

Ephesians 1:20-23 by Wayne Barber

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EPHESIANS 1:20-23: OUR MAJESTIC CHRIST

by Dr. Wayne Barber

Will you turn with me to the book of Ephesians chapter 1? I want to talk to you about Our Majestic Christ. Now to catch you up, in [1:3-14](#) Paul teaches and tells the Ephesian church about the riches of their salvation. He says He blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ. He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself. He redeemed us through Christ's blood. He forgave us our trespasses according to the riches of His grace. He sealed us with the Holy Spirit of promise until the day of redemption. [v3-14](#) show us what God has done. In effect He authored a great salvation.

Now in [v15-19](#) Paul prays for them and tells them he hopes that they will understand and experience and know for themselves two things. One is the greatness of Gods wonderful plan. There are two things involved in that wonderful plan. One is the hope of His calling, and the other is the glory of the riches of the inheritance of His inheritance of the saints, in other words, of being Gods own peculiar possession. He said, I want you to know this. I want you to understand this. I pray that you might know these things. Now he also prayed that they would know the greatness of God's wonderful power to accomplish the plan.

That's a wonderful thing. Not only did He give us an assignment. Not only did He give us a great future to look forward to, but He gives us His power according to His might and strength that we might accomplish the things that God has assigned. We've seen His power and His might and His strength. All of that has been demonstrated in the raising of Jesus from the dead. The resurrection is the key to believing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. If a man does not believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus he does not believe in the Gospel. All of our hope hinges on whether or not Jesus arose from the dead. There's more proof that Jesus rose from the dead than that Plato existed. Yet men tend to turn away and shun that great event, the resurrection of Jesus. Look at [v18-20](#).

18 *I pray* that the [eyes](#) of your [heart](#) may be [enlightened](#) ([RPPMPA](#)), [so that](#) you [will know](#) ([RAN](#)) [what is](#) ([PAI](#)) the [hope](#) of His [calling](#), [what](#) are the [riches](#) of the [glory](#) of His [inheritance](#) in the [saints](#),

19 and [what](#) is the [surpassing](#) ([PAPNSN](#)) [greatness](#) of His [power toward](#) us who [believe](#) ([PAPMPA](#)). *These are* [in accordance with](#) the [working](#) of the [strength](#) of His [might](#)

20 [which](#) He [brought about](#) ([3SAAI](#)) in [Christ](#), when He [raised](#) ([AAPMSN](#)) Him from the [dead](#) and [seated](#) ([AAPMSN](#)) Him at His [right hand](#) in the [heavenly places](#),

How many times in our Christian walk do we doubt whether or not God can or will do things in and through us? We're facing a dilemma, we're facing a problem, and we wonder, "Does God have the power to help us overcome? Does He have the power to help us bear up under. The assurance that God gives us is in the raising of Jesus from the dead. One of the questions that I'm asked all the time is, "What about death? When I die am I assured that I'll go right in the presence of Jesus? When I die am I assured one day my body, which is buried in the ground, will be resurrected and changed and glorified and clothe my immortal spirit forever? How can I be assured of that?"

Look with me in [1Thess 4](#). The Thessalonian believers were concerned about the righteous people in their midst who had died. They wondered what would happen to them. Is God powerful enough to raise their bodies from the dead one day? Is God powerful enough to take their spirits to be with Him? You know some people teach that there's a soul sleep when a person dies. No sir! There is not. Immediately our spirit goes to be with the Lord Jesus. Paul says in Corinthians, "to be [absent](#) from the [body](#) & to be at [home](#) with the [Lord](#)" ([2Cor 5:8](#)) That's a promise to believers.

Look at

[1Thes4:13](#) "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope"

Now that word [asleep](#) ought to just fire you up. It has nothing to do with the spirit. The word [asleep](#) has to do with the body. It's a picture of what's going to happen one day. When you get tired you lay down. After you've slept for awhile you get back up. That's the picture.

I used to serve with a pastor who used to say at funerals, I'm going to plant a body. I

thought that was rather crude until I studied [1 Corinthians 15](#). That's exactly what he was doing. When you plant something what do you expect it to do? Come up one day. That's what He promised. Because He bodily arose He promises that He's the first fruit of many others. He set the pattern. As He was raised, our bodies one day will be raised. Watch what he says in [v13](#). "...so that you will not [grieve](#) as do the [rest](#) who [have no hope](#)." People grieve who don't understand death.

