

GOD'S PROMISE, MAN'S WALK

Ephesians

By Raymond White

Paul's letter to the Ephesians was not written to the Ephesians but to everyone. The oldest manuscripts open not with "To the saints which are at Ephesus" but "To the saints which are at (blank)" with the (blank) to be filled in by whoever. Today we'd call that a form letter.

Why is that important? Because it means that the blessings of the epistle were never targeted to the select few at Ephesus, but were targeted to all Christians in general. And given the theological intricacies of this epistle, it seems important that it be personal, I mean to you and me. Here's a short list of its more magnificent, mind bending promises:

[1] GOD'S PROMISES

Ephesians 1:2 Grace be to you and peace... [I'll take all of that I can get]

Ephesians 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us [foreordained, appointed] to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood...

Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance,,,

Ephesians 1:13 ...in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise.

Ephesians 1:14 ...the earnest of our inheritance [a pledge guarantees a contract]

Ephesians 2:8 by grace ye are saved...it is a gift of God.

These promises are targeted to you and not just to the Saints of Ephesus. Christians often argue about such sweeping promises — chosen, predestinated, have obtained (past tense), sealed, earnest (pledged). We shouldn't argue about them, we should embrace them and enjoy the security. God gave us these promises, not to create theological contention, but to create peace, to feel secure in God's love. But God also calls us to a new life which Paul calls the "worthy walk."

[2] MAN'S WORTHY WALK

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore...beseech you that ye walk worthy...

Yes, God gave us promises. But he also calls us to walk worthy. The worthy "walk" is not a worthy "arrival." It is the progress we make through life. Christians fret that they haven't arrived yet. Well, you won't. It's your walk, your journey through life, not your arrival at perfection. Remember that "born again" means the *start* of the Christian life, not the end of it. And that new life begins a new walk. Here are a few characteristics of your worthy walk.

Ephesians 4:17 Walk not as other gentiles. Be different.

Ephesians 5:2 Walk in love, as Christ. Be loving.

Ephesians 5:8 Walk as children of light. Be teaching.

Ephesians 5:15 Walk circumspectly, not as fools. Be wise.