

Ephesians introduction...
Oct.9th 2016...Chapter 1:1-2

One of my favorite television shows as a child and even to this today is The Beverly Hillbillies.

The Beverly Hillbillies was based on a name Jed a poor mountaineer from Bugtussle that barely kept his family fed.

Then one day when he was out shooting at some food up from ground came a bubbling crude.

Oil that is black gold Texas tea.

Well the first thing you know of Jed's a millionaire the kinfolk told Jed he needed to move away from there...

They said Californy is the place you ought to be so they loaded up the truck and they moved to Beverly.

Hills that is swimming pools and movie stars.

In a day's time Jed went from being poor to being rich...

And then he went from a shack in Bugtussle to a mansion in Beverly Hills.

But there was a problem...

The problem was Jed didn't understand he was rich and he didn't understand how to use his riches.

He was a rich man but still thought like and acted like a poor man.

The book of Ephesians is a book that is addressed to a group of believers who are rich beyond measure yet they are living like beggars.

The reason they are living that way is because they are ignorant of their wealth like ole Jed.

This means the Book of Ephesians is a book about riches.

- It is written to Christians who do not understand the riches they have in Christ.
- It is also a book about fullness and having your life filled with good things.
- It is a book about inheritance through our relationship with Jesus Christ.

- It is book that teaches who we are, how rich we are and how we are to use those riches for God's glory.

The book of Ephesians has been called the Christian's heavenly bank account and also called the treasure house of the Bible.

In chapter 1:7 it tells us about the *riches of God's grace*.

Chapter 3:8 tells us about the *unsearchable riches of Christ*.

Chapter 3:16 tells us about the *riches of God's glory*.

In the Book of Ephesians there are some words that are used many times to express the riches.

The word grace which means God unmerited undeserved favor is used **12** times...

Grace is what is behind all of the riches that come from God.

The word **glory** is used **8** times...

The word **inheritance** is used **4** times...

The word **riches** is used **5** times...

The words **fullness and filled** are used **7** times...

And then two words are used 27 times and they are the words that tie all the above together and they are **In Christ**.

The words In Christ, in Him or in the Lord are used by Paul in the Bible 164 times.

In Ephesians fullness and riches are based on these things...

1:5 His **will**...

1:6&7 His **glory**...

1:9 His **good pleasure**

1:11 His **purpose**

1:12&14 His **power**...

1:18 His **calling**

2:4 His **love**...

2:10 His **workmanship**.

So it is easy to see **we are what we are...**
and **we have what we have** and rich all because of Jesus Christ.

In chapters 1-3 Paul tells us what our riches are...

And then in the last three chapters he tells us how to use them.

It is important to know who wrote these words and how he was qualified to do so.

Verse 1 says...*Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.*

Here Paul starts out by giving us his credentials and qualifications.

He **didn't say he was just** an Apostle of Jesus Christ **he adds the words** by the will of God.

He is what he is by the grace of God.

He didn't deserve to be an Apostle it was by the will of God he became an Apostle.

He was qualified by grace and the will of God.

Some history of Paul is necessary to understand this.

When he was born he was not given the name Paul.

His name was Saul and was probably named after the first king of Israel.

Saul became a great rabbi and he was very well trained in the school of Gamaliel.

Gamaliel was an expert in religious law and was respected by all people.

So to be **trained in the school** of Gamaliel was **like going to Harvard** or Yale.

Saul was **part of the societies** he knew the **philosophers on first name basis...**

He knew the O.T. Scriptures and he was a leader, teacher and member of the Sanhedrin.

Saul was the **most devout anti-Christian leader** in the Jewish community.

He hated Christians and he went after them with all that he had.

One day he was on his way to arrest some Christians in Damascus and suddenly the Lord showed up.

At that time **the persecutor met the persecuted...**

The **Rabbi met Jehovah...**

The **Anti-Christian met the Christ** of the Christians.

Through that meeting Saul was converted.

The preacher killer at that point became a killer preacher.

Then the Lord changed his name by taking the S off of Saul and putting on a P and his name became Paul.

He was a new man and he needed a new name.

God called him to take the gospel to the Gentile world and he went on what is considered to be the greatest missionary journey in the history of the church.

That is why he introduces himself as an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.

It was God's will to change and use him.

Backing up we need to understand what the words Apostle of Jesus Christ means.

An Apostle is not just a man with a message.

An Apostle is the mouthpiece of the Lord Jesus Christ.

An Apostle is one who spoke divine revelation.

This means he was:

- Called by the will of God...
- Sent by the will of God...
- He spoke through the will of God...
- He did all he did through the will of God...

And that was all he needed.

He told Timothy how he was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and the chief of sinners and he was not worthy of what God had done with him and made him an Apostle.

He also said for him to live was Christ and to die was gain.

In other words Christ was all he lived for.

Christ gave him delegated power and he recites this in every letter he writes in the very beginning he says he is an Apostle.

In 1st Cor.9:1 he said *Am I not an Apostle?*

Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord he said that because that was the basic qualification to be an Apostle was to have personally seen the risen Christ.

Paul is saying because of God's grace he is what he is.

Verse 1 goes on to say...*To the saints who are in Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus.*

Here he calls Christians by two terms...

The saints and the faithful.

The word saint really needs to be understood.

To many people **saints are dead people who have achieved spiritual eminence and are given the title saint.**

The dictionary describes saint *as person officially recognized for holiness of life.*

The process by which a person becomes a saint is technically known as canonization.

This means the dead person's life is examined carefully to see whether they qualify for sainthood.

If the person's character and conduct are found to be above reproach and they have been responsible for working at least two miracles then they are qualified to be made a saint.

But that's the way the world makes a saint.

But that's not the way the Lord does it.

In the Book of Ephesians Paul will address his readers as saints 9 times.

This means the people he is talking to is not dead but alive.

And they **never performed any** miracles.

But they **did experience a miracle** and that was by trusting in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The word saint means one who has been set apart it is related to the word sanctify which means set apart.

When a person trusts Jesus Christ as their Savior they are taken out of the world and placed in Christ.

They remain in the world physically but not of the world spiritually.

The way a person becomes a saint is found in the two words faithful and grace.

Grace and faith go together because the only way to experience grace and salvation is through faith.

So this means a saint is anybody who is a Christian.

The reason we are saints is because we're the faithful.

This means:

- We acted in faith toward Jesus Christ.
- We believed in what Jesus said and did what he said to do.
- We had faith in His word and His calling and we have been made holy as a result.

And then Paul says in Christ Jesus for the first time.

In Christ Jesus identifies the spiritual position of the believer.

We are in Christ and therefore able to draw upon the wealth of Christ for our daily living.

Verse 2...Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace is the N.T. word charis it means kindness of God toward undeserving people.

The words grace to you has a powerful meaning.

When we meet we say hello, or how are you, or what's up dawg.

When early believers saw each other or met they said grace to you.

It was not just a greeting it was a reminder that they were what they were by grace.

Grace to you.

But Paul adds more to it and says and peace.

What he means by that is because we have grace from God we also have peace with God.

There would no peace without grace.

And then he tells us where grace and peace come from and that is from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now if you go back and look you will see riches accumulating.

Already in the first two verses everything is double.

An Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.

To the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus.

Grace to you and peace...

From our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a believer we are rich in peace, power and fulfillment.