

Position and Practice of Believers – Ephesians

The book of Ephesians is divided into two major sections: the first half (chapters 1–3) explains the believer's position in Christ—what God has done for us, who we are in Christ, and the spiritual blessings we have received. The second half (chapters 4–6) shifts focus to the believer's practice—how we are to live in response to our calling, walking in holiness, love, wisdom, and spiritual readiness.

GRACEABOUNDING	
Grace (Greek: <i>charis</i>) refers to the beneficial actions of God in which He reveals Himself, His gifts, and His life—all bestowals which grow out of His love rather than any sinful person's worth or merit.	
Benefit:	Christ's spiritual blessings in heaven (v. 3); the forgiveness of sins (v. 7)
Origin:	Divine choice from eternity past (v. 4); the good pleasure of God's will (v. 5)
Purpose:	Love manifested in holiness and blamelessness (v. 4); to be joined with Christ (v. 10)
Privilege:	Adoption into God's family as beneficiaries of Christ (v. 5)
Cost:	The blood of Christ (v. 7)
Means:	Having heard the truth, trusting in Christ (vv. 12, 13)
Assurance:	The Holy Spirit as the down payment of our inheritance (vv. 13, 14)

Chapter 1: Chosen and Blessed

1. Blessed with every spiritual blessing

- Ephesians 1:3*
- God has given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms through Christ. These blessings are not material, but spiritual, eternal, and foundational to our identity.

2. Chosen before the foundation of the world

- Ephesians 1:4*
- God chose us in Christ to be holy and blameless. This reveals His intentionality and grace long before we existed.

3. Predestined for adoption as sons and daughters

- Ephesians 1:5*
- In love, God predetermined that we would become part of His family through Jesus Christ.

4. Accepted in the Beloved

- Ephesians 1:6*

- b. We are accepted and cherished in Christ, the Beloved, and we live under the favor of God because of Him.

5. Redeemed through His blood

- a. *Ephesians 1:7*
- b. Jesus' sacrifice has purchased our freedom from sin and death.

6. Forgiven of trespasses

- a. *Ephesians 1:7*
- b. We are completely forgiven, not partially, according to the riches of God's grace.

7. Lavished with grace and insight

- a. *Ephesians 1:8-9*
- b. God didn't just forgive us; He also made His will known to us, giving us wisdom and understanding.

8. Heirs of God's promises

- a. *Ephesians 1:11*
- b. We have obtained an inheritance in Christ, aligned with His purpose and plan.

9. Marked with the Holy Spirit

- a. *Ephesians 1:13*
- b. Believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit, a permanent mark of God's ownership and protection.

10. Guaranteed inheritance through the Spirit

- a. *Ephesians 1:14*
- b. The Holy Spirit is our down payment of the full inheritance we will receive.

11. Given spiritual enlightenment

- a. *Ephesians 1:17-18*
- b. Paul prays that our eyes would be opened to understand the hope, riches, and power available to us.

12. Recipients of incomparably great power

- a. *Ephesians 1:19-20*
- b. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is working in us.

13. Seated with Christ in authority

- a. *Ephesians 1:21-23*
- b. Christ is far above all rule and authority, and as His body, the Church shares in this spiritual position.

Chapter 2: Made Alive and United

1. Made alive with Christ

- a. *Ephesians 2:1-5*
- b. We were dead in sin but made alive through God's mercy and love. Salvation is entirely God's doing.

2. Raised and seated with Christ

- a. *Ephesians 2:6*
- b. Spiritually, we share Christ's resurrected and exalted position. This points to victory and authority.

3. Display of God's grace and kindness

- a. *Ephesians 2:7*
- b. Our lives are a testimony of God's abundant kindness and grace for all eternity.

4. Saved by grace through faith

- a. *Ephesians 2:8-9*
- b. Our salvation is a gift, not earned. God gets all the glory.

5. God's workmanship, created for good works

- a. *Ephesians 2:10*
- b. We are handcrafted by God for purpose and mission.

6. Brought near by the blood of Christ

- a. *Ephesians 2:13*
- b. Once distant from God, now we are close through Christ's sacrifice.

7. Christ is our peace and unity

- a. *Ephesians 2:14-15*
- b. He broke down the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile and created one new humanity.

8. Reconciled in one body to God

- a. *Ephesians 2:16*
- b. All believers are reconciled to God through the cross, ending hostility.

9. Access to the Father by the Spirit

- a. *Ephesians 2:18*
- b. Every believer, regardless of background, has direct access to God.

