

# A Plan for the Fullness of Time: The Background of Ephesians & Chapter 1

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## *I. Why do a Bible Conference?*

*The study of the sacred Scriptures must be a door opened to every believer.* It is essential that the revealed word radically enrich . . . all our efforts to pass on the faith. *Evangelization demands familiarity with God's word*, which calls for dioceses, parishes and Catholic associations to provide for a serious, ongoing study of the Bible, while encouraging its prayerful individual and communal reading. We do not blindly seek God, or wait for him to speak to us first, for "God has already spoken. . ." (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 175, quoting Pope Benedict XVI)

"The Carmelite Saint Teresa of Avila, who in her writings constantly uses biblical images to explain her mystical experiences, says that Jesus himself revealed to her that '*all the evil in the world is derived from not knowing clearly the truths of sacred Scripture*'.—Pope Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, no. 48

### The "Word of the Lord"

1. The Bible as "Inspired": "God is the Author of Scripture":<sup>1</sup>
2. God speaks through Scripture<sup>2</sup>
3. Dual authorship
  - a. God as "principle author" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 304)
  - b. Human authors as "true authors"<sup>3</sup>

### St. Paul's Importance

1. 13 of the 27 New Testament books attributed to him
2. More responsible than almost anyone else for the spread of Christianity throughout the world
3. Importance and brilliance of St. Paul's letters recognized early on (2 Peter 3:15–16)
4. Taught by example: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1)

## *II. Introduction to Ephesians*

### The Authorship of Ephesians

1. Paul identified as author in 1:1; 3:1
2. Pauline authorship doubted since Erasmus: Tone, style, substance said to differ from other letters
3. Pseudonymous writings seem to have been accepted (e.g., Augustine and Jerome on Wisdom of Solomon)<sup>4</sup>
4. Especially similar to Colossians—another "disputed" Pauline letter
5. Recently there has been an emergence of renewed support for Pauline authorship—Douglas A. Campbell,<sup>5</sup> N.T. Wright,<sup>6</sup> Michael Gorman,<sup>7</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson,<sup>8</sup> Peter Williamson<sup>9</sup>
6. Differences often overstated and Paul's use of amanuensis accounts for differences as well—"I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord." (Romans 16:22)

<sup>1</sup> The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: "God is the author of Sacred Scripture" (no. 105).

<sup>2</sup> "In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them" (Vatican II, *Dei Verbum* 21).

<sup>3</sup> "To compose the sacred books, God chose certain men who, all the while he employed them in this task, made full use of their own faculties and powers so that, though he acted in them and by them, it was as true authors that they consigned to writing whatever he wanted written, and no more" (*Catechism*, no. 106 quoting Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, no. 11).

<sup>4</sup> See Augustine, *City of God* 17, 20; Jerome, *Prologue to the Wisdom books*

<sup>5</sup> *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 309–38.

<sup>6</sup> *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (2 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 56–63.

<sup>7</sup> *Apostle of the Crucified Lord: A Theological Introduction to Paul and His Letters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 501-2.

<sup>8</sup> *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (Anchor Bible 35A; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 55–90.

<sup>9</sup> *Ephesians* (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 14.

## Audience and Date

1. Debate over destination: “in Ephesus” not in some of the earliest manuscripts
2. Regardless of original destination, letter likely intended to be distributed widely like Colossians  
And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also *the letter from Laodicea*. (Col 4:16)
3. Could Ephesians be the letter to the Laodiceans mentioned in Colossians 4:16?
4. Date of epistle:
  - a. If pseudonymous, written by disciple of Paul in 90s
  - b. If written during first imprisonment in Rome, A.D. 60–62 (Acts 28:16, 39)
  - c. Douglas Campbell: Very early (A.D. 50), thus unlike other epistles

## Purpose and Major Themes

1. Purpose: “catechesis for the newly baptized” (Hahn and Mitch)<sup>10</sup>
2. Major theme: “The Mystery of Christ in his Church”
3. Key ideas:
  - a. God’s plan to unite heaven and earth is fulfilled in Christ
  - b. The power of Christ’s grace in the sacraments to transform all human beings and families
  - c. Christ’s power is revealed in the Church: Bride of Christ, Family of God, Temple of the Spirit
  - d. “We are not contending against flesh and blood” (Eph 6:12): Spiritual warfare

