to one side and knocked to the other, knocked to one side and knocked to the other. You're just trying to stay in the groove.

You don't want to hit a big enough piece of grit or sand or something that you skip a groove and the record skips. You're the needle, and you're just trying to do your job, stay in the groove, and you get knocked this way and knocked that way, knocked this way and knocked that way. Well, from the needle's point of view, this is just a real tribulation.

Why don't they just stop the turntable and let me rest? Give me a break here. But it's turning, and some of this debris gets knocked out of the groove, and you're just trying to faithfully stay with it. Well, unbeknownst to the needle, its movements in a lever action are being mirrored on a pivot back in the back of the cartridge.

The needle is moving out here, but it's on a stem, and on the back of that stem you've got a

mechanism that translates those little miniature vibrations into variations in electricity. It's movement in a magnetic field. You've had physics, you know how this works.

Current is generated when you move a magnet in a field, or vice versa. So those little tiny vibrations, these little variations, the needle doesn't see those and know about them. It's just trying to stay in the groove.

But those are taken, and they pass via a wire to an amplifier, and it's a preamplifier, and it takes those tiny voltages and makes them larger by a factor of 10. That tenfold increase is then passed on to the main amplifier, which amplifies them based on how far you've turned up your volume control to move speaker cones that can blast people out of a room, can break glass, can broadcast that information to thousands of people in an assembly. The same thing is true whatever analogy you want to use.

The vibration of an electric guitar string is minuscule. You can barely hear the thing if you don't have it plugged in. But there's a pickup that translates those tiny vibrations into something that then goes into the amplifier, that then goes into a system.

And, you know, bands can rock the world. There can be tens of thousands of people assembled for a concert, and that little tiny string vibration is greatly amplified. This is you.

This is us. This is what Paul is talking about. If he had known and had been able to tell anybody else about amplification, I'm sure this would have been a helpful example for him to use.

He says, you have no idea that we who trust are a place where this vast power is being channeled, is being directed, is accomplishing a purpose. Your tiny vibrations through the day, your decisions, your actions, seemingly meaningless, seemingly unappreciated, seemingly unknown and unwitnessed are the needle in the groove. It's the vibration of the string over the pickup.

And we will come to know one day the huge amplified effect that these things are having. How much power is in the needle? How much power is in the string? It is only because that little piece of diamond or that little piece of wire has been placed in a system and exposed to a kind of power that it is amplified and makes powerful sound. It is a part of something much greater and grander than itself.

The needle has no power to amplify music or to reproduce music, nor does the string. It is when you put that string in an instrument, it is when you expose it to an environment where its movements can, through that power, accomplish huge things. That's when it makes a difference.

That's what Paul is talking about here. I pray that you will come to know the exceeding greatness of His power, His invisible Energeia, toward us who are trusters, according to the working of His mighty power, this limitless reservoir, which He worked in Christ. Verse 20.

Now, which He worked in Christ. We're back to Energeo now. This is the same word we had up there, the greatness of His power, the greatness of His energy, which He energized, if you will, in Christ.

Now look at this. When He worked in Christ, when Christ stilled the storm, when Christ multiplied the bread, when Christ healed the sick, when Christ raised Lazarus from the dead, that would be a biggie. How great is this power? What is the standard? According to the greatness of His power, when He did what? When He raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies.

Now, how great is that power? That diminishes every other miracle to utter insignificance. Not raising any old body, not raising Lazarus who will die again, not resuscitating the man on the bier or the girl in the upper room or casting out demons and so on. This is the Lord Jesus Christ, who has died for the sins of the world, the God-man, the hypostatic union, slain, bearing our sins in His body on the tree, and God raised Him from the dead with this energeo action, this energeia.

This is according to the working of His mighty power, which He worked in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead. And not only raised Him from the dead, raised Him from the earth and seated Him in the heavenlies at His right hand. It's just unimaginable.

And yet Paul says, I want you to imagine it. It's unknowable. And Paul says, I pray that you will come to know it.

Why? This is where we're going to read on through now. Stay with me. We're going to go right into chapter 2. You need to know this.

It is according to the standard of what God did when He raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principalities and powers and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but in the age to come. God overcame any other thing that you can name that might be a power, might be an authority, might have some effectual influence. God just shoved it all aside, pressed it out of sight, and raised Christ from the dead, through the skies, into the heavens, to His right hand, far above any other influence or capacity that you can think of.

Any name that you can name. Not only in this age, but in the age to come. It just stretches the limits of imagination, how big this is.

And He put all things under His feet. There's nothing higher than the Lord Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Father. All things are under His feet.

Not just positionally, but this picture is subordination, control, dominance. And gave Him, gave the Lord Jesus Christ, to be head over all to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. How important is the church? How important are you as a part of the church?

The church completes Jesus Christ.

The Jesus Christ that God the Father raised from the dead, raised above all principalities and powers and dominions and might, and every name that is named, in this age and the age to come, seated in His right hand, and you are in Christ. You are part of what fills up and completes the Lord Jesus Christ. You are His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all.

And, no chapter break, scribble it out. If I could, I'd just get that little white tape and just take all this ink right out. This verse ought to be right on.

I wouldn't even change verses. I would continue verse 23 right here. Which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all, and you who were dead in trespasses and sins.

What has He just said? The greatness of this power, the standard by which it's measured, is God raising Christ from the dead. And look at what He has done. Utter expression of unimaginable power above any other power you can think of.

