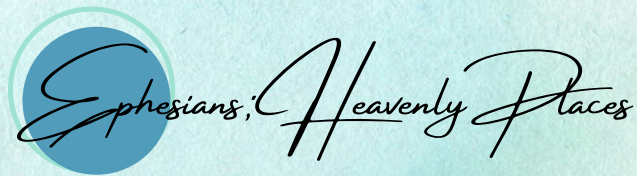


A.R.M.



Ephesians

Keywords Devotional



Ephesians Ch 1, v 3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the HEAVENLY PLACES,

God gives believers access to every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus, who is seated in the Heavens at the right hand of the Father. These spiritual blessings are made available to us by Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension into Heaven. Since these blessings are spiritual in nature, this means they originate from the heavenly realms where Christ is seated. Now, Jesus sits in Heaven as our representative, and gives us access to every spiritual blessing through our faith in Him. We have are not lacking anything in Christ, so we can live content.

Ephesians Ch 1, v 10

as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in HEAVEN and things on earth.


God's ultimate plan is to unite all things in His Son. Whether heavenly things or earthly things, everything will find its focus in Christ. The plan of God involves Jesus becoming the bridge between Heaven and earth, and eventually, there will be new heavens and a new earth created in Christ. Heaven and earth will collide in the person of Jesus, who brings all things into existence. New creation is built upon Christ and finds its fulfillment in Him. As believers, we should live for the coming kingdom of God, and not settle into the temporary condition of this world.

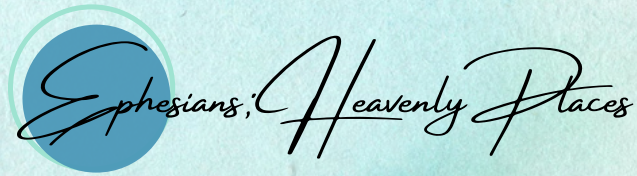




Connecting the Verses

The fullness of God's blessing is found in His presence. Though, we have access to every spiritual blessing through our faith in Jesus now, there will be a fuller experience of that blessedness when Jesus returns to unite Heaven and earth in Himself. He is the greatest blessing, and when He comes, we will have a perfect and complete experience of our blessedness in Christ Jesus.





Ephesians Ch 1, v 20

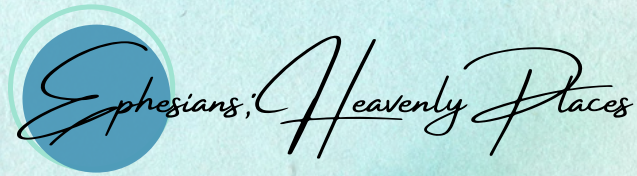
that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the HEAVENLY PLACES

The power of God is demonstrated magnificently through the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. When Jesus conquers death, He is displaying the unstoppable power of God. But, He also puts God's power on display when He ascends into Heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father. The Father raised the Son and seated the Son at His own right hand. Jesus is seated in heavenly places because He has finished His work as the ultimate high Priest. His place in the heavens alongside the Father notes His supremacy and ultimate power over all spiritual authorities and rulers. We are loved and cared for by an unstoppable God.

Connecting the Verses

Jesus is currently seated at the right hand of the Father in the heavenly places, where our spiritual blessings originate from. But, there will be a day when Jesus returns and His throne will be on the new earth among His people, where the fullness of blessing will be experienced in new creation. Heaven and earth will be re-created when Jesus returns. He won't stay in the Heavens for long. He will reign on the new earth, and along with the full establishment of His Kingdom will come the fullness of spiritual blessing for His people.