## III. Ephesians 1

### The Trinity and the Mysterious Plan of Salvation

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with *every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places*, <sup>4</sup> even as *he chose us in him before the foundation of the world*, that we should be *holy and blameless* before him. <sup>5</sup> *He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ*, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious *grace* which he *freely bestowed* [Grk. *echaritōsen*] on us in the *Beloved*. <sup>7</sup> In him we have *redemption through his blood*, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the *riches of his grace* <sup>8</sup> *which he lavished upon us*. <sup>9</sup> For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight *the mystery of his will*, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup> as a *plan* [*oikonomia*] for the fulness of time, to *unite* [*anakephalaioō*] *all things in him*, *things in heaven and things on earth*. . . <sup>13</sup> In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:1–10, 13–14)

#### Trinitarian blessing:

1. The Father’s Plan: “*He chose us . . . destined us in love to be his sons* through Jesus Christ” (1:3)
2. Fulfillment in the “Beloved” Son: “*redemption in his blood . . . unite all things in him*” (1:7, 10)
3. Inherited in the Spirit: “*sealed with the promised Holy Spirit . . . guarantee of our inheritance*” (1:13–14)

### The Mystery of Predestination

“So essential to Christianity are its mysteries that in its character of truth revealed by the Son of God and the Holy Spirit it would stand convicted of intrinsic contradiction if it brought forward no mysteries. Its Author would carry with Him a poor recommendation for His divinity if he taught us only such truths as in the last analysis we could have learned from a mere man, or could have perceived and adequately grasped by our own unaided powers.”

—Matthias Scheeben<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible: New Testament* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010), 343.

<sup>11</sup> *Mysteries of Christianity* (trans. C. Vollert; St. Louis: B. Herder Book, Co., 1946 [1865/1888]), 4.

To God, all moments of time are present in their immediacy. When therefore he establishes his eternal plan of “predestination,” he includes in it each person’s free response to his grace. . . (*Catechism*, no. 600)

We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him. . . <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us? (Romans 8:28, 31)

And he came to her and said, “Hail, *full of grace* [*kecharitōmene*], the Lord is with you!” (Luke 1:28)

. . . the Mother of Jesus, in the glory which she possesses in body and soul in heaven, is *the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come*. Likewise she shines forth . . . a sign of certain hope and comfort to the pilgrim People of God. (Vatican II, *Lumen gentium*, no. 68).

### “Uniting” All Things in Heaven on Earth

. . . a *plan* [*oikonomia*] for the fullness of time, to *unite* [*anakephalaioō*] *all things in him*, things in heaven and things on earth. . . (Ephesians 1:10)

*Put off your old nature* which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful lusts, <sup>23</sup> and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and *put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God* in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:22–24)

. . . God has put all things under [Christ’s] feet and has made him *the head over all things for the church*, <sup>23</sup> *which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all*. (Ephesians 1:22–23)

### Augustine on the Church as the “Whole Christ”

This is the whole Christ, head and body, one formed from many . . . whether the head or members speak, it is Christ who speaks. He speaks in his role as the head (*ex persona capitis*) and in his role as body (*ex persona corporis*). What does this mean? “The two will become one flesh. This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the Church” [Eph 5:31–32].—St. Augustine<sup>12</sup>

### Church as Bride

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by *the washing of water with the word*. . . <sup>28</sup> Even so *husbands should love their wives as their own bodies*. . . <sup>29</sup> For no man ever hates his own flesh, but *nourishes* and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> *because we are members of his body*. <sup>31</sup> “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” (Ephesians 5:25–30)

### Church as Temple

. . . you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; <sup>22</sup> in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19–22)

### Christ in the Temple

To ensure that this genuine and whole-hearted love will reign in our hearts and grow every day, we must accustom ourselves to see Christ himself in the Church. For it is indeed Christ who lives in the Church, and through her teaches, governs and sanctifies; and it is also Christ who manifests himself in manifold disguise in the various members of his society.—Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, no. 43.

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<sup>12</sup> St. Augustine, *En. in Ps. 74:4*: PL 36, 948–949; cited from *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 796.