1Thes4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus."

Now wait a minute. How can He bring with Him those who have fallen asleep? I thought their bodies were in the ground. Well they are. There was a departure. He brings their spirits with Him as He comes to meet us in the clouds. [V15](#) says,

1Thes4:15: "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep."

In other words, when Jesus comes for His church, which we call the rapture of the church, that is the moment that the bodies, the dead bodies, of the righteous dead will rise up and be changed first before we are changed. [V16](#) says,

1Thes4:16 "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first."

Their spirits are coming down. Their bodies are rising up. Then he says,

1Thes4:17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord."

Boy, the power and strength and might of God was all demonstrated in the raising of Jesus from the dead. Then He ascended, and God sat Him on His right hand. So when it comes to assurance, we have the assurance because of the resurrection. He can accomplish whatever's necessary in our lives now and in the age to come. When we die He will care for our body and our spirit just as He promised.

Well, in [Ephesians 1:20-23](#) Paul moves from the might of Christ to the majesty of Christ. He wants them to see the majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the beautiful, beautiful part of chapter 1 that just should thrill all of our hearts. He wants them to see that Christ is ruler of the universe, but He's also Head of His body, the Church. We're going to look at the fact that He's the Ruler of the Universe. We're going to look at His majesty. Maybe you're living in a low place right now, and you're discouraged and defeated, but you're looking at the lions, you're not looking at the Lord. When you get your eyes up you'll realize how majestic He is. That's what causes us to see life from a different point of view. First of all in verse 20 we want to find that our Lord Jesus Christ is seated in the place of highest honor. It says in verse 20,

"..which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places."

Now in their culture when a sovereign wanted to honor someone he would always put him at his right hand. The right hand was always emphasized when a sovereign wanted to honor someone. He put him on his right hand. Paul is not speaking of human sovereigns. He's speaking of God Himself.

Now understand, no created being could ever be associated in the place of highest honor with God. Jesus was the uniquely begotten son. He has always existed. He's the Son of God that came to this earth to be the Son of man and is the God-Man. He has that place reserved for Him. He's seated in the place of highest honor. God never said to an angel, "Sit here at My right hand." God never said to a human being, "Sit here at My right hand."

You see, the disciples argued about who would be at the right hand and who would be at the left. They tried to decide who was the best one to be seated at the right or left hand. What did Jesus say? He said, It's not for Me to tell you. My Father decides who sits there." The Father reserved the place for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The honor was reserved for Jesus alone. The Son of God has always held that place.

The Right Hand of God

Here's the uniqueness of it. Now He's the son of man, the God-Man. We have a representative in heaven seated at the right hand of God, the God-Man. He's seated in the place of highest honor. I grabbed hold of that right hand years ago. He grabbed hold of me.

I started looking in scripture to find out where right hand was used in the New Testament. I found it is used [138 times](#). That would be a little laborious to work through. Seventy percent of the time it refers to the right hand of God. Let me just give you a little sample of what I found. I challenge you to do your own study on the right hand of God.

First of all, we find it's at His right hand that you find His power. Those very words are used. It's called the right hand of power. The *power* means the ability to do what we cannot do. We have a representative in heaven. It's His Spirit that lives within us. Look up. He wants us to come to Him. He wants to show us that honor in our lives as He gives us the power to do what He's assigned us to do.

Secondly, I found the word right hand was associated with all the fullness of joy. He says, "In thy right arm we find the pleasures of life." Now folks, if you're looking for pleasure, if you're looking for joy, don't look down here, look up there. The one who is seated far above all principalities, He's the one who wants to give you joy that you've never had before. It's not an outward joy. It's an inward joy, that kind of joy that no man can take away from you and no circumstance can rob you of. He's the one who, in His right hand, has the fullness of joy.

I found that His right hand was associated with His saving deliverance. Man didn't save himself. It was the right hand of God that reached down to us through His Son Jesus Christ

and rescued us out of a miry pit and put our feet on the rock and gave us a brand new song. This is the right hand of God. Jesus is the one who administrates all from that position.

