

EPHESIANS - Review & Ephesians 2:13
The Wonderful Work of Salvation
Message 45
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INTRO: Many years ago I began preaching through Paul's letter to the Ephesians. I began September 6, 1998. So that is ten years ago. I did the last message January 6, 2013. Whenever I did not have special days like Passover, or Christmas, or baptisms or other special days or addressed special concerns, I would go back to Ephesians and work my way further. I have come to a point in time in which I am caught up with things I have felt urgent. I do hope somewhere in the future to deal with a very, very important subject, and that is repentance. I would recommend a book to you for your reading, and that is a book called: Repentance: The First Word of the Gospel. It is written by Richard Owen Roberts who was born in 1931. So he is 87 years old now. So we realize he has seen a lot. As with all books one has to be discerning but he has a lot of good material. Having been a pastor and a student of revival, he has learned a lot about repentance. There are many things we would see as genuine repentance, and he would say it is not repentance. So, some day, if the Lord gives me time, I want to deal with that most important and much neglected subject. Many people think they are Christians, but they are not. They have never truly seen themselves as the sinners they are.

But for now, I am back in Ephesians. In your outlines you have outline on front and back. It will show you where we are in this series. If you wonder why it has taken so long it is because I have done hundreds of messages in between and this is message number 46 in Ephesians. The Scriptures contain so very much that to go through verse by verse is a big task. So I might recommend that you listen to the first 3 or 4 messages that simply introduce this letter and they cover the first 4 verses of chapter 1.

As I outline this book, it has two big sections. Chapters 1-3 deal with the wonderful work of salvation. It is a beautiful section of this book. Chapters 4-6 deal with the worthy walk of the saved. That is the big picture.

But when we go to the details of the first section, we begin to see what all is involved in these larger sections. So let us

look at just this first section, chapters 1-3, because we are not through with it yet. In 1:1-2 we have a brief introduction. Let us read those verses:

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

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

Our first main point begins in verse 3. So in 1:3-14 we have what I have called, The Blessed Source Of This Salvation. In 1:3a we have the one who is to be blessed. Look at it:

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

When it says, "Blessed be", we might read, "May the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed." How do we bless Him? By speaking well of Him.

And why should we speak well of Him to others? Well, we read the rest of verse 3:

who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

Why should we bless Him? Well, look at what He has done for us! He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing? Well, you can go to sermonaudio and listen to those messages and find out some of what that means.

There is another reason why we should bless Him. Look at the second part of verse 3:

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world,

Why should we bless Him? Because He chose us, He elected us in Christ before the foundation of the world. This is a verse much used by Calvinism, and since I did three messages on Calvinism a while ago, you might find it interesting to listen to the message on this verse I did years earlier.

And why did He choose us in eternity past? What did He want of us? Well, He desired what we note in the rest of verse 4:

that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

God chose us in order that we should become holy and without blame before Him in love. Oh, how much is in these verses! May I ask you, are you growing in holiness? That means are you getting victory over more and more sin? Or is sin defeating anyone of us? If it is, we are not achieving what God elected us for.

And how did God plan to make us holy and without blame before Him? Well, look at verses 5-6:

5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

In verses 3-6 we have the basis of election, how we were elected, how we remain the elect and when we were elected. Then we are told how God predestined us; what He predestined us to; by whom He predestined us; to whom He predestined us, and to what ultimate purpose He predestined us. By the way, let me tell you that predestination does not mean predeterminism.

Then in verses 7-10 we have more reasons why we should bless God. He redeemed us in Christ. Look at the verses:

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,

Here we have the place of redemption; in Christ. We have the people of redemption; we, the Christians. The price of redemption is through the blood of Christ. We have what happens in redemption; the forgiveness of sins. These are huge! Then we have the policy of redemption; He did it in all wisdom and prudence! Do we have reason to bless Him? When we understand these things we have great reason to bless Him.

In verse 9 we have yet another reason why we should bless Him. It says:

9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

He has made known to us the mystery of His will, and He did it according to His own good pleasure which He purposed in Himself! Oh how much there is to expound here, and it is in those messages we have done before.

Then in verse 10, God will make us administrators in Christ. It says:

10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

Oh, what great things lie before the Christian! Then in verses 11-12, we become an inheritance in Christ. Look at it:

11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

The words, 'we have obtained an inheritance' can be translated, 'we have become an inheritance'. Both ideas are used in this chapter and I think here it means we have become an inheritance. And again, it says we have been predestined to something, and here it has to do with how the Lord predestined us. He did it according to the counsel of His will.