Ephesians Ch 2, v 6

and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the **HEAVENLY PLACES** in Christ Jesus,

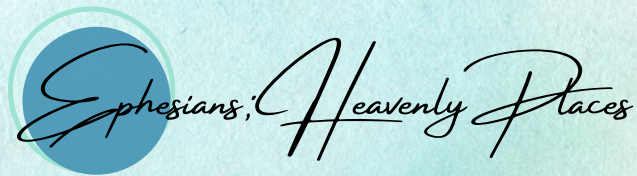
When we trust in Jesus for salvation, God positions us in Christ spiritually. We are positioned in Jesus, who dwells in the Heavens. Therefore, we are spiritually seated in the heavenly places through our faith in Christ. When our spirit is raised to life by the power of God's Spirit, our new life is hidden with Christ in the Heavens. Our spiritual position for all eternity is with Jesus, because our spirit is bonded with Him through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Connecting the Verses

Not only is Jesus seated in the Heavens, but He invites His people to be spiritually seated with Him. He sits at the right hand of the Father on our behalf, and for our benefit as the ultimate high priest. Since we are positioned in Christ through our faith we can rest in Him, knowing that He has fully accomplished our salvation, He is coming back to establish new creation, and we have every spiritual blessing possible because of our relationship with Him.

Our proximity to Jesus is what brings spiritual blessing into our life and guarantees us of the promises God has made about what He will do for His people in the future.





Ephesians Ch 3, v 10

so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might
now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the
HEAVENLY PLACES


There are invisible, spiritual authorities and rulers in the heavenly places (spiritual realm). Some of these spiritual authorities are in rebellion to God and these rebels were conquered by Jesus through His death, resurrection, and ascension into Heaven. The fullness of God's plan was a mystery that was hidden from these spiritual rebels. There was an aspect of God's infinite wisdom that was concealed from them until the right time. Now, through Christ, God has sovereignly chosen to reveal that wisdom and mystery through the church to the spiritual authorities in the heavenly places. Those spiritual rulers discover this hidden wisdom of God through the church. As the church, we demonstrate the wisdom and the mystery that God concealed from the rulers and authorities in heavenly places.

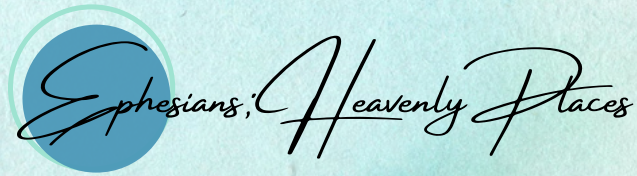




Connecting the Verses

Our blessings are in the heavenly places where Christ is, and we are seated with Him spiritually. One day the heavens will collide with the earth in Jesus and He will bring new creation into existence. Until then, the church reveals the wisdom of God to the spiritual authorities, and this revelation is their demise. The church is witness to the unstoppable power of God that has overthrown the spiritual rebels in the heavenly places. God has guaranteed His future promises in Christ through the establishment of the church. We testify to the fact that God's promises will most certainly come to pass. God has designed the church to validate His promises, and one of those promises is that He will destroy these spiritual rebels. What God has wisely done with His people, is a sign of guaranteed defeat for the spiritual rulers in the heavenly places.





Ephesians Ch 3, v 14-15

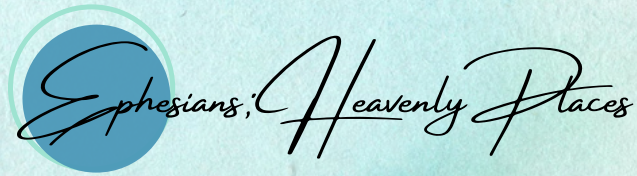
For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in HEAVEN and on earth is named

The people of God, whether in Heaven or on earth, inherit the name of their Father through their faith in Jesus. As God's children, we bear the name of our Father when He adopts us into His divine family. We become beloved children of God who are called to faithfully represent their Father in the earth. Believers in Heaven and on earth are unified in Jesus and are apart of the same spiritual family. The name of God transcends time and space and eventually all those who bear the name of the Lord will exist as one united family in the new creation.

Connecting the Verses

The name of the Lord is not limited to Heaven or earth. As the family of God we can enjoy what God has made available to us in His name, whether we're in Heaven or on earth. The presence of God and His spiritual blessings will be perfectly experienced in Heaven. But, even as we are on earth, we can enjoy His presence, His blessings, and His Son's victory, even though these things aren't experienced perfectly until we enter into the Heavenly realms where God dwells.





Ephesians Ch 4, v 10

He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the HEAVENS, that he might fill all things.

