

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 4-27-14 PM NOTES  
"A CHRIST EXALTING PRAYER"  
EPHESIANS 1:20b-23  
#6 in Series, "The Wealth, Walk, and Warfare of the Christian"

**Ephesians 3:14b-16a (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup>...I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>16</sup>that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory..."

**Ephesians 3:20-21 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, <sup>21</sup>to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

**Philippians 3:10a (NKJV)** "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection..."

I. He Is Seated at the Father's Right Hand (v. 20b)

**Hebrews 1:13 (NKJV)** "But to which of the angels has He ever said: '*Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool*'?"

**Matthew 26:64b (NKJV)** "...I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

**Hebrews 1:3 (NKJV)** "who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

"Paul here explains what it means for Christ to be seated at the right hand of God in heaven. It means that He has become Lord of all things in heaven and on earth. There is no principality, no power, no strength, no dominion and no name that can be compared with Him. All things are subject to Him, and He has been raised up so high above all creatures that He has been appointed the cause, author, giver and transmitter of our righteousness and made our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."  
—German Reformer Erasmus Sarcerius (1501-1559)

**Hebrews 10:11 (NKJV)** "And every priest **stands** ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins."

**Hebrews 10:14 (NKJV)** "For by **one** offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."

II. He Is Far Above Every Created Being (v. 21)

**2 Timothy 2:8-10 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup>Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, <sup>9</sup>for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, *even* to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. <sup>10</sup>Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

**2 Corinthians 3:18a (ESV)** "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another."

*The mountains shake before You  
The demons run and flee  
At the mention of the name King of majesty.  
There is no power in hell  
Or any who can stand  
Before the power and the presence of the great I Am,  
The great I am, the great I Am!*

-Jared Anderson

III. He Is Conqueror of All (v. 22a)

**Psalms 8:6 (NKJV)** “You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all *things* under his feet.”

**1 John 4:4b (NKJV)** “...He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”

**Romans 14:9b (NKJV)** “...Lord of both the dead and the living.”

**Revelation 1:18 (NKJV)** “I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.”

**Hebrews 1:3b (NKJV)** “...upholding all things by the word of His power...”

**Hebrews 2:8-9 (HCSB)** <sup>8</sup> and subjected everything under his feet. For in subjecting everything to him, He left nothing not subject to him. As it is, we do not yet see everything subjected to him. <sup>9</sup> But we do see Jesus—made lower than the angels for a short time so that by God’s grace He might taste death for everyone—crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death.”

**Philippians 2:8-11 (HCSB)** <sup>8</sup> He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death—even to death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> For this reason God also highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow— of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth— <sup>11</sup> and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

“Providence itself is now directed by the Mediator: All history is shaped by His imperial hand. Every moment, every occurrence, both in heaven and in earth is ordained by the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is clothed with all authority and invested with universal dominion, and He is now engaged in exercising the same. But let it not be overlooked that the exaltation and sovereignty of Christ are revealed in Scripture as something more than a historical reality. The very fact that this truth is here, brought in at the close of the Apostle’s prayer, intimates that it is a grand verity [truth] that ought to affect our hearts and lives. Do we conduct ourselves as those in complete subjection to Him? As we view those who oppose us, do we realize the force of His ‘Fear not little flock’? As we contemplate the troubled waters of this world, do we recognize that our mighty Captain is at the helm?”  
—Arthur Pink

IV. He Is Head Over All Things for the Church (vv. 22b-23)

**Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even to the end of the age.*’ Amen.”

**2 Corinthians 5:20 (NKJV)** “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.”

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“A CHRIST EXALTING PRAYER”

EPHESIANS 1:20b-23

#6 in Series, “The Wealth, Walk, and Warfare of the Christian”