I found that His right hand is associated with His righteousness. Oh folks, when you do what you want to do and ask God to bless it, that's nothing but filthy rags in God's sight. You say, "How can I be righteous before Him?" It's in Him who is seated at the right hand, at the place of honor. In His right arm, in His right hand, you find righteousness. I found He is our security. You have no security unless you run to Him, because it says His hand is the right hand of our refuge. It's a place we run to when we have no other place to turn. We know we can come to Him. He should have been the first place we turn. If you're resting on heritage, if you're resting on good deeds you have no security. But if you have run to Jesus in His right hand you have security. He is your refuge. He's the one who does in your life what no one else could ever do. He's in the place of highest honor. But not only that, it gets better. He's in the place of highest authority.

He says in verse 21 that now He's

["far above all rule](#) and [authority](#) and [power](#) and [dominion](#), and [every name](#) that is [named \(PPPNSG\)](#), not [only](#) in this [age](#) but also in the one to [come \(PAPMSD\)](#)."

Not only did sovereigns seat on their right hand those they wanted to honor, but they would seat on their right hand those who they wished to share authority and ruler ship. You see, Jesus is unique. We're talking about human sovereignty. When it comes to God, He is God. God the Father has assigned Him all authority in heaven and on earth. It says in [Mt28:18](#) when He came to His disciples after His resurrection He said,

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."

Now just how high of an authority does He have? Oh folks, look at the words.

First of all, it is "[far above](#)". It's not just above. That would be one thing, but He stretches it. In the Greek it is very emphatic. Far, exceedingly above any!

Then he uses the word "every". Sometimes the word every, [pas](#), in a limited context doesn't mean everything. But oh, it does here. Any rule, any authority, anything that claims to have any He far exceeds it. As a matter of fact, if you tried to compare any ruler and authority with Jesus Christ they wouldn't show up on the scale. He's far above. The word "**rule**" is the word **arche**. It's the word that originally meant the beginning of something, but it has the idea of the dominion or domain that somebody ruled over. In other words, Jesus is far above anybody's territory they think they're ruling.

Also there is the word **authority (exousia)**. It means "the right & the might". It's talking about the right to exercise authority in one's domain. Now depending on whether they are great or small, people have authority exercising within their domain. **Power** is the word **dunamis**, which refers to one's ability which is measured by His authority. What he's saying is you've got some big ones, you've got some little ones. You've got some great kings, you've got some small kings. No matter who they are, Jesus is far exceedingly above

their rule and their reign and their power.

The word **dominion** is only used here. It's the word **kuriotes**, and it means **lordship**. It talks about the lordship of somebody as they exercise their power. Jesus is far above every dominion. Then he goes on as if to say, "Hey I want to add something else to it. "Every name that is named" He's far above it. In other words, get the history books. Take a book of all the kings on earth. Take a book of all the kings that will be and put them all together, and He's far above any of them.

But not only do we see He's in the highest place of honor and the highest place of authority. He's in the highest place of lordship. The reason I put that last is because in [v22](#) look what he says. He says,

"And He [put \(3SAAI\)](#) [all things](#) in [subjection under](#) His [feet](#), "

He's King of kings, Lord of lords. When it says He put all things in subjection, the word all things again is emphatic. It means all things, all powers.

The term under His feet in their culture referred to the place of total defeat, to the place of complete subjection. Now this is very, very important. Every rule, every authority, every power, every lordship, every name that is named, and you can exhaust every one of them, He is high above it, and they're all subjected to Him. They're under His feet. They're already defeated folks. They're up under His feet. Our minds usually turn to earthly rulers, but in the Jewish culture the terms there, rule, authority, power, and lordship, are terms they would use for spiritual, angelic rule and dominion and power.

Paul, I believe, is beginning to set the stage for what he's going to bring out in chapter six. He wants you to make sure that down here anything you see on this earth is trivial.. The spiritual powers of angels are far greater. We know that we have an **adversary** who is the devil and his demonic fallen angelic host. We know that they're there. It's very important in Scripture to realize that they're there. But folks what he's saying is you take all of their power, sum it up, and again they don't compute when it comes to His authority and to His power.

That's why he's praying for the Ephesian believers. When I was in Ephesus, modern day Turkey, and walked up that long street and saw the Temple of Artemis, I began to realize that every other shop had some kind of idol that they were selling in those little shops. They were the most idol worshipping people. Satan had a stronghold in Ephesus like you wouldn't believe. What Paul is saying is, "Hey, folks, you think that's powerful? Hey folks, He's seated in the highest place of authority and honor and lordship" They don't even compute when it comes to His power.