Paul notes that Jesus has ascended far above all the Heavens. Whatever kind of cosmology you work with, Jesus is above the highest of the heavens as the one who pre-exists and sustains all things. Jesus fills all things as a result of His ascension into Heaven at the right hand of the Father. But, if Jesus is God, doesn't this mean He was always above the heavens even before His death and resurrection? This is not Jesus attaining a higher status that He previously lacked. God lacks nothing and cannot ascend any higher than He is. This is Jesus ascending above the heavens as the perfect resurrected human. He is ascending into the heavens as the first of new humanity because He is our representative. He makes way for us to follow Him into the Heavens through our faith in him. As the perfect human in our place, Jesus has achieved the higher status that we lacked. He didn't lack this status as God. We lacked this status as sinful humanity. Through His ascension, we can be filled with His Spirit to be seated where He is.

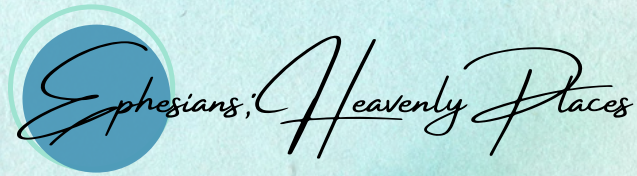




Connecting the Verses

Everything that exists in the invisible heavenly realms is beneath the feet of Jesus. He has ultimate authority, rule and power over all things in both the material and spiritual realm. This includes the spiritual rebels that had power over humanity because of our sin. Through His transcendent victory, Christ gives us access to every spiritual blessing, which includes His presence, His Spirit, and His position in the heavens as the perfect resurrected human.





Ephesians Ch 6, v 9

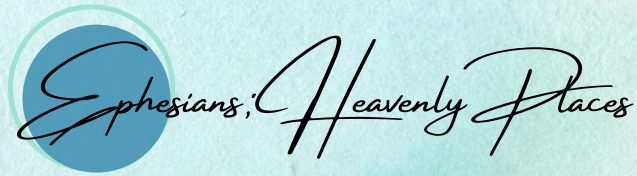
Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in HEAVEN, and that there is no partiality with him.

Paul exhorts masters to treat their bondservants with love because God is the master of them both, and He dwells in Heaven. God, who dwells in Heaven, is the ultimate judge of all people. His presence and authority in Heaven should compel His people to live in submission to His ways on the earth.

Connecting the Verses

God is the ultimate authority and judge. He has called His people to live according to His ways. This God who dwells in Heaven, has revealed His ways through what He has accomplished for us through His own self-sacrificial love. He has blessed us in the heavenly places through Jesus. He has seated us with His Son above all spiritual rule and authorities. And, He promises to unite heaven and earth in His Son and for the enjoyment of His children. This is the love that drives the way that we live on the earth as we seek to imitate our Father in Heaven.





Ephesians Ch 6, v 12

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the HEAVENLY PLACES.

There are forces of evil that exist in the Heavenly places. These spiritual ruler and authorities are invisible because they exist in the spiritual realm. Paul tells us that our daily battle is not with people, but with these spiritual rebels who are working in the heavenly realms. This doesn't mean these evil forces are in heaven.

The heavenly realms simply refer to the invisible spiritual dimension, which can include Heaven, but these evil forces are operating outside of Heaven. Our daily struggle is spiritual in nature. Our daily battle is with evil forces in the spiritual realm, which means we need spiritual strength that comes from God.



Connecting the Verses

If we are engaged in spiritual warfare with spiritual beings, then we need spiritual weapons to fight back. This is why we need to access the spiritual power of God on a daily basis. God has blessed us with spiritual blessings so that we can experience victory over these spiritual forces. God has equipped us in the heavenly places with what we need to win the spiritual battle each day. He has seated us with Christ, so that we live in His authority and power over these evil spiritual forces. Not only do we have the spiritual blessings and authority in Christ, but we can rest in His victory that was accomplished by His death and resurrection. When Jesus ascended into the heavenly realms to sit at the right hand of the Father above all the heavens, He empowered us to conquer these spiritual forces through His ultimate victory over them. We are equipped and positioned for victory in spiritual warfare. We are fighting from a place of victory because these are defeated foes who have been conquered by Jesus.