## Grace, Faith, Works in Ephesians 2

### Introduction

1. Catholic vs. Protestants on Justification
  - a. Protestants → Justified by “Faith alone” (Latin *sola Fide*) (Romans 3)
  - b. Catholics → Justified by Works, “not by Faith alone” (James 2:24)
2. Passage I Always Wondered About: Ephesians 2

For *by grace you have been saved through faith*; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not *because of works*, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

3. Questions:
  - a. Is Saint Paul a proto-Protestant?
  - b. How do I reconcile Ephesians 2 with James 2?
4. What is the *Catholic Church’s* official teaching on how we are saved?
  - a. The Council of Trent (1547)
  - b. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992)

### Saint Paul is Speaking about the Grace of *Initial Justification*

<sup>1</sup> And you he made alive, when *you were dead through the trespasses and sins* <sup>2</sup> in which *you once walked*, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. <sup>3</sup> *Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh*, following the desires of body and mind, and so *we were by nature children of wrath*, like the rest of mankind. (Ephesians 2:1-3)

### The *Catechism* on Original Sin: A State of Spiritual Death

Following St. Paul, the Church has always taught that the overwhelming misery which oppresses men and their inclination toward evil and death cannot be understood apart from their connection with *Adam’s sin* and the fact that he has transmitted to us a sin with which we are all born afflicted, *a sin which is the “death of the soul.”* ...By yielding to the tempter, Adam and Eve committed a *personal sin*, but this sin affected *the human nature* that they would then transmit *in a fallen state*. It is a sin which will be transmitted by propagation to all mankind, that is, by the transmission of a human nature deprived of original holiness and justice. And that is why original sin is called “sin” only in an analogical sense: it is a sin “contracted” and not “committed”—a state and not an act. (CCC 403)

### Council of Trent: Because of Original Sin, Neither Nature or Law Justify

The holy council declares that for a correct and clear understanding of *the doctrine of justification it is necessary that each one admits and confesses that all men, having lost innocence through the sin of Adam, “became unclean”, and, according to the apostle, were “by nature children of wrath”* (Eph 2:3), *as the council taught in its decree on Original Sin*. So completely were they the slaves of sin and under the power of the devil and death that *not only the Gentiles by means of the power of nature but even the Jews by means of the letter of the law of Moses were unable to liberate themselves and to rise from that state*, even though their free will, weakened and distorted as it was, was in no way extinct. (Decree on Justification, Chapter 1).

### **The Catechism on Pelagianism, Protestantism, and Justification**

The Church's teaching on the transmission of original sin was articulated more precisely in the fifth century, especially under the impulse of St. Augustine's reflections against *Pelagianism*, and in the sixteenth century, in opposition to the Protestant Reformation. *Pelagius held that man could, by the natural power of free will and without the necessary help of God's grace, lead a morally good life*; he thus reduced the influence of Adam's fault to bad example. The first Protestant reformers, on the contrary, taught that original sin has radically perverted man and destroyed his freedom; they identified the sin inherited by each man with the tendency to evil (*concupiscentia*), which would be insurmountable. (CCC 406)

### **Back to Ephesians 2: Saint Paul's on Grace, Faith, and Works**

And you he made alive, *when you were dead* through the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. <sup>3</sup> Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind, and *so we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind*. <sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (*by grace you have been saved*), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—* <sup>9</sup> *not because of works*, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:1-9)

### **Saint Paul's Teaching**

1. "Saved by grace" (Greek *chariti sesōmenoi*) (Eph 2:5, 8)
2. "Through faith" (Greek *dia pisteōs*) (Eph 2:8)
3. "Not because of works" (Greek *ouk ex ergōn*) (Eph 2:9)

### **The Catechism on Grace, Good Works, and Merit**

The term "merit" refers in general to the recompense owed by a community or a society for the action of one of its members... deserving reward or punishment... *With regard to God, there is no strict right to any merit on the part of man*. Between God and us there is an immeasurable inequality, for we have received everything from him, our Creator. The merit of man before God in the Christian life arises from the fact that God has freely chosen to associate man with the work of his grace. *The fatherly action of God is first on his own initiative, and then follows man's free acting through his collaboration, so that the merit of good works is to be attributed in the first place to the grace of God, then to the faithful*. Man's merit, moreover, itself is due to God, for his good actions proceed in Christ, from the predispositions and assistance given by the Holy Spirit... The merits of our good works are gifts of the divine goodness. (CCC 2006-2009)

### **The Catechism: No One Can Merit the Initial Grace of Salvation**

Since the initiative belongs to God in the order of grace, *no one can merit the initial grace of forgiveness and justification, at the beginning of conversion*. (CCC 2010)

**The Catechism: We Can Then Merit the Graces of Further Sanctification**

Moved by the Holy Spirit and by charity, *we can then merit for ourselves and for others the graces needed for our sanctification*, for the increase of grace and charity, and for the attainment of eternal life. Even temporal goods like health and friendship can be merited in accordance with God's wisdom. These graces and goods are the object of Christian prayer... *The charity of Christ is the source in us of all our merits* before God. Grace, by uniting us to Christ in active love, ensures the supernatural quality of our acts and consequently their merit before God and before men. The saints have always had a lively awareness that their merits were *pure grace*. (CCC 2010-2011)

