

**FOR YOU
ARE
SAVED
BY GRACE
THROUGH
FAITH,
AND
THIS IS
NOT
FROM
YOURSELVES.**

KEY VERSE

For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift--not from works, so that no one can boast. 2:8-9

Ephesians

ON THE TIMELINE:

Paul, the clearly identified author of Ephesians (Eph 1:1), wrote the letter while in prison (Eph 3:1; 4:1; 6:20). There is disagreement concerning whether he was imprisoned in Caesarea (Ac 24:22) or Rome (Ac 28:30) at the time, but tradition suggests Paul wrote the letter from Rome around AD 60–61. This would have been while Paul was under house arrest awaiting his appeal before Caesar (Ac 28:23–31). Paul most likely wrote Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon during the same imprisonment.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND:

Relatively little is known about the recipients of Ephesians. In fact, some important and early manuscripts do not contain the words “at Ephesus” (1:1). The letter was carried to its destination by Tychicus, who is identified in Ephesians 6:21 and Colossians 4:7 as Paul’s messenger. Since Paul notes in both letters that Tychicus would inform the churches of Paul’s situation, we can assume the letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians were delivered at the same time.

MESSAGE & PURPOSE:

The overall theme of Ephesians is the unity of the Church in Christ, through the power of the Spirit. The doctrine of the new creation corrects the misguided view that God accepts the Jew and rejects the Gentile. Paul teaches that this distinction was abolished at Christ’s sacrificial death, and no hindrance remains to reuniting all humanity as the people of God, with Christ as the head (1:22–23). The new body, the church, has been endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit to enable the members to live out their new lives (1:3–2:10) and put into practice Christ’s standards (4:1–6:9).

GIVE THANKS FOR THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS:

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians is an anthem to the sovereign grace of God displayed toward sinners in Christ. It contains some of the worst news (“you were dead in your trespasses and sins,” Eph 2:1) and best news (“but God . . . made us alive with Christ,” Eph 2:4–5) in all of Scripture. In view of this grace, Paul calls believers to “live worthy of the calling” (Eph 4:1) we have received.

Read & Understand Ephesians

OUTLINE

ch. 1

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INTRODUCTION

Greetings **1:1-2**

God's purposes in Christ **1:3-14**

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**PAUL'S PRAYER OF
THANKSGIVING**

ch. 2

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**SALVATION BY GRACE
THROUGH FAITH**

ch. 2

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**UNITY OF GOD'S
NEW PEOPLE**

ch. 3

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**REVELATION OF THE
DIVINE MYSTERY**

ch. 3

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**PAUL'S PRAYER FOR
STRENGTH AND
LOVE**

Read & Understand Ephesians

OUTLINE

ch. 4

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UNITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

Exhortation to unity **4:1-6**

The variety of gifts **4:7-10**

The maturity of the church
4:11-16

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EXHORTATIONS TO HOLY LIVING

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NEW RELATIONSHIPS

Wives and husbands **5:22-33**

Children and parents **6:1-4**

Slaves and masters **6:5-9**

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WARFARE OF THE NEW PEOPLE

ch. 6



CONCLUSION

Read & Understand Ephesians

The Bible is a complete work in which many stories combine to tell one story. As you read the book of Ephesians, consider reading the additional passages to discover how the whole of Scripture works together.

READING PLAN

Week 1

GOING DEEPER

<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 1:1-14	John 1:12-13 Colossians 1:16
<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 1:15-23	2 Corinthians 4:3-6 Philemon 4-7
<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 2:1-10	John 3:16-21 1 John 5:1-5
<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 2:11-22	Psalms 118:22 Galatians 3:23-29; 6:15
<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 3:1-13	Romans 11:1-36 Revelation 7:9-12

Week 2

<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 3:14-21	1 Corinthians 13:1-7, 13 Philippians 4:12-13
<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 4:1-16	Psalms 68 Romans 12:1-8
<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 4:17-5:21	2 Peter 2:1-3 1 John 1:5-10
<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 5:22-6:9	Genesis 2:4-25 Galatians 5:22-23
<input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 6:10-24	Luke 21:25-28 John 4:23-24

GREETING

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will:
 To the faithful saints in Christ Jesus^A at Ephesus.^B
² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

GOD'S RICH BLESSINGS

³ Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him.^C ⁵ He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us in the Beloved One.

⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding.^D ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the right time^E — to bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth in him.