Then, another reason we should bless Him is because He sealed us by the Holy Spirit of promise. Note verses 13-14:

13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Here we have the sealing of the believer, the inheritance, the guarantee, the redemption, the purchased possession, and that all this is to the praise of His glory. All of those then are things we are to bless God for.

Paul then changes topic to talk about his prayers of thanksgiving for the Ephesian believers. This section will go from 1:15-3:21, but it will include several diversions when his topic takes him to explaining some matters he feels are important to insert.

In verses 15-16 we have some information regarding his thanksgiving. It says:

15 Because of this I also, having heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and the love to all the saints,

16 do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,

Here Paul tells us of his thanksgiving for them. He gives them the time when his thanksgiving began, whom he is thankful for and that this happens when he is making mention of them in his prayers.

Then he gives the twofold purpose of why he prays for them. We find the first purpose in verse 17-18 like this. He prays:

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

19 and what the exceeding greatness of His power to us who are believing,

Here we have four great things that he wishes the Father of glory might give to the Ephesian believers. First, that God would give to them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God. Second, he desired that God would enlighten their spiritual eyes so that they would know the Hope of His calling. Third, He wanted them to know what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints is. Fourth, he wanted them to know the exceeding greatness of His power to those who believe.

Now in the rest of verse 19 and through verse 21 he explains

what how great this power is. He says it is:

according to the working of the power of His might,

20 which He wrought in the Christ, having raised him out of the dead, and did set him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

The Lord wants us to experience in life the kind of power that it required to raise Christ from the dead, to transport Him to heaven, and then set Him at the right hand of God. And when Christ had accomplished His work on earth and He was transported to heaven, we find what God did then in verses 22-3:1a.

22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,

23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Now our Bibles begin a new chapter here, but I think the end of verse 23 is not the end of the sentence. I think it reads right into the next words, and you will have forgotten what I explained here. So let me briefly explain it again. If you look at 2:1, it says, "And you *He made alive...*" Look closely at the words, 'He made alive.' You will see they are italicized. That means they are not in the original. But the question is, how do you make sense of this sentence if you don't add them? And where did the translators get the idea that it is these words that need to be supplied? Well, it is a very rare thing for translators to do, but as far as I can see, they take the idea of these words from versed 4-5 which say:

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

You see the similarity of thinking and it was understood that the words 'made us alive' apply to verse 1 as well. But I do not think there are any words needed to be supplied in verse one. Let me begin in 1:22 and read right through 2:1 translating as

the Greek text literally reads. I will make one slight change. I will change the 'and' of 2:1 to 'even'. It is the Greek word 'kai' and can be translated as 'and', or 'even' or 'also'. I believe it should be translated as 'even' in this text. So let me read it like that:

22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,

23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all,

1 even you who were dead in trespasses and sins,

Now that is an exact reading of the Greek. Nothing needs to be supplied. And when he says, 'even you' he is reminded of the salvation of the Gentiles and he makes his first digression. His subject was his prayers for them. It will now change to the salvation of the Gentiles. Later he will finish his subject of prayer. This digression now takes us all the way through chapter 2. In chapter 3 he once more wants to pick up his train of thought on prayer like this, "For this reason, I Paul, the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ for you Gentiles -" and then once more his train of thought is redirected to speak of something else and hopefully we'll get that far in our series. But then in 3:14 he picks up his subject of praying for them and finishes this time in 3:21.

So we go now to his first digression in 2:1. His first digression has to do with the salvation of the Gentiles. It takes us from 2:1-22. And in 2:1-10 he will describe to them what they were like before they were saved. We'll look at that now briefly.

He has said that the Christ, who fills all in all, fills even them. Amazingly, the Lord fills them. They are Gentiles! And what were they like before the Lord filled them? They were dead in trespasses and sins. So look at this description as I read from 1:22-2:3, translating as I have recommended. It then says:

22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,

23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

1 even you who were dead in trespasses and sins,

2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Notice whom the Lord fills. It is those who were dead in trespasses and sins. They once walked in trespasses and sins. They walked according to the course of the world. They walked according to the prince of the power of the air. They walked according to the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. They conducted themselves in the lusts of the flesh. They fulfilled the desires of the flesh and of the mind. They were by nature the children of wrath. They were just like all the rest of lost mankind. But the Lord filled them!