**St. Paul on the Role of Works *after* Initial Justification**

<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God— <sup>9</sup> not because of works, lest any man should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

**St. Paul's Teaching: Saved by Grace, through Faith, for Good Works**

1. "Saved by grace" (Greek *chariti sesōmenoi*) (Eph 2:5, 8)
2. "Through faith" (Greek *dia pisteōs*) (Eph 2:8)
3. "Not because of works" (Greek *ouk ex ergōn*) (Eph 2:9)
4. "Created in Christ Jesus for good works" (Greek *epi ergois agathois*) (Eph 2:10)
5. "Which God prepared beforehand" (Greek *prohētoimasen ho theos*) (Eph 2:10)

**St. James is Talking about Good Works *after* Justification by Faith**

<sup>14</sup> What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has *faith* but has *not works*? *Can his faith save him?* <sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? <sup>17</sup> *So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.* <sup>18</sup> But some one will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. <sup>19</sup> You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. <sup>20</sup> Do you want to be shown, you shallow man, that faith apart from works is barren? <sup>21</sup> Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered his son Isaac upon the altar? <sup>22</sup> You see that *faith was active along with his works*, and *faith was completed by works*, <sup>23</sup> and the scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness"; and he was called the friend of God. <sup>24</sup> *You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.* (James 2:14-24)

**St. James Teaching: Justification by Works, not by Faith Alone**

1. "Faith" (Greek *pistis*) by itself cannot "save" (Greek *sōsai*) a person (James 2:14)
2. "Faith" (Greek *pistis*) without "works" (Greek *erga*) is "dead" (James 2:17)
3. "Faith" is "active along with works" (Greek *synērgei tois ergois*) (James 2:22)
4. "Faith" is "completed" (Greek *eteleiōthē*) by "works" (Greek *ergōn*) (James 2:22)
5. A man is "justified by works" (Greek *ex ergōn dikaioutai*) (James 2:24)
6. "Not by faith alone" (Greek *ouk ek pisteōs monon*) (James 2:24)

**Saved by Grace, through Faith, for Works: Good News for Gentiles!**

<sup>11</sup> Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called the uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—  
<sup>12</sup> remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. <sup>17</sup> And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; <sup>18</sup> for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. <sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; <sup>22</sup> in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:11-22)

# The Mystery of the Power of Christ Working Within Believers (Ephesians 3)

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## Suffering and Glory

So I ask you not to lose heart over *what I am suffering for you, which is your glory*. (Ephesians 3:13)

“The meaning of ‘glory’ has puzzled all interpreters.”—Chrys Caragounis<sup>1</sup>

“... a logic which we can hardly analyze. . . . It is the language of the heart.”—J. Armitage Robinson<sup>2</sup>

And Jesus answered them, “*The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified*. (John 12:23)

## The Bible as the Book of Suffering

Sacred Scripture is a *great book about suffering*. Let us quote from the books of the Old Testament a few examples of situations which bear the signs of suffering, and above all moral suffering: the danger of death (Isa 38:1–3), the death of one's own children (Gen 15:16; 2 Sam 19:1) and, especially, the death of the firstborn and only son (Tob 10:1–7; Jer 6:26; Amos 8:10; Zech 12:10); and then too: the lack of offspring (Gen 15:2; Gen 30:1; 1 Sam 1:6–10), nostalgia for the homeland (Ps 137), persecution and hostility of the environment (Ps 22:17–21), mockery and scorn of the one who suffers (Job 19:18; 30:1, 9; Ps 42:11; 44:16–17; Jer 20:7; Isa 53:3), loneliness and abandonment (Ps 22:2–3; 31:13; 38:12; 88:9, 19); and again: the remorse of conscience (Ps 51:5; Isa 53:3–6; Zech 12:10), the difficulty of understanding why the wicked prosper and the just suffer (Ps 73:3–14; Eccl. 4:1–3), the unfaithfulness and ingratitude of friends and neighbours (Job 19:19; Ps 41:10; 55:13–15; Jer 20:10; Sir 37:1–6), and finally: the misfortunes of one's own nation (Ps 44:10–17; 77:3–11; 79:11; 89:51; Is 22:4; Jer 4:8; 13:17; 14; 17–18; Ezek 9:8; 21:11–12; Dan 3:31–40; 9:16–19).