10. Fellow citizens and members of God's household

- a. *Ephesians 2:19*
- b. We belong in God's family, not as visitors, but as full members.

11. Built on Christ as the cornerstone

- a. *Ephesians 2:20-22*

- b. Together, we form a dwelling place for God's Spirit.

Chapter 3: Strengthened and Filled

1. Sharers in the mystery of Christ

- a. *Ephesians 3:6*
- b. Gentiles are co-heirs, part of one body, and share in the promises through the gospel.

2. Bold and confident access to God

- a. *Ephesians 3:12*
- b. We can approach God freely, without fear, because of Christ.

3. Strengthened with power in the inner being

- a. *Ephesians 3:16*
- b. The Holy Spirit empowers us from within to walk in strength.

4. Christ dwelling in our hearts through faith

- a. *Ephesians 3:17*
- b. We experience Christ's abiding presence through a life of faith.

5. Rooted and grounded in love

- a. *Ephesians 3:17*
- b. God's love becomes our foundation and anchor.

6. Able to comprehend God's love

- a. *Ephesians 3:18-19*
- b. Though God's love surpasses knowledge, we are invited to grasp its height, depth, width, and length.

7. Filled with the fullness of God

- a. *Ephesians 3:19*
- b. God desires to completely fill us with His presence.

8. God does more than we ask or imagine

- a. *Ephesians 3:20*
- b. He is able to do far more than we could ever dream of, revealing His abundant power and generosity.

The Believer's Practice in Christ (Ephesians 4–6)

Ephesians chapters 4–6 shift the focus from understanding our position in Christ (chapters 1–3) to practicing a life that reflects our calling. These chapters present God's **directives** for how believers are to live in unity, holiness, love, and readiness as His redeemed people. As followers of Christ, we are given clear instructions for our personal conduct, relationships, and spiritual preparedness.

Chapter 4 Living in Unity and Holiness: Paul begins by urging believers to live lives worthy of their calling. This includes practicing humility, gentleness, patience, and love to maintain unity within the body of Christ. Spiritual gifts are given to build up the Church, leading to maturity and stability in faith. Paul contrasts the old self, characterized by sin, with the new self, which is created to be like God in righteousness and holiness. Believers are instructed to put away falsehood, anger, and unwholesome talk, replacing them with truth, kindness, and forgiveness.

Chapter 5: Walking in Love, Light, and Wisdom: Believers are called to imitate God by walking in love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us. They are to live as children of light, avoiding behaviors like sexual immorality, greed, and coarse language. Instead, they are to walk in goodness, righteousness, and truth, making the most of every opportunity because the days are evil. Paul transitions to address relationships, using marriage as an example of godly love and submission. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the Church, and wives are to respect their husbands as part of their mutual reverence for Christ.

Chapter 6: Strengthening Relationships and Spiritual Readiness: Paul provides practical instructions for family and workplace relationships, emphasizing respect, obedience, and integrity. Children are to obey and honor their parents, while parents are to raise their children in the Lord. Employees and employers are reminded to serve and lead as if they were serving Christ directly. The chapter concludes with a charge to stand firm against spiritual opposition. Believers are equipped with the armor of God, which includes truth, righteousness, faith, salvation, the gospel of peace, the Word of God, and prayer. This armor enables them to withstand the devil's schemes and remain steadfast in their faith.

Chapter 4: Living in Unity and Holiness

1. **Walk worthy of your calling** – *Ephesians 4:1*
Believers are urged to live lives that reflect the weight and value of their calling in Christ.
2. **Be humble, gentle, patient, and loving** – *Ephesians 4:2*
These traits are essential to unity and reflect the character of Christ.
3. **Make every effort to maintain unity** – *Ephesians 4:3*
Unity is something we preserve, not create; it is a work of the Spirit that we must honor.
4. **One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God** – *Ephesians 4:4–6*
Paul emphasizes the oneness of the Christian faith as a basis for unity.
5. **Use spiritual gifts to build the body** – *Ephesians 4:7–16*
Every believer is uniquely gifted to serve the church and bring it to maturity.
6. **Speak the truth in love** – *Ephesians 4:15*
Truth and love are not opposites; they must go together to promote growth and unity.
7. **Do not live like the Gentiles (world)** – *Ephesians 4:17–19*
A call to leave behind the futility, impurity, and darkness of a life apart from God.
8. **Put off the old self** – *Ephesians 4:22*
Our former way of life must be intentionally removed.
9. **Be renewed in the spirit of your mind** – *Ephesians 4:23*
Transformation starts with the way we think.
10. **Put on the new self** – *Ephesians 4:24*
Our new identity in Christ is righteous and holy.
11. **Speak truthfully to others** – *Ephesians 4:25*
Honesty strengthens the body.
12. **In your anger, do not sin** – *Ephesians 4:26*
Anger must be managed righteously and resolved quickly.
13. **Do not give the devil a foothold** – *Ephesians 4:27*
Unresolved sin opens the door to spiritual attack.
14. **Do honest work and share with those in need** – *Ephesians 4:28*
A transformed life is marked by integrity and generosity.
15. **Avoid corrupt speech; speak to build up** – *Ephesians 4:29*
Our words should give grace to those who hear.
16. **Do not grieve the Holy Spirit** – *Ephesians 4:30*
The Spirit is personal and present; our actions affect Him.

