

# Life by the Spirit

A Study in Paul's letter to the Church in Ephesus

## Why did Paul write?

Paul saw the believers struggling like

- *14 “... infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.” (Eph. 4:14)*
- They were not standing strong in the Lord.

Troubled by  
their life  
experiences

- Magic and evil spirit powers

- <sup>9</sup> *"Now for some time a man named Simon had practised sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, <sup>10</sup> and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, '**This man is rightly called the Great Power of God.**' <sup>11</sup> They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. <sup>12</sup> But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women. "*

(Acts 8:9-13)

Christ – seated  
far above all  
rule & authority

- *[God] “raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed **all things under his feet** and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.”*
- *<sup>11</sup> “Put on the full armour of God, so that you **can take your stand** against the devil’s schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Eph. 6:11-12)*

## Understanding the evil powers

- **They promote the darkness of this world**
- They promote the Devil's schemes;
- They are located in the "heavenly realms;"
- They work behind the scenes, promoting ungodly teachings, hostility, anger and all kinds of destructive life-styles.
- **We were caught up in it all**
- *"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. <sup>3</sup> All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts." (Eph. 2:1-3)*
- **But...God, in his great love for us ... made us alive in Christ**

Troubled by  
their life  
experiences

- **Division, racial tensions & hostility**
- <sup>11</sup> *“Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)—  
<sup>12</sup> remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.” (Eph. 2:11-12)*
- Their life experience was **“We are excluded.”**

Hostility is  
ended in the  
cross

## **The dividing wall is destroyed:**

- *Christ ... “has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two (Jew and Gentile), thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.” (Eph. 2:14-16)*

He created one  
new humanity

***We are a 'new creation' in Christ Jesus.***

- *"His purpose was to make the two groups of people become one new people in him and in this way make peace." (NCV Eph. 2:15)*

[Effectively, a whole new race of people.]

- *17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come or that person has become a new creation; the old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Cor 5:17)*
- *15 "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the new creation." (Gal 6:15).*

No longer  
“excluded”

- **Brought near by the blood of Christ:**

- *<sup>13</sup> “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ... <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Consequently, **you are no longer foreigners and strangers**, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. (Eph. 2:13-20)*

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End of Part 1

**Any Questions?**

You are blessed  
in every way

### **Blessed with every spiritual blessing:**

- *“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us** in the heavenly realms with **every spiritual blessing** in Christ.”*  
(Eph. 1:3)

The blessings God has secured for us, through the death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, are revealed and released into us by the Holy Spirit.

(Eph. 1:8)

Christ exalted  
the 'powers'  
defeated

- He has *raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,*" (Eph. 1:20)

And He has

- *"placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church ..."*...  
*"far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked (referring to names in magic), not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ... (Eph. 1:22 & 21)*

Christ exalted  
the 'powers'  
defeated

**Two Scriptures are helpful:**

- *“The Lord says to my lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”*

*<sup>2</sup> The Lord will extend your mighty sceptre (your rule) from Zion, saying,*

*“Rule in the midst of your enemies!””*

(Ps. 110:1-2)

- *“disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” (Col 2:15)*

## The new humanity

### **The new humanity has purpose**

- *“His purpose was to create in himself **one new humanity** out of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and in one body to reconcile both of them (Jew and Gentile) to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility”. (Eph. 2:15b-16)*
- *As one who has given himself entirely to the purposes of the Lord ... “I urge you also to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.” (Eph. 4:1)*

## An empowered people

- **A Spirit-empowered people**
- *“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, in order that you may know the (present) hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, (in the future) <sup>19</sup> and **his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,**” (Eph. 1:18-20).*

He stood  
against the  
powers

## Empowered by the Holy Spirit

- *“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, <sup>2</sup> where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.”*
- *“Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit.”*
- *“We do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.” (Heb. 4:15)*

# The upside-down victory of Christ

## As Isaiah prophesied:

- *He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. (Isa. 53:3)*
- *He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. (Isa. 53:7)*

Let us be  
overcomers!

- *“Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. 20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.*
- *To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’” (Rev 3:19-22)*