You're asking, Okay, if He's in a perfect place of authority and lordship, how come evil still exists in this world? Now that would be an intelligent question to ask at this point. Why does it say in I Corinthians 15 He must reign until all the enemies, and death being the last one, are conquered? I thought it said He's already been given that place? Oh, He has. But folks He hasn't chosen to manifest that to everybody else down here on this earth yet. He

does what He does when He gets ready to do it. A lot of people are saying —Oh no! Christ does not reign. The devil reigns on this earth. Oh no! God reigns over him and don't forget that. However, He's allowing him to do what he's doing because by allowing him to do it He's purifying His church, and He's readying the world for the final judgment. They're going to find out one day that He is in that place of power.

Why do you think the apostle John wept in Revelation 5? What did he go there to see? He went up there to see how the ruling power of God will bring everything to its completion on this earth. He's the one who said in John 1, 'We behold His glory, the glory of the only begotten Son of God. We know who He is.' He gets up to heaven. They are about ready to unveil it for him. They're preparing to open the seven-sealed book. An angel says, 'Is anybody here worthy of opening the book?' It says no one in heaven, no one in the earth, above the earth or under the earth was worthy. Now he meant created beings. They weren't worthy. John began to weep. 'Oh no. That's why I came up here, to see how His lordship would be vindicated on this earth.' An elder standing over there said, 'Look over there. Look over there by the throne.' It says in the center and around the throne was the Lamb. Oh man! The Lion of Judah. How can a Lion be a Lamb? Like a Lamb He conquered sin, but like a Lion He's going to conquer Satan. He was a Lamb standing as if slain. Slain lambs don't stand up. They're dead. Oh yes, He resurrected, and He's standing there at the center of the throne. He comes forth, and all man's praise breaks out in heaven, 'Worthy is the Lamb, the one who can open up that sealed book.' He hasn't shown the world yet who He is. He's shown you, and He's shown me. That's why Paul said in Ephesians 1, we've been allowed in on the mystery that the world can't figure out. They think it's all falling apart. That's why he says, 'He's summing up all things under Christ Jesus' We know that. The world doesn't, but they're going to know. There's going to come a time here when He's going to unveil who He is. They're going to see it like they've never seen it before.

As a matter of fact, if you'll look in 2 Peter it says why He waits so long. It's not the reason you think. Some people say, 'Well if He really cared about us...' There are a lot of people out there who think God's not in control. Why look at the laws. They've all been thrown out. 'Why look! We're winning! We're winning! 'Oh no! God's judgment on a people is letting them have what they want.

Folks, don't ever for one second think He's not in control of what's going on. He knows exactly what's happening. He's in the highest place of authority, and the highest place of lordship.

Look in 2Peter 3:9,10 . Why is He so slow?

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient towards you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance

That's why He's slow. He wants as many as possible to come to know Him. As bad as He's got to let it get, that sometimes drives people to Jesus. Verse 10 says, 'But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned

up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,...' In other words, back away. Quit asking the questions and start living like you ought to live. The world is going to know His place of authority one day. His lordship will be revealed.

I've got one more thing. I want you to turn to Revelation 20:1. Let me show you how He's going to exercise His power over Satan. Folks, you wonder why I never mention Satan much. I'll tell you why. I had rather mention the one who is all powerful over him. I found out something. The devil loves prime time. Give it to him negative or give it to him positive. He still likes it. I'm just not going to fool with him. I know he's out there. I know his demonic world is out there. But folks, I know a power that's far above him, and He's got him on a leash. If we will surrender to Him, we can know that power.

Revelation 20:1-3 says,

"And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time."

You know that at the end of a thousand years He releases him for a short time, and an army raises up against the Lord again. I think it's God's way of showing you, 'I told you. They won't turn to Me, regardless of what I do.' Thus He vindicates the fact of His righteous judgment. Then in verse 10 is his demise. 'And the devil who deceived them was thrown into a lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.'

I want to be standing right by the edge of that thing when he throws him in. I want to hit him right in the mouth as he throws him in there. Don't you feel that way? You can feel that way about him folks. He's doomed, and he knows it. Well, verse 11 says, 'And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which was the book of life; and the dead was judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.'