17. Get rid of bitterness, rage, slander – Ephesians 4:31

These destroy relationships and do not reflect Christ.

18. Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving – Ephesians 4:32

Forgive as God forgave you, from the heart.

Chapter 5: Walking in Love, Light, and Wisdom

1. Imitate God; walk in love – Ephesians 5:1–2

We reflect God's nature by loving others sacrificially, as Christ did.

2. Avoid sexual immorality, impurity, greed – Ephesians 5:3–5

These behaviors are not fitting for God's holy people.

3. No obscenity, foolish talk, or coarse jokes – Ephesians 5:4

Let your words be marked by gratitude, not corruption.

4. Give thanks to God – Ephesians 5:4, 5:20

Gratitude is the language of a heart aligned with God.

5. Do not partner with darkness – Ephesians 5:6–7, 11

Don't align with those who live in rebellion; expose darkness by living in the light.

6. Live as children of light – Ephesians 5:8–10

Display goodness, righteousness, and truth in daily life.

7. Expose the deeds of darkness – Ephesians 5:11–14

Let your light reveal what is sinful and bring hope.

8. Be careful, not careless in how you live – Ephesians 5:15

Intentional living brings wisdom.

9. Make the most of every opportunity – Ephesians 5:16

Time is limited; use it well because the days are evil.

10. Do not be foolish; understand God's will – Ephesians 5:17

Seek to know and do what pleases God.

11. Do not get drunk; be filled with the Spirit – Ephesians 5:18

The Spirit should influence and control us more than anything else.

12. Sing spiritual songs; make music in your heart to God – Ephesians 5:19

Worship is both communal and personal.

13. Always give thanks – Ephesians 5:20

A thankful heart is evidence of a Spirit-filled life.

14. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ – Ephesians 5:21

Mutual submission reflects humility and respect.

15. Wives: Submit to your husbands – Ephesians 5:22–24

As the Church submits to Christ, so wives honor their husbands.

16. Husbands: Love your wives as Christ loved the Church – *Ephesians 5:25–33*

Husbands are called to sacrificial, nurturing love.

Chapter 6: Relationships and Spiritual Readiness

1. Children: Obey and honor your parents – *Ephesians 6:1–2*

This is right in God's sight and comes with a promise.

2. Fathers: Do not provoke; raise children in the Lord – *Ephesians 6:4*

Discipline with love and train in God's ways.

3. Workers: Serve with sincerity as to Christ – *Ephesians 6:5–8*

Your true Master is in heaven. Serve Him through your labor.

4. Employers: Treat workers with respect; do not threaten – *Ephesians 6:9*

God shows no favoritism. Lead with justice and fairness.

5. Be strong in the Lord and His power – *Ephesians 6:10*

Our strength for spiritual battle comes from God, not ourselves.

6. Put on the full armor of God – *Ephesians 6:11–17*

Put on the full armor of God to stand against the devil's schemes (6:11-17)

7. Equip yourself with truth, righteousness, faith, salvation, the Word, and prayer to resist spiritual opposition.

a. Stand firm with the belt of truth buckled around your waist (6:14)

i. Truth is foundational for standing firm in spiritual battles.

b. Put on the breastplate of righteousness (6:14)

i. Righteousness guards the believer's heart and life.

c. Have your feet fitted with the readiness from the gospel of peace (6:15)

i. Be prepared to share the gospel and walk in peace.

d. Take up the shield of faith (6:16)

i. Use faith to extinguish the attacks of the enemy.

e. Put on the helmet of salvation (6:17)

i. Protect your mind with the assurance of salvation.

f. Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (6:17)

i. Rely on Scripture to defend and overcome spiritual challenges.

8. Pray in the Spirit on all occasions – *Ephesians 6:18*

Consistent, Spirit-led prayer is vital for victory.