In treating the human person as a *psychological and physical "whole"*, the Old Testament often links “moral” sufferings with the pain of specific parts of the body: the bones (Isa 38:13; Jer 23:9; Ps 31:10–11; Ps 42:10–11), kidneys (Ps 73:21; Job 16:13; Lam 3:13), liver (Lam 2:11), viscera (Isa 16:11; Jer 4:19; Job 30:27; Lam 1:20), heart (1 Sam 1:8; Jer 4:19; 8:18; Lam 1:20–22; Ps 38:8, 10). In fact one cannot deny that moral sufferings have a “physical” or somatic element, and that they are often reflected in the state of the entire organism. (John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, no. 6)

## Suffering, Fatherly Discipline, and Purification

For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. <sup>5</sup> Having been *disciplined* a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; <sup>6</sup> *like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them*. (Wisdom of Solomon 3:4–6)

When he slew them, they sought for him; they repented and sought God earnestly. (Ps 78:34)

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same thought, for *whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin*, <sup>2</sup> so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer by human passions but by the will of God. (1 Peter 4:1–2)

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<sup>1</sup> *The Ephesian Mystery: Meaning and Content* (ConBNT 8; Lund: Gleerup, 1977), 112 n. 61.

<sup>2</sup> *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (2d ed. London: Macmillan, 1904); cited in Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians* (vol. 42; Word Biblical Commentary; Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1990), 191.



## The Suffering of the Righteous

While it is true that suffering has a meaning as punishment, when it is connected with a fault, *it is not true that all suffering is a consequence of a fault and has the nature of a punishment*. The figure of the just man Job is a special proof of this in the Old Testament. (John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, no. 11)

## The Cross as Glory

<sup>35</sup> And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him, and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” <sup>36</sup> And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” <sup>37</sup> And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, *one at your right hand and one at your left*, in your glory.” <sup>38</sup> But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” <sup>39</sup> And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; <sup>40</sup> but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.” . . . <sup>45</sup> For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and *to give his life as a ransom for many*.” (Mark 10:35–40)

And with him they crucified two robbers, *one on his right and one on his left*. (Mark 15:27)

## God’s Wisdom as Christ Crucified

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. . .

<sup>22</sup> For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but *we preach Christ crucified*, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, *Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God*. (1 Corinthians 1:18–24)

## Sharing in Christ’s Afflictions

I have been crucified with Christ; *it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me* (Galatians 2:20).

Now *I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church*, <sup>25</sup> of which I became a minister according to the divine office which was given to me for you, *to make the word of God fully known*, <sup>26</sup> *the mystery hidden for ages and generations* but now made manifest to his saints. (Colossians 1:24–26)

*If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer*. <sup>7</sup> Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort. (2 Corinthians 1:6–7)

*If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together* (1 Corinthians 12:26).

When you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup> which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; <sup>6</sup> that is, how the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. <sup>7</sup> Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace which was given me *by the working of his power*. <sup>8</sup> To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup> and to make all men see what is *the plan* [Gk *oikonomia*] *of the mystery hidden for ages in God* who created all things; <sup>10</sup> *that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places*. . . <sup>13</sup> So I ask you not to lose heart over *what I am suffering for you*, which is your glory. (Ephesians 3:7–10, 13)

## “Access” to the Father

Therefore *be imitators of God*, as beloved children.<sup>2</sup> And walk in love, *as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.* (Ephesians 5:1–2)

This was according to the eternal purpose which he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,<sup>12</sup> in whom we have boldness and confidence of *access* [Gk *prosaḡōgē*] through our faith in him. (Ephesians 3:11)<sup>3</sup>

You have now consecrated yourselves to the LORD; *come near* [Heb *nāgaš* / Gk. *prosaḡōgē*], bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the LORD. (2 Chronicles 29:31)

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been *brought near in the blood of Christ*.<sup>14</sup> For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down *the dividing wall of hostility* . . .<sup>18</sup> for through him we both have *access* [Gk *prosaḡōgē*] in one Spirit to the Father. . .<sup>19</sup> . . . you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of *the household of God*,<sup>20</sup> built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,<sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into *a holy temple in the Lord*;<sup>22</sup> in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:13–14; 18)<sup>4</sup>

Come to him, to *that living stone*, rejected by men but in God’s sight chosen and precious;<sup>5</sup> and *like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices* acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:4–6)

For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.<sup>12</sup> Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—<sup>13</sup> each man’s work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.<sup>14</sup> If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.<sup>15</sup> *If any man’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire*.<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that *you* [plural] are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in *you* [plural]?<sup>17</sup> If any one destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and that temple *you* [plural] are. (1 Corinthians 3:11–17)