He's in the highest seat of honor. He's in the highest seat of authority. He's in the highest seat of lordship. Nobody can touch our Lord. He's the God-Man. Isn't that precious? He understands me, and He understands you. In His right arm, in His right hand is the power

to do whatever He assigns in our life. Don't be discouraged. Don't be defeated. Learn that when you obey, you get to experience that rule and reign that He has to offer to you. He will show you what real victory is all about. He won't change your circumstance very often, but He sure will change you in the midst of your circumstance. He is King Jesus. King of kings, and Lord of lords.

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Ephesians 1:19-23: CHRIST, THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

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22 And He [put](#) (3SAAI) [all things](#) in [subjection under](#) His [feet](#), and [gave](#) (3SAAI) Him as [head over all things](#) to the [church](#),

23 which [is](#) (3SPAI) His [body](#), the [fullness](#) of Him who [fills](#) (PPPMSG) [all](#) in [all](#).

We want to look at Christ, the Head of the Church in this study. Let's go back and pick it up in the middle part of verse 19 after he says he wants us to know the surpassing greatness of His power. " These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet."

He saw earlier that our Lord Jesus is seated in the highest place of honor; He is seated in the highest place of authority. He is seated in the highest place of Lordship. Christ is far above all things, and all things are far beneath Him. We touched on the fact that we can experience this Lordship, that He rules and reigns every day. We know that He is Lord. We know that He is in control.

I had a beautiful picture of this. I was in the Atlanta airport watching a man and his young son. You could tell what the father was doing. The father just wanted the little boy to run and get some energy out, because evidently they had a long flight. You could tell he had just turned him loose. That father was right beside that little boy. That little boy would take

off and look back and just laugh, because he thought he was outrunning his daddy. That little boy would run looking backwards, and that loving father was running along with him. When he would see him about to run into somebody, he'd reach down and grab him up. The little boy would just laugh. Then he would set him down again, and that little boy would just take off. The big hands, the quick movement of the father was right there. He was absolutely in control of that little boy. One time he said to that little boy, "Now son, don't go there. Don't run that way." The son looked around and just laughed. He was going to see why. He went that way and tripped and fell on his little face. You know the next part. He hit, scraped his nose all the way up his face. That father was quick to pick him up, put him over on his shoulder and console him. The little boy finally began to whimper, got quiet and rested in the arms of his father. I sat there in the airport, and I thought, "God, thank You for loving me like that. Thank You that Jesus rules and reigns. I am thankful, Father, that Your big hands are so quick to keep me from falling on my face. But I thank You, Father, for those times that you don't use those hands and let me go on and fall on my face." I saw both sides of that. "I thank You, Lord, that you are behind me. You are in front of me. You are over me. You are beneath me. You are within me. Oh, Father, thank You for Your rule and authority in my life."

Oh folks, Paul wants them to see Jesus is in control. He's far above all things, and all things are far beneath Him. You see, the world does not realize He is in control. He has not chosen yet to manifest Himself in that way to the world. Oh, He is, but they don't know it. All the people that do things that come out of a reprobate mind, they think God is not in control. Oh, He's in control. You see, you and I can be in on that control day by day. He rules and reigns in our hearts. To the degree I am willing to submit to Him is to the degree I recognize that, yes, He is in control, and, yes, He does want me to experience His reign in my life. The Bible tells us we have three enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil. Every one of them are conquered when we bow before Him because He is far above any rule or authority. Well, we are going to see how our majestic Lord, the King of kings and Lord of Lords, who has been made head of all things, has been given to the church. The last part of verse 22 says,

"And He put (3SAAI) all things in subjection under His feet, and gave (3SAAI) Him as head over all things to the church,"

I want us to look at how He is the head of the church.

Before I get into it, I would like to give you a definition of the church. This is not a thorough study, but just to give you an idea of what the church is. It is something that belongs to Christ, as we will see later.

First of all, the Greek word for the church that is used there in Verse 22 is the word **ekklesia**. It comes from the word **ek**, and the word **kaleo**, which means to call out. In other words, the called out ones. It refers to those who have been called out for the purpose of being set aside for God's use. It refers to believers. You see, believers make the church. Just because your name may be on the church roll, that doesn't mean you are a part of the church. The church refers to those people who have been called out, cleansed

by the blood of Jesus and have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact, in our context, it tells us a lot about the church.