Now how could the Lord fill with His Holy Spirit such a filthy bunch? Well, He filled them after they were saved! They had to be saved first! They had to be released from the death in which they were held. This happened by repenting from sin and by putting their faith in Christ. And we know how that happens. First, one has to hear the Gospel. Then one has to see oneself a filthy, wicked sinner and then repentance has to happen. There is no salvation from sin until repentance takes place and then one has to place one's trust in Christ.

Well, we find that these Ephesians had been released from the death caused by sin. In verses 4-6 we find how God released them from this death. It says:

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

How did the Lord deliver the Gentiles from so great a death? Because He was rich in mercy, and because of His great love for man, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins He made us

alive together with Christ. Paul is then careful to slip in that this happens by grace. To be forgiven by repenting and to be accepted in Christ by faith is all by grace. And once we are saved, he raises us up together and causes us to sit together with Christ in heavenly places! Oh what a great salvation this is.

Now why did God do all this? Look at verse 7:

7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

What are the ages to come? It is eternity future. How long will it take the Lord to show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus? Into the ages of the ages! You see, God wants to show off the exceeding riches of His grace. It is all those riches that come because of His grace He will show off. And through whom did He express this grace? Through Christ! And why will He be able to do all this? Because He saved us by His grace! He will be able to glory for all eternity in all those who are saved! This is beyond description!

We go now to verses 11 up to where we want to begin our next message in verse 13. Paul says to these Gentiles there is something he wants them to remember. In verses 11-12 Paul tells the Ephesian Gentiles to remember what their predicament was before Christ came. He says this:

11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—

12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

What we as Gentiles must remember is that before Christ came, we, the Gentiles, were without Christ. We were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. We were strangers from the covenants of promise. We had no hope and we were without God in the world. What a hopeless picture.

And so we have just covered the previous 44 messages. Now we go into Ephesians 2:13 where we left off in the last message a long time ago. In this message we are continuing in this first

digression Paul makes from his main subject of sharing his prayers for them with them. I believe that he begins this digression in 2:1 and the subject is that of the salvation of the Gentiles and we could not be on a more practical matter for us as Gentiles than this. Paul will now remind the Gentiles of what changed for them as Gentiles after Christ came. So listen to this great statement:

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

What a contrast is this verse in comparison to what has just gone on before. Before Christ, it was very dismal picture for the Gentiles. After Christ, we, who were once far off from God are brought near to Him by the blood of Christ! There was a great barrier between God and the Gentiles. They could not come near. There were obstacles. The Gentiles were the uncircumcision. They were without Christ. They were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. They were strangers from the covenants of promise. They were without hope and without God in the world. And we want to now see how God overcame those obstacles.

b) After Christ - AD

(1) How God overcame these obstacles (13-18)

We begin with verse 13. It says this:

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

First then, we were brought near to God by the blood of Christ. Notice the words, "But now." You see, in the past, before we were saved, we were separated from God in that we were heathen, Gentiles. We were the un-circumcision. We were without Christ. We were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. We were strangers from the covenants of promise. We were without hope. We were without God in the world, BUT NOW...

But now it is different. You see, it says, "But now in Christ

Jesus..." Now that we are in Christ everything has changed. Before we were in Christ we were far off from God, but now everything has changed since we came to Christ. And those changes we want to now consider.

We want to consider first now the agency by which the Gentiles were brought near to God. It was by the blood of Christ! Once we were far off, but now we have been brought near. You see, we were far off from God. We were without God in the world. And verse 13 says we have now been brought near, so we have been brought near to God. Now think of that for a moment. This is absolutely phenomenal! It is so easy to read and skip over such huge thoughts! We have been brought near to God! If I had had an eloquent tongue, I would paint a picture for you that you would never forget.

Consider for a moment what it requires to get near to the Queen of England. It is almost impossible to get near to her. Unless she comes near to us, we cannot get very near to her. In order to get near to her we have to be brought near to her. But you and I don't have anything to bring us near to her. We cannot get near to her physically, never mind relationally. If she would come to Edmonton, and we knew where she would walk, our chances of getting somewhere near enough to see her would be slim. But that is only near in respect to physical distance. Now think of how slim our chance would be of being brought near to her relationally. But in Christ we are brought near to God Almighty relationally!

Some ordinary folk have been brought near to the queen. But

there was some agency by which they were able to get near. The man known as the 'horse whisperer' was brought near to her. You see, the queen likes horses. Now if you can do something spectacular with horses, you have a chance of getting near to her through the agency of horses. So almost all of us will never come near to her.