Two of the greatest prayers ever offered are found in the book of Ephesians. These two prayers are found in Ephesians 1 and 3. They are easy to find. **Ephesians 1:16-17 (NKJV)** “<sup>16</sup> do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you **in my prayers:** <sup>17</sup> **that...**” The other glorious prayer in Ephesians is found in Ephesians 3. Again, this prayer is easy to find because of the way it begins. **Ephesians 3:14, 16 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> ...I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory...” It doesn’t require a seminary degree to figure out that this is a prayer. There is an interesting characteristic in Paul’s prayers. He begins by making a request for the people he is praying for, and his prayer of petition turns into overflowing praise. For instance, in chapter 3 Paul is praying for the Ephesians to be strengthened and to be rooted and grounded in love and he is so overcome with the person of God that he breaks into praise – a doxology. **Ephesians 3:20-21 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, <sup>21</sup> to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” It is that same pattern that we are looking at in the prayer recorded in Ephesians 1. He is praying for knowledge of God’s person, God’s provision, and God’s power. When he gets to focusing on the power of God, he goes into a doxology, a praise focusing on Jesus Christ and His exalted position in **Ephesians 1:21-23 (NKJV)** “<sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, <sup>23</sup> which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” The Apostle Paul was so saturated with love for God and gratitude for all that God had done in him that he was forever breaking out into praise and adoration as he focused on the person of God. In this prayer in Ephesians 1:17-23, the focus of Paul’s “glory spell” is the exaltation and victory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What set Paul’s “praise button” off? It was when he began to focus on the mighty power of God that overcame every demon of hell and the Devil himself when he raised Jesus from the dead. Let’s contrast this power that Paul focuses on with another display of power. On May 18, 1980 Mount St. Helens in the Cascade Mountain Range of Washington exploded with what is probably the most visible display of power in the natural world this nation has ever seen. At 8:32 AM the explosion ripped 1,300 feet off the top of the mountain with a force of ten million tons of TNT. That is approximately 500 times the power of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan. Sixty people were killed, most by a blast of three hundred degree heat traveling at 200 MPH. Some were killed as far as sixteen miles away. The blast leveled 150 foot Douglas Firs as far as 17 miles away. A total of 3.2 billion board feet of lumber was destroyed. That is enough to build 200,000 three bedroom homes. The power that raised Jesus up from the grave makes the power displayed at Mount St. Helens on May 18, 1980 seem like a small firecracker going off. Here is the exciting thing: that power that raised Christ from the dead and defeated Satan, demons, and death itself is available to us. Paul prays for this power in his own life. **Philippians 3:10 (NKJV)** “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection...”

The focus of the prayer of praise in Ephesians 1:20b-23 is the position to which Christ has been elevated having been raised from the dead. This resurrected Christ described in Ephesians 1:20-23 in the person of His Spirit dwells in every believer to empower them with the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. When that sinks in, you will praise and exalt the Lord Jesus along with Paul the Apostle.

Notice the heights to which Christ was exalted after the power of God raised Him from the dead.

#### I. He Is Seated at the Father’s Right Hand (V20b)

To be seated at the Father’s right hand testifies of Jesus Christ’s honor and glory. When kings expressed their respect and desire to honor someone they would put them at their right hand. The Father’s placing of Christ at His right hand signified the conferring of supreme honor upon Him. The Father’s right hand is the place of eminence and glory. **Hebrews 1:13 (NKJV)** “But to which of the angels has He ever said: ‘*Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool*’”? This is an honor shown only to Christ Himself. At His trial, Jesus said to the High priest in **Matthew 26:64 (NKJV)** “I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” **Hebrews 1:3 (NKJV)** gives us more detail as to the significance of being seated at the Father’s right hand. “Who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all

things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high”. Listen to this great summary statement by the German reformer Erasmus Sarcerius (1501-1559): “Paul here explains what it means for Christ to be seated at the right hand of God in heaven. It means that He has become Lord of all things in heaven and on earth. There is no principality, no power, no strength, no dominion and no name that can be compared with Him. All things are subject to Him, and He has been raised up so high above all creatures that He has been appointed the cause, author, giver and transmitter of our righteousness and made our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.”