9. Be alert and keep praying for all believers – *Ephesians 6:18*

Stay vigilant in intercession for fellow believers.

10. Pray for boldness in proclaiming the gospel – *Ephesians 6:19–20*

Ask for courage to share the mystery of the Gospel without fear.

SALVATION: MAN'S GREATEST POSSESSION		
Justification (Past Tense)	Sanctification (Present Tense)	Glorification (Future Tense)
Saved <i>immediately</i> from sin's penalty	Saved <i>progressively</i> from sin's power	Saved <i>ultimately</i> from sin's presence
"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8)		

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The Work of Salvation

The work of salvation is essentially threefold: (1) justification, in which God declares the sinner righteous before Him, thus freeing the sinner forever from the legal penalty of sin; (2) sanctification, in which the sinner is progressively freed from the power of sin by the power of the Holy Spirit; and (3) glorification, which looks forward to the time when the believer will be completely freed from sin and conformed to the image of Christ.

Connection Between the Three:

1. **Justification** deals with the **penalty of sin** (we are declared righteous).
2. **Sanctification** deals with the **power of sin** (we are gradually being made holy).
3. **Glorification** deals with the **presence of sin** (we are fully perfected, free from sin).

Each stage is an essential part of the Christian journey. Justification happens at the beginning of our faith, sanctification is ongoing, and glorification is the ultimate future hope for every believer.

Aspect	Justification	Sanctification	Glorification
Definition	Declared righteous by God through faith	The process of being made holy and Christlike	The final transformation into a glorified state
When it Happens	At the moment of salvation	Throughout the Christian life	At Christ's return, in the future

Nature	Instantaneous, legal act	Progressive, ongoing process	Instantaneous, final state
Key Scripture	Romans 5:1, Ephesians 2:8-9	1 Thessalonians 4:3, 2 Corinthians 3:18	Philippians 3:20-21, Romans 8:30
Focus	Removal of guilt and penalty of sin	Growth in holiness, overcoming sin	Complete removal of sin, perfected in body and spirit
Result	Peace with God	Becoming more like Christ	Eternal life in a glorified state with Christ

In Christian theology, **justification**, **sanctification**, and **glorification** are distinct yet interconnected aspects of the believer's salvation. These terms represent the different stages of the Christian life, from the moment of salvation through to the final state of eternal glory with God. Here's a breakdown of each:

1. Justification:

- **Definition:** Justification is the act of God declaring a sinner righteous on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ. It is a one-time event that happens at the moment of salvation.
- **Key Aspect: Legal declaration** of righteousness.
- **Nature:** Instantaneous, based solely on faith in Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection, not on personal merit or works.
- **Scriptural Basis:**
- **Romans 5:1 (NLT)** – "Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us."
- **Ephesians 2:8-9 (NLT)** – "God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."
- **What Happens?:** Through Christ's sacrifice, the believer is **declared righteous** in God's eyes, and their sins are forgiven. They are no longer under condemnation.

2. Sanctification:

- **Definition:** Sanctification is the ongoing process of being made holy and conformed to the image of Christ. It involves the believer's growth in holiness and spiritual maturity through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- **Key Aspect: Progressive transformation** into Christlikeness.
- **Nature:** It is both a **position** (set apart for God) and a **process** (ongoing growth in holiness). Sanctification continues throughout a Christian's life.
- **Scriptural Basis:**
 - **1 Thessalonians 4:3 (NLT)** – "God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin."
 - **2 Corinthians 3:18 (NLT)** – "So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image."
 - **Philippians 2:12-13 (NLT)** – "Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him."
- **What Happens?:** The believer, having been justified, is now being **purified** and **transformed** by the Holy Spirit. This process involves growing in grace, resisting sin, and becoming more like Christ in character and actions.

3. Glorification:

- **Definition:** Glorification is the final step in the process of salvation, when believers are given their resurrection bodies and are fully conformed to the image of Christ in eternity. It occurs when Christ returns, and believers are raised to eternal life.
- **Key Aspect: Final transformation** into the perfected state.
- **Nature:** A future event that will happen when Christ returns. The believer will be made perfect in body and spirit, free from sin and death.
- **Scriptural Basis:**

- **Philippians 3:20-21 (NLT)** – "But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control."
- **Romans 8:30 (NLT)** – "And having chosen them, He called them to come to Him. And having called them, He gave them right standing with Himself. And having given them right standing, He gave them His glory."
- **What Happens?:** Believers are fully **conformed to the image of Christ**, free from the presence of sin and suffering. They receive glorified bodies and will live eternally with God in perfect righteousness and joy.