## The Church as the Temple

. . . that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,<sup>18</sup> may have power to comprehend with all the saints *what is the breadth and length and height and depth*,<sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, *that you may be filled with all the fullness of God*. (Ephesians 3:17–19)

The inner sanctuary was *twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high*. . . (1 Kings 6:20)

Then came one of the seven angels . . . saying, “Come, *I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb*.”<sup>10</sup> And in the Spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. . .<sup>16</sup> The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its breadth; and he measured the city with his rod, twelve thousand stadia; *its length and breadth and height are equal*. (Revelation 21:9–16)

## The Power at Work within Us

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think,<sup>21</sup> to him be *glory in the church and in Christ Jesus* to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20–21)

<sup>3</sup> See K. L. Schmidt, *προσάγω-προσαγωγή*, TDNT 1:131–134. Nijay K. Gupta, *Worship That Makes Sense to Paul: A New Approach to the Theology and Ethics of Paul’s Cultic Metaphors* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 112–13.

<sup>4</sup> On the “dividing wall”, see Josephus, *Jewish War* 5.193–94; 6.124–26; *Antiquities of the Jews* 15.417; Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 212.

## **“Wives, Do What?!”**

### **Ephesians 5 and St. Paul’s Life-Changing Vision of the Christian Family**

#### **The Problem with Paul**

1. Once a year, on the Feast of the Holy Family (Sunday in Christmas Octave)
2. We hear the following words of Saint Paul (*if they read the ‘long form’!*):

Wives, be subordinate to your husbands, as is proper in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and avoid any bitterness toward them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, so they may not become discouraged. (Colossians 3:18-21)

3. This is a shorter version of Saint Paul’s Longer teaching:

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her with the washing of water with the word, that he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes it and cherishes it, as Christ does the Church, because we are members of his body. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church. (Ephesians 5:21-32)

4. What are most peoples’ response to Saint Paul’s teaching?
  - a. One extreme: Paul the misogynist (tyrant husbands and doormat wives)
  - b. Another extreme: mutual submission with no true headship for husbands
  - c. How do we as Catholics understand these words?

*God is the author of Sacred Scripture...* Therefore, all that the inspired authors or sacred writers affirms should be regarded as affirmed by the Holy Spirit. (Catechism 105, 107)

#### **Saint Paul’s Teaching in Context: Renouncing Former Life in Paganism**

Now this I affirm and testify in the Lord, that *you must no longer walk as the Gentiles walk*, in the futility of their minds; they are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart; they have become callous and have given themselves up to licentiousness, greedy to practice every kind of uncleanness. You did not so learn Christ! *...Put off the old man that belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful lusts*, and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and *put on the new man*, created *after the likeness of God* in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:17-24)

### **The Context of Ephesians 5: Renouncing Pagan Immorality**

Therefore be *imitators of God*, as beloved children. And walk in love, *as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us*, a fragrant offering and *sacrifice* to God. But *immorality* (Greek *porneia*) and *impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you*, as is fitting among saints. Let there be no filthiness, nor silly talk, nor lewdness, which are not fitting; but instead let there be thanksgiving. *Be sure of this, that no immoral man* (Greek *pornoi*) or *impure man, or one who is covetous (that is, an idolator), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for it is because of these things that the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not associate with them, for once you were in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things they do in secret...

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father. (Ephesians 5:1-20)

1. Imitate God
2. Walk as Christ walked, giving yourself “in sacrifice”
3. Avoid sexual immorality (*porneia*)
  - a. Has no place among “saints”
  - b. Destroys the soul: exclusion from the kingdom
4. The Days are Evil: first-century paganism in the Roman Empire
  - a. Gentiles known for their abortions (Jewish view of Gentile houses as graves)
  - b. Contraception out of control (Roman government paying citizens to procreate)
  - c. Homosexual sex and Pederasty condoned by the Gentile culture

### **The Opening Line: Mutual Submission within Marriage**

1. St. Paul *begins* with the principle of *mutual submission* within Marriage:  
“Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Ephesians 5:21)
2. This is based on the biblical teaching of the *equal dignity* of man and woman:  
So God created man *in his own image*, in the image of God he created him; *male and female he created them.* (Genesis 1:27)
3. Pope John Paul II on Mutual Submission in Ephesians:  
This relationship [between spouses] is nevertheless not one-sided submission. According to the teaching of Ephesians, marriage excludes this element of the contract, which weighed on this institution and at times does not cease to weigh on it. Husband and wife are, in fact, “subject to one another,” mutually subordinated to one another. The source of this reciprocal submission lies in Christian pietas and its expression is love. (*Man and Woman He Created Them*, 473)