And you who were dead, see the connection? If God did this for Jesus Christ and He's dead, and this magnitude power beyond all thought was expressed, according to that standard, you who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to these authorities that He just talked about being superseded and suppressed and surpassed. You once were walking according to the course of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in sons of disobedience. We've got the Holy Spirit working in us.

We've got a human spirit characterized by wisdom and revelation and the full knowledge of Him. These poor, pathetic, non-trusting sons of disobedience, they've got a spirit working in them. But it's pathetic, it's low, it's common, it's defiled, it's corrupt.

We also once conducted ourselves in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling to the desires of the flesh and of the mind. We're by nature children of wrath, just as these others. But God, verse 4, but God who is rich in mercy.

Remember the riches? How many times have we seen the word riches? It's like six times in this letter. God who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us. Remember in the Beloved? Remember all of those expressions we saw in the first half of chapter 1? We're still in chapter 1 here.

God who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. You know what it took for God to make us alive together with Christ? Everything we've been looking at, all of those words for power, kreteo, iskuos, dunamis, energeo, those things. When He raised Christ, it's the biggest thing that has ever happened, anywhere, at any time, in any age, now or future.

The raising of Christ from the dead, and you and I have been made alive in that same power, according to that same standard. God who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, God has made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved. And raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

You see the connection between verse 6 here of chapter 2, and verses 20 and 21 in chapter... it's the same thought. He's saying what God did in Christ, because what God did for Christ, He does for us because we are in Christ. And we experience this, we live it, we enjoy it, we appreciate it, we fulfill it and express it when we are trustors.

How important is your faith? And this is my concluding thought. How important is your daily faith? In these little, needle in the groove, small little happenings. Bump to the left, bump to the right, bump up, bump down, it's a stereo record.

We get jostled, and are we faithful? Do we stick, do we stay, do we persevere? How important is it? Look at the lengths to which God has gone in this age, to raise us up together with Christ, with that same power, that same purpose, that same overall goal, we are in Him. And this inexpressibly magnificent thing that God has done, in raising Christ from the dead, and seating Him at His right hand above everything, is expressed in us and for us. We are not left like the sons of disobedience, with some other spirit working in us, corrupting us, defiling us, pushing us down.

We have been delivered, we are not in that world, we are in Christ. And in Christ we possess and inherit these things. We have been raised up, verse 6, together and made us sit together in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus, so that... Here is the biggest so that, in what I think ought to be all of chapter 1. So that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace.

How many times have we seen it? Exceeding riches, grace, in His compassion toward us in Christ Jesus. So that in Christ Jesus. Now you have your familiar passage.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works. I mean how utterly absurd is that? How could you say your salvation is of works? Look at what He has said, look at the power that God has invoked and wrought, the magnitude of it. In this long description, by grace you have been saved through faith, that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Now verse 10, this is the true culmination I think of the thought and of what ought to be the first chapter. We are His workmanship. How sloppy is God in His workmanship? Did God just say, well, it's general, doesn't really matter where you are or what detail I put here.

I just get a pile of wood and I'm going to call it a guitar, it doesn't really have a headstock, it doesn't have a top and sides, it doesn't have a fret board, it doesn't have a bridge, it doesn't have

bracing. It's just wood, that's a guitar, I'm going to call it a guitar. There's specific, every part has its function and its place.

We are His workmanship, you are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for the purpose of good works. We have a purpose. No guitar should be a wall hanger.

It's a purpose. No album should be in its shrink wrap as a collector's item. It was made to be played.

Instruments are made to be played, to make music. Things have a function and a purpose, they should be used for that function and purpose. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for the purpose of good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

We have a destiny. We have an assigned function and purpose in Christ. In Christ, this limitless power, according to God's amazing design, comes right down to focus for you and for me, in our daily walk.

It makes a difference what you think. It makes a difference what you trust. It makes a difference what you know and how you apply that knowledge.

In the smallest, most seemingly insignificant ways, how are you going to hear the cymbals in a classical piece if the needle does not faithfully follow that groove? How are you going to hear the discreet bow strokes and the bite of that bow into the strings in a beautiful violin concerto, or the violas, or the cellos, or the basses, or any other instrument in that orchestra if you do not have something that will faithfully reproduce and follow in high fidelity stereo that assigned function? You'll miss it. It'll be fuzzy. It'll be muddy.

It will be obscured. Nobody will see the glory of the arrangement, and of the performance, and of the piece itself if that reproductive element is not faithful, and that's us. It doesn't seem important from our perspective, perhaps, but it is hugely important to God.

This is how much power He has invoked to make it happen. So it's something worth thinking about, isn't it? The Lord Jesus Christ died to lead the way that we could be with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection, in His ascension, in His being seated at the right hand of the Father. Far above these things, Jesus first had to come and learn obedience through the things that He suffered.

Was it important what Jesus did day by day when He was going to die on the cross and go be seated in heaven? Does it really matter if He uttered a cross word, or messed up on where He went, or the miracles He performed, or the teaching He gave the disciples? Were the details not important? Every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Man shall not live by bread alone. It may look like bread, but it's the Word of God.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank You for the revelation of these things to us.

We're so privileged to have the presence and revealing power of Your Holy Spirit to lift these words from the page and make them flame and live in our souls.

We pray that as we consider and review what we see in this letter of the Apostle Paul reflecting Your truth to us, that it will be a source of motivation and challenge, that we will take up that challenge, that we will pursue the potential and exploit the opportunities that have been given to us in and through our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray these things in His name. Amen.