Ephesians Chapter 1, v. 3-10

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in
the HEAVENLY places,

4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the
world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In
love

5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through
Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has
blessed us in the Beloved.

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the
forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his
grace,

8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to
his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in
him, things in HEAVEN and things on earth.



Connecting Ephesians 1:3-10

When God chooses us in Christ, He is choosing us to be adopted into his spiritual family and bear his name in the earth as His representatives. We are now citizens of the heavenly kingdom that we are expecting to invade the earth. All of these beautiful gifts of God in this passage are blessings that we have in the heavenly places because we are positioned in Christ through faith. We are chosen, we are holy, we are blameless, we are adopted, we are forgiven, we are redeemed, and we are covered in the grace of God. What God has done to us through His Son, is a witness to His glorious grace.

These blessings are only ours because Jesus has ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of the father which makes a way for these blessings to be extended to us through his victory over the rulers in the heavenly places. The focus of God's plan is to unite heaven and earth in Christ which is according to his ultimate purpose. This reality was always a part of his will even though it was a mystery that was hidden for ages. This mystery is Christ in us the hope of glory. This mystery is that both Jews and non-Jews can be a part of the family of God through their faith in Jesus. Jesus creates new humanity in himself so that now we are a combination of that which is heavenly and that which is of the earth. The spirit of God, who is of Heaven, has filled these earthly bodies which are made from the dust. We are the first of new creation in Jesus.

Heaven and earth will be united in Christ according to God's divine plan, but before that happens, God has filled us with his spirit so that we are the first creature to be a combination of heaven and earth. Heaven and earth will not stay separated forever. As new humanity we are a glimpse into the new creation. And God uses us as His people, to demonstrate the certainty of his promises and the greatness of His wisdom to the defeated spiritual rebels in the heavenly places.



Ephesians Chapter 1, v. 15-23

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints,

16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the HEAVENLY places,

21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,

23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.



Connecting Ephesians 1:15-23

Paul's prayer is centered around knowing and understanding Jesus, who is seated in the heavens as our advocate. The spirit of wisdom comes through knowing the One who reigns in the Heavens. And, as we are given this heavenly wisdom through the knowledge of God. The eyes of our hearts are opened up to know and understand all that God has made available to us in the heavenly realms through Jesus Christ. Paul is praying for a wisdom and enlightenment of the heart that comes from heaven through the Spirit of God. And it is Jesus who makes way for our spiritual eyes to be enlightened as He shows us more of who He is.

Paul prays that the church would know the hope and the power that God has invited them into, through the finished work of Jesus. This power is demonstrated through Jesus's life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven where He sits in authority above all spiritual rulers and principalities that exist. This great power is what unites us as the family of God and seats us with Jesus in heavenly places above all of the forces of evil in the spiritual realm.

As we better understand the hope and the power God has called us to walk in, we will live a life that is consistent with our position in Christ. We will live like we are seated in heavenly places with Jesus as we know Him better. Everything is placed under the feet of Jesus and He is given as the supreme ruler and head to the church. He is God's greatest gift to humanity. Through his eternal victory and supreme power, we can demonstrate the wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities in heavenly places as we live like citizens of God's heavenly kingdom. Paul also prays that we would know God's glorious inheritance in his saints.



Connecting Ephesians 1:15-23 (Continued)

Not only does Jesus demonstrate the power of God but He also demonstrates the love of God for humanity when He dies in our place and triumphs over all of our spiritual enemies for us. God enjoys and delights in His people as His own valuable inheritance. This is why He seats us in heavenly places with Christ to demonstrate His love, power and wisdom through the church to every spiritual ruler and authority in the heavenly realms.

Because Jesus has the name that is above every name, he can extend to us that very name so that we can be a part of the family of God and carry the name of the Lord in the earth. When we honorably bear the name of Jesus and submit to His authority and mighty name, we are fighting against the evil spiritual rulers and authorities through our faith in Jesus. Spiritual warfare starts by resting in the One who has done all the work for us and triumphed over all of our enemies.