Why was He **seated** at the right hand of the Father? His sitting down communicated that His redemptive work was finished. **Hebrews 10:11 (NKJV)** “And every priest **stands** ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.” The Old Testament priest’s job was never done. There were no chairs in the place where the sacrifices were offered. As we saw a few weeks ago, just before Jesus died, He cried out, “It is finished”. The sacrifices were officially over! **Hebrews 10:14 (NKJV)** says “For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” The sacrificial work was done and Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Father. I join with the Apostle Paul in praising this resurrected, honored, seated Savior who has finished redemption’s work.

## II. He Is Far Above Every Created Being (V21)

Notice that He is not just slightly above these created beings. Jesus, uncreated and eternal is FAR ABOVE every created being. The words “principality”, “power”, “might” and “dominion” all refer to angelic beings of great might and power. These descriptions include both obedient and fallen angels (demons). The phrase “every name that is named” likely refers to earthly human rulers, armies, and governments. Notice that there is no time limit on Jesus’ superiority over these created angelic and human beings. It is “not only in this age but also in that which is to come.” As that well known line in “The Hallelujah Chorus” proclaims, “And He shall reign forever and ever”.

When you find yourself discouraged and beaten down, this truth will be used of God to lift you up. It seems that Timothy was at one time intimidated, fearful and discouraged by criticism he was getting. Paul wrote this to encourage him in **2 Timothy 2:8-10 (NKJV)** “<sup>8</sup> Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, <sup>9</sup> for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, *even* to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” Paul was saying, “Timothy, remember the one who called you and gave You His Spirit to indwell you. He is the descendent of David, crucified to provide our redemption, raised and exalted to the right hand of the Father in the heavenlies, far above every created being in this age or even in the age to come. Quit being intimidated; quit being fearful. Look unto this one who is seated at the right hand of the Father and the one to whom all will one day bow. When you and I begin to focus on and praise this one, all of our problems will be seen in perspective. Paul told the Corinthians to focus on Him in **2 Corinthians 3:18a (ESV)** “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.”

I love the words to one of the new songs we sing entitled, “The Great I Am”

*The mountains shake before You*

*The demons run and flee*

*At the mention of the name King of majesty*

*There is no power in hell*

*Or any who can stand*

*Before the power and the presence of the great I Am*

*The great I am, the great I Am*

## III. He Is Conqueror of All (V22a)

Paul quotes the last part of **Psalms 8:6 (NKJV)** “You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all *things* under his feet”. On the cross, men pierced His feet with huge nails, but the risen conquering Christ now has all things under His feet. There are two opinions among Bible believing scholars as to what that phrase is referring to. First, it could be referring to the ancient

custom in battle when the General of the victorious army requires the leader of the defeated army to lie on the ground while the victorious General puts his foot on the conquered leader's neck showing the complete victory. In that meaning of this phrase, Jesus stands with His foot on the neck of every opposing earthly ruler, Satan, and every demon spirit. Our Lord is the conqueror! The conqueror lives in us and that is why **1 John 4:4b (NKJV)** says, "... He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." That could be what verse 22a is referring to, but I lean toward the second interpretation. Having all things under His feet could simply mean that every creature is in subjection to Him. This means that Christ is not only elevated above all creatures, He has rule and dominion over them. Every earthly ruler, angel, demon and Satan himself is under Christ's authority. He is called in **Romans 14:9b (NKJV)** "...Lord of both the dead and the living." The one who was crucified at Calvary's cross is now Ruler over all. In **Revelation 1:18 (NKJV)** Jesus tells us "I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death." Since His ascension into Heaven **Hebrews 1:3b (NKJV)** tells us that He is "...upholding all things by the word of His power..." This victory was settled as an accomplished fact when He was raised from the dead even though the final subjugation of His enemies waits His return to the earth. The outcome is settled. We see the clarity of this glorious truth in **Hebrews 2:8-9 (HCSB)** "<sup>8</sup> and subjected everything under his feet. For in subjecting everything to him, He left nothing not subject to him. As it is, we do not yet see everything subjected to him. <sup>9</sup> But we do see Jesus—made lower than the angels for a short time so that by God's grace He might taste death for everyone—crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death."