Verses 3-14 tell us that they have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Jesus Christ. That's who makes up the church. They have been chosen before the foundation of the world. They have been predestined to the adoption of sons through Jesus Christ. They have been redeemed by His blood, forgiven of their sins and sealed with the Holy Spirit. As a matter of fact, in verse 13, it tells us that these are the people that make up the church. They have heard the message of truth, the gospel of their salvation, and they have believed it. They responded in obedience to it. These are the people that make up the church.

You say, "Well, do you mean that we may have people on the local roll that may not be a part of His church?" That's exactly right. The universal church means somebody who has been called out. We are set aside. We are usable for God. That's His church. Those are the people who have been cleansed and sanctified and set apart.

It means you have confessed Him as Lord. Look in Romans 10. Romans 10:9-11 very clearly tells us what a man must do to receive the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's back up to verse 8 and catch the whole thought there.

[Romans 10:8-11](#) "But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.'"

Who makes up the church? People who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, by belief I am not meaning you understand everything. As a matter of fact, if we are to come to Him as little children, how can we understand everything? What little child understands everything? We receive it by faith. We do what He tells us to do. We believe it because God said it, and the Holy Spirit of God reveals to us that we are in need of a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Look in Romans 3:23. We have confessed the fact that we are sinners. We can't save ourselves. For people who are trying to work their way to heaven there is always a rung to the ladder they can never reach.

[Romans 3:23](#) says,

"...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

That word "all" means "all." There is nobody who escapes that.

When a man realizes that he has sinned, he realizes he has come short of the glory of God.

[Romans 6:23](#) tells man that the wages of sin is death. He realizes what the Lord Jesus has done to come down and die on the cross. But He arose from the dead. That man believes in what He has done, trusting not what he can do, but what God did for him. That's part of believing and receiving the Lord Jesus.

Look back in Romans 10:13. You called on Him to save you. I mean, if you don't ask Him, it's not something that is just going to happen. You see the need. The need is brought clear to your heart. It says in verse 13, "...for 'Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.'" God said that. When you see yourself as a sinner, when you see that the wages of sin is eternal death, when you realize that Jesus came to die for you, and you confess Him as Lord with your lips and believe in your heart, then something is going to take place in your life. Salvation is going to take place. When it takes place, you are going to be a part of what the Lord calls the church.

Finally, in [John 1:12](#) it says,

"But as [many](#) as [received](#) Him, to them He [gave](#) the [right](#) to [become children](#) of [God](#), even to those who [believe](#) in His [name](#),"

[Revelation 3:20](#) talks about this. Some people say they are Christians, and some people say they are lost people. The principle is solid. It says,

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him."

Do you realize what He is saying there? We have got to hear His voice. That's the key. That's the significant difference in being convinced that you need to be saved and convicted that you need to be saved.

When God, through the power of His Holy Spirit, lets you realize you are a sinner, there is absolutely no hope for you until you see that Jesus came to die for you. He reveals to you that Jesus is the Son of God. He begins to knock on your heart's door, and you feel that need in your life. You say, "God, I'm empty. I'm absolutely empty." Jesus says, "You must believe upon Me." When you hear His voice, there comes with it the power to open the door. You open the door, and He comes in and dines and sups with you and becomes one with you for all eternity.

So what is the Church made of? It's the called out ones. Who are the called out ones? Those who have heard the gospel of truth, the gospel of their salvation and have responded in belief. They didn't understand it all. They just simply, by the conviction of the Spirit of God, have believed it. They fell down and did what God told them to do. That's the Church.

Once we have the Church made up of people who love Jesus, people that are cleansed by His blood, people that have been set apart for His purposes and not for the world's purposes, then we need to look at how Jesus is the Head of that group of people. I want to keep saying it over and over again. Your name could be on a church roll, and you not know

the Lord Jesus Christ. Because your name is on a church roll doesn't mean it is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. They are two different books altogether. One's going to burn, and the other one is going to stand. When it stands at the end of time, that's when we will know.

All right, Jesus is the Head of the Church. Who is the Church? Set apart, cleansed people, people that want to let God use them and people that have received Jesus into their life as Lord and Savior.

There are three things we need to look at concerning Jesus as Head of the Church..

Number one, He sets the course for the Church. Look back at Ephesians 1:22. It says, "and gave Him as head over all things to the church." That little Greek word there for "**head**" is the term that generally means "the leader or ruler of something." In other words, it means the one who is at the top that everyone is subordinate to. Everybody has to obey him. That's what it means by head, the leader, the one at the top. Regardless of where you are found in His body everyone in the Church submits to Him.