But let me transcend that comparison of the Queen to the Creator of the universe, God Almighty Himself. As Gentiles, our internal sinfulness estranged us from Him so completely that we had no chance to get near Him at all, either as to location or as to relationship. And not being able to get near, means to be cast into hell at death because of our sin. BUT NOW, in Christ Jesus, God has made it possible for us to be brought near to Him relationally. The concept this verse brings before us is so huge that our mind just gets a dim, numb idea of what this really means. Through the blood of Christ, we have been brought near to God.

Well, just what does that mean? You see, not only did God find a way to overcome our internal estrangement from Him, our sinfulness. But He found a way to overcome our external estrangement from Him; being Gentiles, uncircumcised, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; strangers from the covenants of promise; having no hope and being without God entirely. How did He do that? By the blood of Christ! Glory hallelujah!

So just how did God bring the Gentiles near? Listen to Revelation 13:8:

8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life

*of the Lamb slain from the foundation
of the world.*

Do you know what this tells us? God had a plan when He created the universe and man. And it was all wrapped up in the Lamb of God who would be slain. Listen to 1 Peter 1:20:

1:20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world..

The word translated 'foreordained' is *proginosko*. It simply means, foreknown. God foreknew what He would do. God knew that if He sent His only Son into the world, a totally sinless Person, sinful man would not be able to put up with Him, and would kill Him. And God decided on that plan. Why? It was the only possible way His wrath against man could be satisfied without doing away with man altogether!

God paid a price so horrific that the railroad story I sometimes have told only gives us a small idea of the price God the Father paid to bring us near. And now, through the blood of Christ we have been brought near to God Almighty! The blood of Christ is a very important subject, and we'll look at it more in the next message.

Let me read a few verses for you on the significance of the blood of Christ:

Acts 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to 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.

Romans 3:25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His

*righteousness, because in His
forbearance God had passed over the
sins that were previously committed,*

*5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we
shall be saved from wrath through Him.*

*1 Corinthians 10:16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it
not the communion of the blood of
Christ? The bread which we break, is
it not the communion of the body of
Christ?*

*11:25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper,
saying, "This cup is the new covenant
in My blood. This do, as often as you
drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

*I have a list of 11 more verses that all speak of the blood.
Time will probably run out so I'll
leave them for now.*

*Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the
forgiveness of sins, according to the
riches of His grace*

*2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have
been brought near by the blood of
Christ.*

*Colossians 1:20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself,
by Him, whether things on earth or
things in heaven, having made peace
through the blood of His cross.*

*1 Peter 1:2 elect according to the foreknowledge of God the
Father, in sanctification of the
Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling
of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to
you and peace be multiplied.*

*1Peter 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb
without blemish and without spot.*

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light,
we have fellowship with one another,
and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son
cleanses us from all sin.

Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the
firstborn from the dead, and the ruler
over the kings of the earth. To Him
who loved us and washed us from our
sins in His own blood,

5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take
the scroll, And to open its seals; For
You were slain, And have redeemed us
to God by Your blood Out of every
tribe and tongue and people and
nation,

7:14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me,
"These are the ones who come out of
the great tribulation, and washed
their robes and made them white in the
blood of the Lamb.

12:11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by
the word of their testimony, and they
did not love their lives to the death.

19:13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name
is called The Word of God.

The preaching of the blood was once a very special and oft heard
message from pulpits all over the
world. Today our attention is drawn
away from the blood of Christ to our
needs, our concerns, or our interests;
and much is made of how special we are
to God that He paid such a price for
us. But we are only special to God
because of the blood, so we must not
forget this important subject. Jesus
Christ shed His blood in order that we
might be brought near to His Father.

There has been debate, whether it is the blood or the life He

gave that is so important. Well, these are synonymous. Leviticus 17:11 says the life of the flesh is in the blood. No blood, no life. No life, no blood. Life flows in the veins. The blood stands as a symbol for the life it carries.

And now I ask, when did Jesus shed His blood? Well, it began in Gethsemane, before ever a whip was laid on Him. There in that garden, He lost His first blood as He sweat as it were drops of blood. But then He was chained and whipped. The whip was so designed as to cut the back into hanging ribbons of flesh. There, at that whipping, He lost more blood. They put a crown of thorns on His head, and there is more blood. They put a purple robe on Him and it stuck to His lacerated back. Later they tore it off, and there is more blood. And then He carried the cross on that same lacerated back, and there is more blood. There is such a loss of blood that He is weak from it. Then they put a crown of thorns on His head, and there is more blood loss. And then they nailed Him to the cross. There in the nail holes, no doubt is much more blood loss. Then imagine His lacerated back against that cruel rough wood.