¹¹ In him we have also received an inheritance,^F because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of his will, ¹² so that we who had already put our hope in Christ might bring praise to his glory.

¹³ In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed. ¹⁴ The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL INSIGHT

¹⁵ This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father,^G would give you the Spirit^H of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength.

GOD'S POWER IN CHRIST

²⁰ He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens — ²¹ far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given,^I not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And **he subjected everything under his feet^J** and appointed him^K as head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

^A1:1 Or to the saints, the believers in Christ Jesus ^B1:1 Other mss omit at Ephesus

^C1:4 Or in his sight. In love ^D1:8 Or on us. With all wisdom and understanding

^E1:10 Or the fulfillment of times ^F1:11 Or In him we are also an inheritance, ^G1:17 Or the

Father of glory ^H1:17 Or a spirit ^I1:21 Lit every name named ^J1:22 Ps 8:6

^K1:22 Lit gave him

From Death to Life

Scripture talks about salvation as a transformation—a rebirth or coming to life. Ephesians 2 illustrates the nature of this transformation in a series of comparisons between what we once were before coming to faith and what we become after.

Old Life

EPHESIANS 2:1-3

New Life

EPHESIANS 2:4-6

We were dead.

Now we are alive.

We were enslaved.

Now we are enthroned.

We were objects of wrath.

Now we are objects of grace.

We walked among the disobedient.

Now we fellowship with Christ.

We were under Satan's dominion.

Now we are unified with Christ.

FROM DEATH TO LIFE

2 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins ² in which you previously lived according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient.^{a 3} We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also.⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us,^{b 5} made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace!⁶ He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus,⁷ so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift — ⁹ not from works, so that no one can boast.¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

UNITY IN CHRIST

¹¹ So then, remember that at one time you were Gentiles in the flesh — called “the uncircumcised” by those called “the circumcised,” which is done in the flesh by human hands.¹² At that time you were without Christ, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus, you who were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.¹⁴ For he is our peace, who made both groups one and tore down the dividing wall of hostility. In his flesh,¹⁵ he made of no effect the law consisting of commands and expressed in regulations, so that he might create in himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace.¹⁶ He did this so that he might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross by which he put the hostility to death.^{c 17} He came and proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one spirit to the Father.¹⁹ So then you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God's household,²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.²¹ In him the whole building, being put together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.²² In him you are also being built together for God's dwelling in the Spirit.

PAUL'S MINISTRY TO THE GENTILES

3 For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles — ² you have heard, haven't you, about the administration of God's grace that he gave to me for you? ³ The mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have briefly written above.⁴ By reading this you are able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ.⁵ This was not made known to people^d in other generations as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit:⁶ The Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and partners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

^a2:2 Lit sons of disobedience ^b2:4 Lit love with which he loved us ^c2:16 Or death in himself ^d3:5 Lit to the sons of men

Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts are one way God equips the Church for the life and work He calls us to. These gifts range from essentials for the Christian life, to miraculous abilities, to roles and skills necessary for the ongoing ministry of the Church. While the gifts shown here vary in type, they all share one distinctive quality: they come from the Holy Spirit.