Ephesians Chapter 2, v. 1-10

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world,
following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at
work in the sons of disobedience—

3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh,
carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by
nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which
he loved us,

5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive
together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the
HEAVENLY places in Christ Jesus,

7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable
riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not
your own doing; it is the gift of God,

9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good
works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in
them.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10

We were once held captive to the spiritual forces of evil through our sin. The only way we could be set free was by someone who transcends this present dark world. And, Jesus has come into the earth from the heavens to accomplish a spiritual work that conquers our spiritual enemies. These spiritual forces of evil lead people to follow the passions of their flesh and do whatever sinful thing they desire and crave. At one point, we embodied the ways of these evil forces in the spiritual realm. We were, by nature, even children of the devil. We were manipulated by the invisible darkness and were powerless to do anything about it.

And even though we were children of wrath deserving of separation from God, God does the good that we don't deserve. God doesn't operate according to the ways of this world but He has heavenly ways that transcend this world. So God raises us up with Jesus makes us spiritually alive and seats us with Him in the heavenly places through our faith in Jesus. This was all accomplished through the victorious work of Jesus on our behalf. This great salvation that God extends to us through his Son is not a reward for our works, but rather it is a free gift of God's grace that we do not deserve. This is a heavenly work that was accomplished by Jesus so that we could be set free from the rulers of this present world and come into the family of God to be seated with Jesus in heaven. That process of salvation includes recreating us into something that is not of this world, but rather, is heavenly in nature. Jesus makes us a new creation, and raises our spirit to life so that we are fitted and equipped to do the spiritual works that He has prepared for us to walk in.



Connecting Ephesians 2:1-10 *(Continued)*

Those good works require spiritual life that originates in heaven with God Himself. This is why we need to become spiritually alive so that our nature is compatible with the spiritual works God has called us to as we live like we are seated in Heaven with Christ. These good works include being a demonstration of God's divine wisdom to the rulers in the spiritual realm. These good works look like living as the family of God who bear His name and wage warfare daily with the spiritual forces of evil that have been conquered by our God. Because our God is in heaven above all things, He extends to us an unstoppable and irreversible victory that we get to walk in, as we accomplish the works He has equipped us for. And, these works are spiritual in nature which is why they require us to be seated with Christ to have his power and grace to effectively do them.



Ephesians Chapter 3, v. 7-13

7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,

10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the HEAVENLY places.

11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,

12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.



Connecting Ephesians 3:7-13

For Paul, one of his spiritual blessings is that God graciously invited Paul to become a minister of the gospel. This is one of Paul's many blessings in the heavenly places in Christ. Part of this gift is that God empowers Paul to be an effective minister of the gospel. The ability and the opportunity for Paul to be an effective minister is founded on the very power of God which was demonstrated when Jesus was seated at the right hand of all spiritual rule and authority in the heavenly places. The grace Paul is given to be an effective minister of the gospel is based on Jesus who sits in the heavenly places; not on Paul's worthiness or efforts.

Part of sharing the gospel is telling others about the unsearchable riches and blessings we have in Christ, since we're seated with Him in heavenly places. Our inheritance and spiritual blessings are part of the gospel message. When we share the gospel, we are telling people about a heavenly work of God in the earth. We are sharing a heavenly message that transcends this world. Declaring a heavenly message to people on earth will also include mentioning the future unification of heaven and earth in Christ which is a part of God's divine plan. This mystery of the gospel has been hidden in the mind of God, who is above the heavens. Just as God is above all things, so His wisdom is above this world.

And, in His infinite heavenly wisdom, God has graciously decided to make this mystery accessible to people on earth. The heavenly mystery of the gospel that was hidden in God's mind, has now been revealed through his people, who are the first of the unification of Heaven and Earth. God reveals a divine, heavenly message through earth creatures that He has filled with His spirit. There is an element of God's wisdom that was hidden from the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places and that wisdom has now been revealed through the establishment of the church. God chooses to reveal the hidden dimension of his heavenly wisdom to the evil rulers in heavenly places through the way he treats His people and works through them.