Now, in light of the fact that He is the Head to which everyone in the Church submits, there are several things I want you to see. Look in Matthew 16:18. As the Head of the Church, He is the designer and the builder of the Church. "Oh, Brother Wayne, I thought we did that in church growth conferences. I thought that's how you built the church. I thought that we sat in committees and figured out how to build a church." Oh, no, He has the design, and He alone can build it.

In verse 18 look what He says to Simon Peter, "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it." Peter had just confessed that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. He said, "No man told you that, but my Father in heaven." He is not saying, "I am going to build it on you, Peter." Oh, no. He is saying, "I am going to build it on what you confessed. A man's got to confess that I am the Christ, the Son of the living God." He says, "I will build My church." We can't build it. He builds His church. He is the designer, therefore, He is the builder. As the head of the Church, He builds the Church.

Secondly, in [Acts 20:28](#) Acts 20:28, not only is He the builder of the Church, He's the sole owner of the Church. He holds the title deed. He says, "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." He purchased it with His own blood. He owns the title deed. The Church is lock, stock and barrel His. He is the sole owner of the Church.

I have people all the time saying, "Do you own your church property?" Well, yes, we do. Baptists are allowed to do that. We are autonomous, and I like that. There is not a Vatican that tells us what to do. We own our own property, so therefore, we can be pretty free in that situation. However, when it comes to the Church itself, the true Church, not the building, but the people that have believed in Christ, we are owned lock, stock and barrel by the Lord Jesus Christ. He shed His blood and purchased the Church. He owns the title

deed.

In [1Corinthians 12:28](#) He administrates the Church. "Oh, Brother Wayne, I thought the elders administrated the church." Well, no, they are just there to make sure they are hearing what He has got to say. Many people say that elders are the only ones that can hear from the Lord. Oh, folks, we are of the priesthood of believers. The elders are appointed to make sure He is heard. They are making sure that He is doing the administering that He says that He will do. Look at I Corinthians 12:28.

"And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then the gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. All are not apostles."

Then he goes on and speaks of the diversity of the gifts in the Body God has appointed in the church. It was His business; He is the divine administrator.

As a matter of fact, there is a word that popped up in Ephesians that we've seen already. He is the man who manages the household. He is the one who purchased it. It is His own. He has the title deed to it, and He administrates it. It is His church. It is His property. In [Ephesians 5:25 and 29](#), He loves the church and cherishes the Church. It is used in light of families and wives and husbands, but the truth is still there very clearly about Christ loving the church.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her...

29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church,

Boy, that's a precious verse, isn't it? He nourishes it and cherishes it. It is His property. He purchased it. He administrates it. Everything about the Church centers around the Head which is Jesus Christ.

In Revelation 2 and 3 He has a message for the church. Boy, I love what the apostle John saw. He saw the Lord Jesus standing in the midst of all those seven messengers, those seven pastors of the churches there. He held them in his hands. I mean, you talk about who is in control of the church. You talk about His authority being far above every name that will ever be named. Folks, that is the same authority that has been given to the Church. He is the head, the designer, and the builder of it. He is the sole owner of it. He is the one who administrates it. He loves and cherishes it, and He instructs it. It's His church. Folks, that is comforting to me. Boy, you talk about security! Nail that one down. I belong to Him. I am His property. You belong to Him. As a local body, if we are filled with people who are believers, then this is His church, not the Southern Baptist, not the Presbyterians. It is Jesus' Church, and He is the Head! He alone sets the course of the church to which everyone is to obey and who is to follow. He sets the course.

But then, secondly, He is the source inside the church. Ephesians 1:23 says, "...which is His body." The term "**body**" in reference to the church is used eight different times in Ephesians. In 2:16 it says, "and might reconcile them both [Jew and Gentile] in one body." We see how the church is made up of Jews and Gentiles there.

In [Ephesians 3:6](#) it says,

" to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body,..."

We are a part of the body which is called the Church.

[Ephesians 4:4](#) reads,

" There is one body and one Spirit, just as you also were called in one hope of your calling;..."

In [Ephesians 4:11-12](#) it says,

"He gave some... as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ."

The body of Christ, the church, is to be equipped and built up in order that it might function the way it is supposed to function.

In [Ephesians 5:23](#), he uses it again.