ESSENTIAL GIFTS

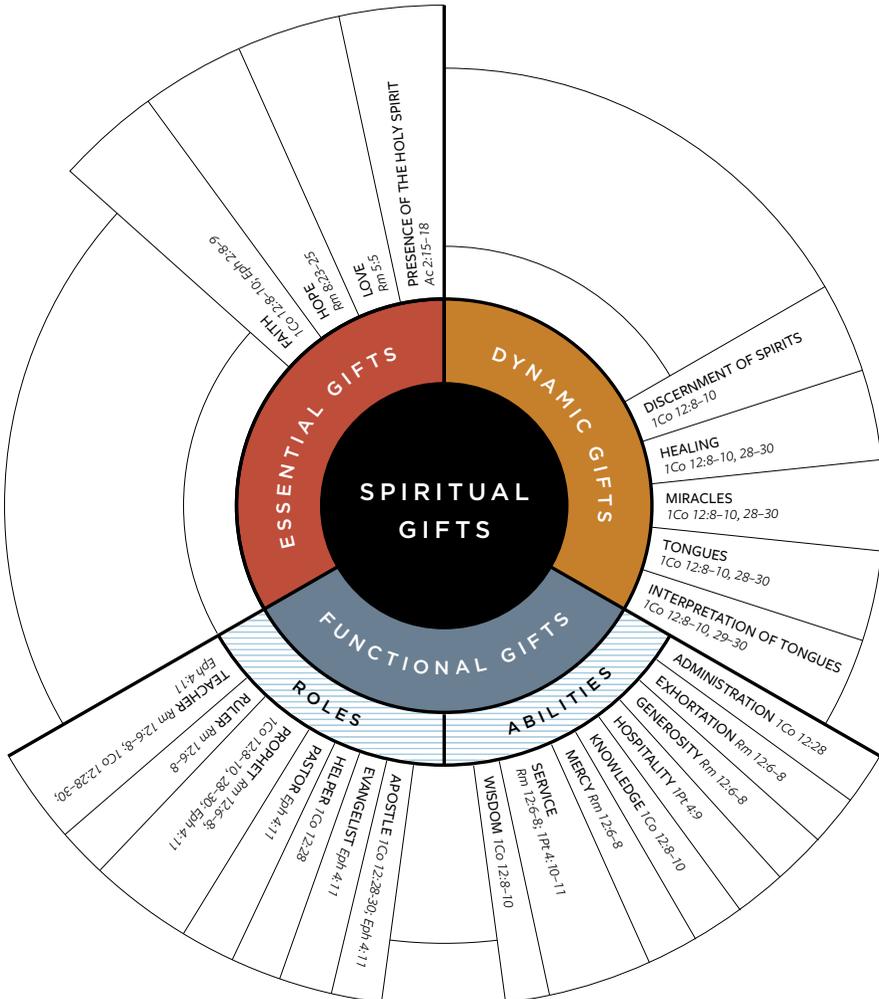
Qualities given to all believers everywhere which are necessary for living the Christian life

DYNAMIC GIFTS

Special abilities given by the Holy Spirit for the specific purpose of delivering or validating a message from God

FUNCTIONAL GIFTS

Roles and abilities needed for the ongoing structure and ministry of the Church on earth



Many scholars believe the gifts centering around speaking for God ceased to be necessary—and therefore ceased to exist—once the Bible was complete.

⁷I was made a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the working of his power.

⁸This grace was given to me — the least of all the saints — to proclaim to the Gentiles the incalculable riches of Christ, ⁹and to shed light for all about the administration of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things. ¹⁰This is so that God's multi-faceted wisdom may now be made known through the church to the rulers and authorities in the heavens. ¹¹This is according to his eternal purpose accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹²In him we have boldness and confident access through faith in him. ¹³So then I ask you not to be discouraged over my afflictions on your behalf, for they are your glory.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL POWER

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father^B ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. ¹⁶I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, ¹⁷and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, ¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love, ¹⁹and to know Christ's love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us — ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

4 Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to live worthy of the calling you have received, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit — just as you were called to one hope^C at your calling — ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

⁷Now grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸For it says:

**When he ascended on high,
he took the captives captive;
he gave gifts to people.^D**

⁹But what does "he ascended" mean except that he^E also descended to the lower parts of the earth?^F ¹⁰The one who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens, to fill all things. ¹¹And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹²equipping the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ's fullness. ¹⁴Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around

^A3:12 Or *through his faithfulness* ^B3:14 Other mss add *of our Lord Jesus Christ*

^C4:4 Lit *called in one hope* ^D4:8 Ps 68:18 ^E4:9 Other mss add *first* ^F4:9 Or *the lower parts, namely, the earth*

by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit.¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head — Christ.¹⁶ From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part.

LIVING THE NEW LIFE

¹⁷ Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord: You should no longer live as the Gentiles live, in the futility of their thoughts.¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them and because^A of the hardness of their hearts.¹⁹ They became callous and gave themselves over to promiscuity for the practice of every kind of impurity with a desire for more and more.^B

²⁰ But that is not how you came to know Christ,²¹ assuming you heard about him and were taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus,²² to take off^C your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires,²³ to be renewed^D in the spirit of your minds,²⁴ and to put on^E the new self, the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

²⁵ Therefore, putting away lying, **speak the truth, each one to his neighbor,**^F because we are members of one another.²⁶ **Be angry and do not sin.**^G Don't let the sun go down on your anger,²⁷ and don't give the devil an opportunity.²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal. Instead, he is to do honest work with his own hands, so that he has something to share with anyone in need.

²⁹ No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need,^H so that it gives grace to those who hear.

³⁰ And don't grieve God's Holy Spirit. You were sealed by him^I for the day of redemption.³¹ Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice.³² And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you^J in Christ.