When you find yourself getting down, discouraged, fearful, or anxious, begin to praise this conquering Savior who has every enemy under His feet; praise the one who has been raised from the dead and the one of whom we are told in **Philippians 2:8-11 (NKJV)** "<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father." If He is your Lord and Savior, no matter what you are facing now, you are on the winning side!

Hold on, because I believe that there is more. The "all things" of verse 22 includes not just persons, angels, demons, and Satan himself, I believe that it also includes every event and every trial and every circumstance that we face. He is the sovereign Lord over all things. Even our circumstances are under His feet in the sense that everything that happens is either allowed or caused by Him. Allow me to share a rather lengthy quote from Arthur Pink that has so blessed me that I want to share it with you. "Providence itself is now directed by the Mediator: All history is shaped by His imperial hand. Every moment, every occurrence, both in heaven and in earth is ordained by the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is clothed with all authority and invested with universal dominion, and He is now engaged in exercising the same. But let it not be overlooked that the exaltation and sovereignty of Christ are revealed in Scripture as something more than a historical reality. The every fact that this truth is here brought in at the close of the Apostle's prayer intimates that it is a grand verity that ought to affect our hearts and lives. Do we conduct ourselves as those in complete subjection to Him? As we view those who oppose us, do we realize the force of His 'Fear not little flock'? As we contemplate the troubled waters of this world, do we recognize that our mighty Captain is at the helm?" [Arthur Pink, *The Ability of God*, page 214].

#### IV. He Is Head over All Things for the Church (V22b-23)

This is a fantastic truth! Paul's favorite picture of the church is that it is Christ's body. He uses this analogy more than any other in the Epistles the Holy Spirit inspired him to write. As the body of Christ, the church is the fullness of Him. The word fullness here means the complement of Him. A head must have a body to manifest the glory of the head. The Lord has chosen the church to manifest His glory on earth. Just as the physical body carries out the orders of the head, the Church carries out the orders of Christ, our head. Think of this extreme honor: The incomparable Christ has chosen us to manifest His incomparable glory. The church is not only the body of Christ; it is the fullness of Him. We complete Him as the body completes the head by carrying out the head's orders and giving the head hands and feet to carry out the head's will. The primary reason that the church exists is to carry out the will of Christ as the

body carries out the will of the head. Just before Jesus went back to Heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father, He spoke to the church – His body. Though the church was not formed until the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, Jesus, our head, gave us, His body our orders. **Matthew 28:18b-20 (NKJV)** “<sup>18</sup> All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” That is the primary instruction of Jesus the Head to His body – the church. That is not the only thing He has instructed us to do, but it is the main thing. There are other pictures besides the body that the Lord uses to communicate this truth. For instance in **2 Corinthians 5:20 (NKJV)** “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.” In Matthew 5:13-15 we are pictured as salt and light in a rotting and spiritually dark world. These are all three telling us the same thing. We represent Him here on this earth. We are His hands and feet and vocal cords.

### CONCLUSION

If you are a part of the body of Christ, you are not here on planet earth to just make a good living, have a comfortable, leisure filled, enjoyable, painless, stress free life. You are His body, His ambassador, His salt and light and you have a mission to accomplish and then He will bring you home where you will have eternity to live a comfortable, pain free, stress free life. For now there is work to do. There are ministries that need faithful people to carry them out; there are financial needs that wait on members of the body to obey the head and give as He has directed.

During the Spanish Civil War, a communist general coined the phrase, “fifth column” to refer to people working within a culture to influence it on behalf of their cause. This general said that he had four columns of troops marching on Madrid, and a fifth column already in the city doing whatever it took to bring down the city for the benefit of the cause. The church is Jesus’ fifth column. We are His body operating under Christ our head’s direction. Like salt and light we impact the rottenness of culture and like light we illuminate the spiritual darkness. Like ambassadors, we constantly represent our King. Our task is not to topple governments but to make disciples where we work, go to school, live, and do recreation. We are to be willing to relocate to wherever our head directs us whether it is short term or permanent. We are the body of Christ, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.