Connecting Ephesians 3:7-13

(Continued)

Earth creatures get to reveal God's hidden, heavenly wisdom to the evil forces in the spiritual realm. And, this mystery that gets revealed is the gospel. This is one of

our many blessings in the heavenly places: we get to reveal the wisdom of God to the spiritual forces in the heavenly places and to people on the earth. Not only is Paul blessed to be a minister of the gospel but so is the church. Part of God's mystery is that He chooses to bless a group of people to reveal His heavenly wisdom and divine mystery in a way that pushes back the darkness in the heavenly places. God's purpose was always to unite heaven and earth in Christ, but God starts with creating new humanity through Christ. These believers are a unique combination of heaven and earth, and are commissioned by God to reveal that hidden dimension of His divine wisdom to the world and spiritual forces in the heavenly places.

Another one of our spiritual blessings is that we get to confidently approach the throne of God as his beloved children through our faith in Jesus. Part of God's hidden mystery was that both Jew and Gentile can approach the living God through Jesus. Because we inherit the name of our father and are seated with Christ in heavenly places, we can boldly approach God in prayer and confidently live above the suffering of this life. Being seated with Jesus in heavenly places changes how we live.



Ephesians Chapter 3, v. 14-19

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,
15 from whom every family in HEAVEN and on earth is named
16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be
strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,
17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you,
being rooted and grounded in love,
18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the
breadth and length and height and depth,
19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that
you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Paul says he prays to
the father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is
named.



Connecting Ephesians 3:14-19

Paul prays that God would strengthen his people with spiritual power to understand the incomprehensible love of God. As the One who is above all the heavens and all spiritual authorities, God is able to do this. This spiritual strength is accessible to us because we are seated with Christ in heavenly places. God's power is not just at work when He raises His Son up from the dead and seats Him in heavenly place above all spiritual rulers. That same unstoppable power is at work when God is opening our eyes to His great love.

What God the father has accomplished through the heavenly work of His Son, is a grand demonstration of His great love for us. His love is also revealed in the way God treats us in Christ. This love is heavenly in nature, and it transcends this world. Therefore, if we want to understand this love, we need the spiritual strength of heaven that comes from God. When God gives us this strength through His Spirit, and we know His love better, we are filled with the fullness of God while we do life on the earth. Paul prays that God's people would be filled with the fullness of God by knowing His heavenly love, which is foreign to this world.



Connecting Ephesians 3:14-19 (Continued)

One of our blessings in the heavenly places is access to this love of God. Not only are we recipients of God's love, but we can understand this love deeper here on the earth as those who are seated in Christ. We are called to know this heavenly love and to be extensions of God's love to the rest of the world. As those who are seated in heavenly places with every spiritual blessing in Christ, the only appropriate and reasonable way to live in response to this great love, is to grow in our knowledge of this love so we can embody this love to the world. When Jesus died, resurrected and ascended into the heavens, it wasn't just a demonstration of God's supernatural power, but of His heavenly love as well. And the same God that conquered all spiritual forces of evil will also strengthen us to know and walk in His love as His children. How God treats us through Christ is a grand demonstration of his love and we should seek to know that love more every day. We are beloved children of God who bear his name in the earth and are seated with His Son in the heavenly places.



Ephesians Chapter 4, v. 7-12

7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

8 Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."

9 (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?

10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the HEAVENS, that he might fill all things.)

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,

12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,



Connecting Ephesians 4:7-12

One of our many spiritual blessings in the heavenly places is the grace of God. One of the ways God has graced us is by allowing us to share in the rewards of Jesus. When Jesus triumphed victoriously over the rulers in the heavenly places, He shared the spoils of His victory with us, even though we did none of the work.

Because we are seated in Christ in the heavenly places, we participate in His spiritual victory. And, His spiritual victory makes way for our gifts. What Christ gives to the church here in Ephesians 4 are these unique positions and roles that are designed to equip and build the church. One of the ways God has blessed us in the heavens is by gifting us with people who are empowered to equip the saints for ministry. No one on their own could become an apostle or prophet or evangelist or shepherd or teacher. These positions are actualized by the power of God. God assigns these positions and gives these gifts to his people by His grace. When Jesus victoriously ascended into the heavens, He made a way for these positions to become a reality for specific individuals in the church. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him in the heavens is the same power that drives apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers to equip the church for the work of ministry.