### **Saint Paul's Message for Christian Wives**

*Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord.* For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. (Ephesians 4:22-23)

1. Wives be "submissive" (*sub-missio*, "under" the "mission" of the husband)
2. Husband is the "head" of the wife, as Christ is "head" of the Church
3. Husband works for salvation of the wife, as Christ is the "savior" of the Church
4. Let wives be submissive "in everything," as Church is to Christ

### **Pope Pius XI on the Order of Love in the Christian Family**

26 Domestic society being confirmed, therefore, by this bond of love, there should flourish in it that "*order of love*," as St. Augustine calls it. This order includes both the primacy of the husband with regard to the wife and children, the ready subjection of the wife and her willing obedience, which the Apostle commends in these words: "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ is the head of the Church."

27 *This subjection, however, does not deny or take away the liberty which fully belongs to the woman both in view of her dignity as a human person, and in view of her most noble office as wife and mother and companion; nor does it bid her obey her husband's every request if not in harmony with right reason or with the dignity due to wife; nor, in fine, does it imply that the wife should be put on a level with those persons who in law are called minors, to whom it is not customary to allow free exercise of their rights on account of their lack of mature judgment, or of their ignorance of human affairs. But it forbids that exaggerated liberty which cares not for the good of the family; it forbids that in this body which is the family, the heart be separated from the head to the great detriment of the whole body and the proximate danger of ruin. For if the man is the head, the woman is the heart, and as he occupies the chief place in ruling, so she may and ought to claim for herself the chief place in love.*

28 Again, this subjection of wife to husband in its degree and manner may vary according to the different conditions of persons, place and time. In fact, if the husband neglect his duty, it falls to the wife to take his place in directing the family. But the structure of the family and its fundamental law, established and confirmed by God, must always and everywhere be maintained intact.

29 With great wisdom Our predecessor Leo XIII, of happy memory, in the Encyclical on Christian marriage which We have already mentioned, speaking of this order to be maintained between man and wife, teaches: "*The man is the ruler of the family, and the head of the woman; but because she is flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, let her be subject and obedient to the man, not as a servant but as a companion, so that nothing be lacking of honor or of dignity in the obedience which she pays.* Let divine charity be the constant guide of their mutual relations, both in him who rules and in her who obeys, *since each bears the image, the one of Christ, the other of the Church.*" (Pope Pius XI, Encyclical Letter on Christian Marriage, *Casti Connubi* 1930, 26-29)

### **Saint Paul's Message for Christian Husbands**

*Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her with the washing of water with the word, that he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes it and cherishes it, as Christ does the Church, because we are members of his body. (Ephesians 5:25-30)*

1. Husbands: “love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her”
  2. Purpose of Husband's Love: to “sanctify” his Wife (sacrament of service/sacrifice)
  3. The Wife is the “Body” of Her Husband, like Church is the “Body” of Christ
- Then the man [Adam] said: “*This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman (ishah), because she was taken out of Man (ish). Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. (Genesis 2:23-24)*

### **St. John Chrysostom on the Husband's Christ-like Love for His Wife**

Have you noted the measure of obedience? Pay attention to love's high standard. If you take the premise that your wife should submit to you, as the church submits to Christ, then you should also take the same kind of careful, sacrificial thought for her that Christ takes for the church. Even if you must offer your own life for her, you must not refuse. Even if you must undergo countless struggles on her behalf and have all kinds of things to endure and suffer, you must not refuse. Even if you suffer all this, you have still not done as much as Christ has for the church. For you are already married when you act this way, whereas Christ is acting for one who has rejected and hated him. So just as he, when she was rejecting, hating, spurning and nagging him, brought her to trust him by his great solicitude, not by threatening, lording it over her or intimidating her or anything like that, so you must also act toward your wife. Even if you see her looking down on you, nagging and despising her, you will be able to win her over with your great love and affection for her. (St. John Chrysostom, *Homily on Ephesians 20:5:25*; in Mark Edwards, *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, 195).