Then imagine, if you can, pulling on the nailed hands and pushing on the nailed feet to get up high enough to draw a breath. Every push and pull causes fresh blood to flow. There, his lacerated back rubs up and down on the rough cross and there is more blood loss, both from the nails and the raw flesh in the back rubbing against the wood. And this went on for hours. And then, last, when He was dead already, as if all this blood loss was not enough, a

soldier pushed his sword under His ribs to the heart and there more blood came out. This is how God brought us near. In His only Son He paid the price that satisfied His wrath, and when we truly repent and truly believe, He brings us near to Himself by that blood. Those of us who were so far removed from God both internally and externally, are in that moment of faith brought near to God Almighty!

I want you to think about this for a moment. What would it take for us to be brought near to Queen Elizabeth? I don't have anything to recommend me to her. She loves horses. I have heard that the famous horse whisperer got her attention by his abilities with horses and he was invited to Buckingham Palace to demonstrate before the Queen. I am sure there are many other things that might gain her interest enough so one might have opportunity to get into her presence. She entertains special people from all over the world. But you and I? How could we ever gain her attention enough to get an invitation?

Well, we can gain access to almost anyone's presence if we can perform well enough in any certain thing or if we have a very high position. And so we try to perform to get near to God. Ted Turner, who apparently became an atheist, still says he thinks he will get into heaven. And what makes him think that? He thinks he will some day be brought near to God because he gives a lot of money to needy causes. But I ask, what can we ever do to get the attention of God Almighty and gain an entrance with Him?

Oh that the Lord would give me words so that I would be able to

give us a good picture of what this text means when it says that we are brought near to Almighty God by the blood of Christ! We were Gentiles, heathen; but He brought us near to God Almighty. We were the uncircumcision, but He brought us near. We were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, but He brought us near. We were strangers from the covenants of promise, but He brought us near.

Consider that in heaven there is a temple. And God the Father is in the Holy of Holies. You know that in Israel only one man could go into the holy of holies. You see, there was a fence; we will learn more about this in chapter 3, and this fence was as far as a Gentile could go. There was a warning posted on that fence and it said, "Gentiles may only proceed further on pain of death." This was as near to God as they could come. But Jewish women could go past the fence, but not very far past it because they could only go to the court of women. This was as near as they could come. Jewish men could go even farther than the women, but they too had their limit. They too could not come all that near to God. But the Levites could go in a little farther, but they too had their limit, though they were now nearer than the Gentiles, the women and the Jewish men. Then certain Jewish priests could go a little nearer. They could enter the holy place. This was getting very near! But only one man and only once a year, could enter the holy of holies, into the very presence of God Almighty!

Now that was the earthly temple. But in heaven there is the real temple after which the earthly temple was designed. And in this temple is

God Almighty in the Holy of Holies. And we have been brought near to Him in the real thing! We should all become a little Pentecostal at such news. You see, when Jesus died, the curtain between the holy place and the holy of holies was torn from top to bottom. Write down these verses to read for yourselves which I don't have time for now: Hebrews 9:1-10 and then 4:14-16. You and I can now boldly enter the Holy of Holies and come before God the Father for grace to help in time of need. We have been brought near by the blood of Christ!

CONCL: Well, we are back in Ephesians and have caught up with where we left off. For those who wish to go back to some of the earlier messages, they are available on sermonaudio.com/mecl. As I outline the book, part one is chapters 1-3. Here Paul deals with the wonderful work of salvation. In this first section in 1:3-14 he deals with the wonderful source of salvation, and then he shares with the Ephesians his prayers for them.

While he shares his prayers with them, he is reminded of something else, and twice he digresses. The first time he digresses he expounds on the salvation of the Gentiles. That is the part we are in right now. Then, as he wants to pick up on his prayers for them again, he thinks of something else and shares with them the mystery of the salvation of the Gentiles. When he has explained that, he then finishes up on his prayers for the Ephesians. This ends the first main part of the book.

So this morning we have basically caught up with where we left off some years ago. And then we touched on one point, and that is that we have been brought near to God by the blood of Christ!