"For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body."

Drop down to [Ephesians 5:30](#):

"because we are members of His body."

Now we see in His body there are many nations and people because Gentiles make up most of the world. There are also Jewish people who have come to know the Lord Jesus Christ. All are made one in His body.

Now let me ask you a question. What is a body for? Well, we know that a body brings identity to an entity. When I think of my son, Stephen, I think of a long, tall drink of water with a big grin on his face looking for food. Every time I think of Stephen, I think, "Is there any food in the house?" I can shut my eyes right now and just see him embarrassed right now that I am talking about him. At the same time, I can see that big grin on his face. I can see the shape of his face. I can see his body. I can see Stephen who lives in that body, the body bringing identity to the entity that lives within it. That is what a body is for. It is to bring visibility to the entity that resides within it.

The church is the body of Christ and as the body of Christ, His body, we are not to bring visibility to what we can do. We are to bring visibility to who He is and what He does in and through us. That is who the church is, the body of Christ. That is why He designed us like He did.

If you will look over in Romans 12 just for a second, we can see how He designed us. Boy, it's a different kind of body, isn't it? It's not an organization.

In [Romans 12:1](#) there is a presentation. There's a renovation in verse 2. We are to be completely totally transformed from within. Then he goes on and says, "Don't think of yourself more highly than you ought to think." Verse 4 says, "For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." Now remember, He is the source within the church. Since He wants Himself to be glorified through the church, He has designed it His own way. That's why some preachers may have the gift of teaching, but it is different than some other preacher who has the gift of teaching. It is all a little bit unique. It is all a little bit different. Somebody has a little bit more exhortation than somebody else. The gifts are just varied. Paul gives the list of gifts here as we go on down through the passage.

When we are filled with the Spirit of God and His authority, which is far above all others that you can ever name, and it begins to operate in our lives, then what comes out of us is a gift that He has given. And guess what? We don't get any glory for that. All the glory goes back to the One who reigns and rules in our life. He is the source within the church.

Christ sets the course for the Church. He is the Source inside the Church. Since He is the Source, He wants the recognition from the body bringing visibility to Himself, not to what we can do for Him. Folks, if we needed that, then why did He die to start with? It's what He can do through us.

Third, He brings the Force to all the Church. Now when I say, force, I am not talking about "Star Wars." Look at verse 23 of our text. It says, "...which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all." That's a tough phrase, folks. What does that mean? One view is some people think that the Church completes Christ.

Ruth Paxson wrote a book on Ephesians, and she said this, "Jesus would have been as incomplete without His body, the church, as Adam would have been without Eve." You know what? I believe there is some truth in that because the God man is to some extent incomplete without His body, the church. If that wasn't so, what did He come to die for? He came to die for the whole world. Once we believe in Him, He wants to minister life and truth through all of us.

That's why I believe in John 14 when Jesus said, "You shall do greater works," I don't believe that means qualitatively. How are you going to top raising Lazarus after the four days? If you will study real carefully, He raised His own self from the dead. Who is going to top that? He was in one body and could only be at one place at one time. Now, He fills all in all, and the body is His completeness. Now simultaneously, He can be in Romania and Poland and America. Wherever He is, He is doing the works that He was doing before but now He is doing them in such a greater way. Jesus is not in one body now. He is in many filling all in all.

Now what Ruth Paxton says is certainly true, but there is another side. One side says the church completes Him, but the other side says, for sure He completes the church. That's what I think He is saying here. The present tense is used when it says "who fills all in all." Who is consistently filling all in all, controlling all in all? That is one of the reasons we exist. He is in us and continues to be in us and continues to fill all in all. He is the one who completes us. Do we dare think we might be that which completes Him in the work that He came to do on the cross?

So personally, I think both are correct, but I lean heavier on the last. He completes us. We exist because He is in us. We are His visible expression on this earth. You see, through us His character is expressed. Through us His life is extended. Through us His power is exhibited. He fills all in all. What we are not, He is. He sets the course for the church. He is the source within the church, and He brings force to all the church. He empowers His body which He purchased, which He has the sole title deed to, which He loves and cherishes and which He instructs. We are His. We are not our own.

He is the head far above all authority. He is far above all things. All things are far beneath Him. As the Head, He has been given to the church. We are the body to bring visibility, not to what we can do for Him, but to let Him do what only He can do through us.

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