Connecting Ephesians 4:7-12

(Continued)

The church can only grow and develop through the gifts of God because Christ has made a way for us to operate in His power now that we are seated in heavenly places and filled with His spirit. When Jesus ascends into the heavens, He accomplishes so much more than we think. But, there is no ascension into the Heavens without Jesus descending into the earth and into the grave. Jesus' descension into our world shows us the humility we should have as children of God. Whatever role you have in the church, God will empower you by His spirit to embody the same humility Christ displayed when He descended from the heavens to come into our world. We truly have every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places so we can be effective witnesses in the earth. If we want to live like we have every spiritual blessing and are seated in heavenly places with Christ, this means we will live humbly for the benefit of others by laying our lives down like Jesus did.

Christian bondservants and masters belong to the same God who is above all the heavens. They have equal standing before Him since they're both seated in heavenly places with Christ. Paul tells bond servants to be faithful to the earthly masters and to do everything faithfully from the heart as service to God who is in heaven. Paul brings God into this as the one who is the master of all, and Paul emphasizes that God is in heaven. If God is the ultimate authority and supreme power over all things then we should care more about his opinion than any earthly one. God's heavenly perspective of our life carries more weight than any earthly perspective of our life.



Connecting Ephesians 4:7-12

(Continued)

Paul also wants to highlight our spiritual standing in the heavenly places. Any earthly position such as bondservant or master is temporary in nature but our position in Christ is eternal. Paul wants believers to give more weight to their spiritual position in Christ and live like they're seated in heavenly places whatever their earthly position may be. Earthly labels, titles, and positions eventually end, but our identity as children of God will never cease, so we should not only identify with what the God of Heaven says about us, but we should live a life that's appropriate with this heavenly position.

The temporary form of this world will eventually be wiped away when Heaven and earth are united in Christ and new creation comes. Masters and bondservants should live in anticipation of that coming reality rather than focus more on any earthly positions or worldly titles. Paul emphasizes that God is in heaven and there's no partiality with Him to note how seriously we should take our service to the God who is above all the heavens,. We are children of God who are called to faithfully represent His name in the earth. And, two of the ways we honor God is in our work ethic and the way that we treat people. As citizens of a Heavenly Kingdom, we are to bring Heaven to the earth through the way that we live. We should respond to God's love and heavenly blessings with a life of faithfulness and gratitude. Believers should be living like they're accountable to the God of Heaven and thankful for everything He has done for them.



Ephesians Chapter 6, v. 10-20

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the HEAVENLY places.

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;

17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,

20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.



Connecting Ephesians 6:10-20

We are called to be strong in the power of God and the work of Christ. The death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus is something we are to stand on. The heavenly work of Jesus provides us the strength for spiritual warfare and it comes through His Spirit. When Jesus was seated in heavenly places above all spiritual rulers and authorities, He made a way for us to walk in that same power of God.

We are blessed in the heavenly places through the victory of Jesus over our enemies and we can engage in spiritual warfare as if the war is finished and the enemy is defeated. The spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places have been conquered by Jesus and because we are positioned with Him, we participate in that victory over these forces of evil.

But, we are called to daily put on the armor that God has made available to us through His Son in the heavenly places.



Connecting Ephesians 6:10-20 *(Continued)*

We live in the victory of Christ. We can stand above the evil forces of this world knowing that our God, who is above the heavens, has conquered them and invites us into His victory. Spiritual warfare requires us to put our armor on and be prepared. And we are blessed in Christ, in the heavenly places with every thing we need to experience victory in spiritual warfare. Jesus is the ultimate victor and He has given us the necessary armor for daily warfare with the spiritual forces of evil. We are called to be alert and prepared and we are most prepared when we are most aware of the finished work of Jesus. The spiritual blessings in the heavenly places aren't just something to be enjoyed but utilized to experience daily victory.

Because our warfare is with rulers and authorities in the heavenly places God gives us a spiritual weapon and spiritual armor. These individual aspects of the armor represent characteristics of Jesus who is the model of supreme power and triumph. If we want to enjoy Jesus's victory over the evil forces in heavenly places, we must walk as he walked and trust in His ultimate victory and authority. We are positioned in Christ to advance God's Heavenly Kingdom across the earth, and as we do, spiritual rulers and authorities in the heavenly places lose territory.