### **The Mystery of Marriage: Christ's Love for the Church**

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” *This is a great mystery (Latin magnum sacramentum), and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church... (Ephesians 5:29-33)*

#### Husbands' #1 Complaint

‘She doesn't respect me’

#### Wives' #1 Complaint

‘He never chooses me’

#### Saint Paul's Solution

Wives, be submissive to your husbands

#### Saint Paul's Solution

Husbands, love your wives

### **God's Purpose: Peace**

God's purpose in ordering marriage is peace. One takes the husband's role, one takes the wife's role, one in guiding, one in supporting. If both had the very same roles, there would be no peace. The house is not rightly governed when all have precisely the same roles. There must be a differentiation of roles under a single head. (St. John Chrysostom, *Homily on Ephesians 20:5:33*, in Edwards, *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, 200).



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Jan 9-10, 2015



# *The* **Mystery of Christ** *in the* **Church**

*A Study in Ephesians*

## Schedule

### Friday

- 6:00pm - 6:30pm Registration
- 6:30pm - 7:30pm ***The Mystery of Christ in Ephesians: An Overview***  
*Michael Barber*
- 7:30pm - 8:00pm Break
- 8:00pm - 9:00pm ***What Must I Do to Be Saved:  
Faith, Works, and Eternal Life***  
*Brant Pitre*

### Saturday

- 7:30am Registration
- 8:00am - 9:00am ***The Power of Christ within Us: The Church as  
Temple in Ephesians Three***  
*Michael Barber*
- 9:00am - 9:30am Break
- 9:30am - 10:30am ***Being Clothed with Christ: Ephesians Four and  
the Life of Righteousness***  
*John Kincaid*
- 10:30am - 11:00am Break
- 11:00am - 12:00pm ***Wives Do What?!: Ephesians Five and St. Paul's  
Life-Changing Vision of the Christian Family***  
*Brant Pitre*
- 12:00pm - 1:30pm Lunch Break
- 1:30pm - 2:30pm ***Be Strong in the Lord: The Armor of God and  
Spiritual Warfare***  
*John Kincaid*
- 2:30pm - 3:00pm Break
- 3:00pm - 3:45pm Question and Answer Session
- 3:45pm - 4:00pm Final Announcements and Prayer



# Speakers



## Brant Pitre

Dr. Pitre is Professor of Sacred Scripture at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana. He earned his Ph.D. in Theology from the University of Notre Dame, where he specialized the study of the New Testament and ancient Judaism.

He is the author of several articles and books. Dr. Pitre is an extremely enthusiastic and engaging speaker who lectures regularly across the United States. He has produced dozens of Bible studies on CD, DVD, and MP3, in which he explores the biblical foundations of Catholic faith and theology.



## Michael Patrick Barber

Dr. Barber is Professor of Theology and Scripture at John Paul the Great Catholic University. He has authored numerous scholarly articles for academic journals such as Journal of Biblical Literature as well popular-level books on Scripture.

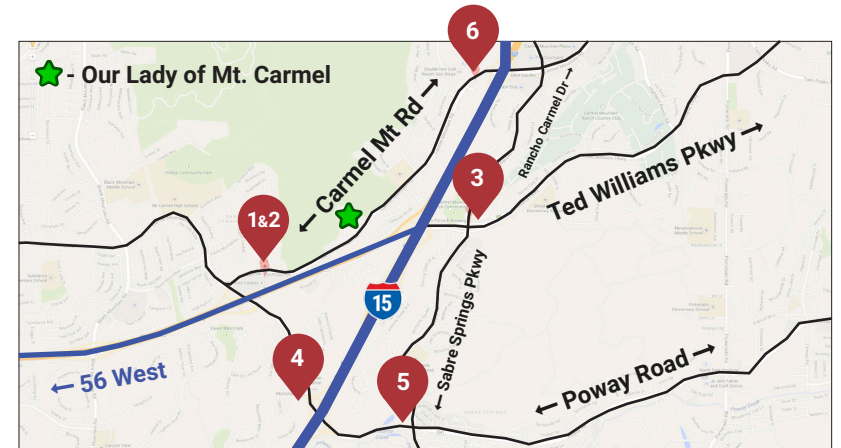
Barber received a Ph.D. from Fuller Theological Seminary. Dr. Barber was granted the mandatum by Robert Brom, while bishop of San Diego, as an ecclesial recognition of his posture and commitment to always teach in communion with the Church.



## John Kincaid

Professor Kincaid is Professor of Theology and Scripture at John Paul the Great Catholic University. John's research interests center on the theological projects of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, contemporary Pauline studies, and the relationship between Modernity and contemporary biblical studies.

He received a Th.M. from Duke Divinity School and a MA in Theology from Covenant Theological Seminary. John was granted the mandatum by the late Cirilio Flores, bishop of San Diego, as an ecclesial recognition of his posture and commitment to teach always in communion with the Church.



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