5 Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children,² and walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God.³ But sexual immorality and any impurity or greed should not even be heard of^K among you, as is proper for saints.⁴ Obscene and foolish talking or crude joking are not suitable, but rather giving thanks.⁵ For know and recognize this: Every sexually immoral or impure or greedy person, who is an idolater, does not have an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

LIGHT VERSUS DARKNESS

⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty arguments, for God's wrath is coming on the disobedient^L because of these things.⁷ Therefore, do not become their partners.⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light —⁹ for the fruit of the light^M consists of all

^A4:18 Or in them because ^B4:19 Lit with greediness ^C4:21-22 Or Jesus. This means: take off (as a command) ^D4:22-23 Or desires; renew (as a command)

^E4:23-24 Or minds; and put on (as a command) ^F4:25 Zch 8:16 ^G4:26 Ps 4:4

^H4:29 Lit for the building up of the need ^I4:30 Or Spirit, by whom you were sealed

^J4:32 Other mss read us ^K5:3 Or be named ^L5:6 Lit sons of disobedience

^M5:9 Other mss read fruit of the Spirit

goodness, righteousness, and truth —¹⁰ testing what is pleasing to the Lord.
¹¹ Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead expose
 them.¹² For it is shameful even to mention what is done by them in secret.
¹³ Everything exposed by the light is made visible,¹⁴ for what makes every-
 thing visible is light. Therefore it is said:

Get up, sleeper, and rise up from the dead,
 and Christ will shine on you.

CONSISTENCY IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

¹⁵ Pay careful attention, then, to how you live — not as unwise people but as
 wise —¹⁶ making the most of the time,^A because the days are evil.¹⁷ So don't
 be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.¹⁸ And don't get drunk with
 wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by the Spirit:¹⁹ speaking
 to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making
 music with your heart to the Lord,²⁰ giving thanks always for everything
 to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,²¹ submitting to one
 another in the fear of Christ.

WIVES AND HUSBANDS

²² Wives, submit^B to your husbands as to the Lord,²³ because the husband is
 the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of
 the body.²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives are to submit
 to their husbands in everything.²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ
 loved the church and gave himself for her²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing^C her
 with the washing of water by the word.²⁷ He did this to present the church to
 himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy
 and blameless.²⁸ In the same way, husbands are to love their wives as their
 own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.²⁹ For no one ever hates his
 own flesh but provides and cares for it, just as Christ does for the church,
³⁰ since we are members of his body.^D ³¹ **For this reason a man will leave
 his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will be-
 come one flesh.**^E ³² This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ
 and the church.³³ To sum up, each one of you is to love his wife as himself,
 and the wife is to respect her husband.

CHILDREN AND PARENTS

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because this is right.² **Hon-
 or your father and mother,** which is the first commandment with a
 promise,³ **so that it may go well with you and that you may have a long
 life in the land.**^{F,G} ⁴ Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring
 them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

SLAVES AND MASTERS

⁵ Slaves, obey your human^H masters with fear and trembling, in the sincerity
 of your heart, as you would Christ.⁶ Don't work only while being watched,
 as people-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, do God's will from your heart.

^A 5:16 Lit *buying back the time* ^B 5:22 Other mss omit *submit* ^C 5:26 Or *having
 cleansed* ^D 5:30 Other mss add *and of his flesh and of his bones* ^E 5:31 Gn 2:24
^F 6:3 Or *life on the earth* ^G 6:2-3 Ex 20:12 ^H 6:5 Lit *according to the flesh*

⁷ Serve with a good attitude, as to the Lord and not to people, ⁸ knowing that whatever good each one does, slave or free, he will receive this back from the Lord. ⁹ And masters, treat your slaves the same way, without threatening them, because you know that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

CHRISTIAN WARFARE

¹⁰ Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. ¹³ For this reason take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand. ¹⁴ Stand, therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist, righteousness like armor on your chest, ¹⁵ and your feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In every situation take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit — which is the word of God. ¹⁸ Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. ²⁰ For this I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I might be bold enough to speak about it as I should.

PAUL'S FAREWELL

²¹ Tychicus, our dearly loved brother and faithful servant^A in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me so that you may be informed. ²² I am sending him to you for this very reason, to let you know how we are and to encourage your hearts.

²³ Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace be with all who have undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.^{B,C}

^A 6:21 Or *deacon* ^B 6:24 Other mss add *Amen.* ^C 6:24 Lit *all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption*