

134 - Grace Be With All Who Love Our Lord Jesus - 2017-04-09

Call to Worship: Psalm 84:1-2

Scripture Reading: Psalm 84:3-11

Sermon: "Grace Be with All Who Love Our Lord Jesus" Ephesians 6:24

Benediction: Psalm 84:12

INTRODUCTION

Today is the last sermon from Ephesians. It is sermon number 134. We started this together April 25, 2014, so it has been just a little bit short of three years.

In the church at the time, there were some very clear areas of weakness, some very evident problems. It seemed to me that we needed to submit ourselves to a very substantial course of study in the Word of God, from one of the longer and more doctrinally substantial epistles, like Romans or Ephesians. I chose Ephesians, and we started in.

Here is a flashback to that day. I read aloud to you Ephesians 1:1-2

Ephesians 1:1-2 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.

I then introduced this study to you by telling you what I hoped we could accomplish by it:

I hope that the Holy Spirit will renew and maintain and increase our focus on the glory of God in the Lord Jesus Christ

I hope that we will better learn the truth about the very fundamentals of true Christianity

I hope that we will see the right approach to rules for Christian living

I hope that those of you who do not yet trust in Christ will be brought to faith in Him

The second week, I spoke more about those things regarding the study of Ephesians, and I said to you

Would you hope those things with me?

Would you work toward those things with me?

Would you pray for those things with me?

Some of you actually spoke to me and answered that you would hope, and work, and pray toward those ends. Others of you didn't say so, but have done so.

I suggested to you that as we would hope, work, and pray for these good things to be accomplished through this study of Ephesians, we would trust that the Lord God knows how to give good gifts to His children, beyond what we even know to ask for, because of His great love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior.

Our gracious Lord had already assembled some of us into this church at that time. More of us have been added to this church by God's grace sometime during those three years. And the Lord has indeed done in this church of His what we hoped and prayed that He would, and what we worked toward. He has done for us all that it pleased Him to do, how it has pleased Him to do it.

He has indeed renewed and maintained and increased our focus on His glory in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He has indeed caused us to learn better the truth about the fundamentals of the faith.

He has indeed shown us the right approach to His commands for holy living.

He has indeed caused some among us to come to faith in Christ and baptism in His name.

Now we come to the end of this study. Next week I plan to speak to you about where we go from here. Today we get to have one last sermon from Ephesians, the very last verse. It occurs to me that here you could have some questions answered. If you are new to the church, or if you are a child just getting old enough really to understand what's being said.

This preacher has been preaching every Lord's Day from Ephesians for years. What has this all been about?

TEXT

Ephesians 6:24

NKJV Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

ESV Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.

BODY

I. This Has All Been About **Our Lord Jesus Christ**

A. This letter started with Him

1. Ephesians 1:1-5 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. (3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, (4) just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, (5) having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

B. And now it ends with Him

C. He is **Our Lord**

1. Whether Paul, or the Christians in Ephesus, or Tychicus, or us here today, what is this all about? We own our Lord. We are servants of a Master. He is indeed Lord of Lords, and before Him every knee shall bow, and God is putting all His enemies under His feet. But we own Him as Lord!
2. We do what He has *told* us we are to do, and so have a sure foundation under us. Luke 6:46-49 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? (47) Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: (48) He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. (49) But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."
3. We do what He has *shown* us we are to do, and so are blessed in Him. John 13:13-17 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. (14) If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. (15) For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. (16) Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his ~~master~~ [lord]; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. (17) If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

D. He is Our Lord **Jesus**

1. "Jesus" means "God saves"
 - a) Mat 1:21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."
 - b) We know ourselves to be sinners, deserving of the wrath of God
 - c) We know our Lord to be Jesus, who is the Savior by whom God saves us from our sins

E. He is Our Lord Jesus **Christ**

1. Christ and Messiah are the same, meaning, “anointed one”
2. Christ was prophesied in the Old Testament, One who was to come, and to suffer, and die, and rise from the dead
 - a) Acts 17:2-3 As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, (3) explaining and proving that the Christ[1] had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ,[2] " he said.
3. Much of Paul’s preaching, at least among the Jews, was to prove from the scriptures that Jesus is Christ
4. This is the heart of the gospel, the good news: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[1] : that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (4) that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,
5. The main purpose of the gospel of John is to demonstrate that Jesus is Christ, so that you may believe in Him; at the same time, John makes “Christ” almost a synonym for “The Son of God.”
 - a) Peter: John 6:69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
 - b) Martha: John 11:27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."
 - c) John 20:30-31 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; (31) but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

This Study of Ephesians Has All Been About **Our Lord Jesus Christ**

II. This Has All Been About **Love for Our Lord Jesus Christ**

- A. There is a prayer and wish here, a greeting and blessing, a benediction, and it is for those who *love* our Lord Jesus Christ

- B. This prayer is not for those who have
 - 1. some outward show of love for Him, or
 - 2. some temporary kind of love for Him
 - 3. some hypocritical, intentionally fake love for Him
- C. This prayer certainly is not for those who refuse to love our Lord Jesus Christ
 - 1. 1 Corinthians 16:20-24 All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. (21) The salutation with my own hand--Paul's. (22) **If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.** O Lord, come! (23) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (24) My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.
 - 2. Does the apostle Paul write, "Those of you who have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, and have no love for Him, I pronounce a blessing of grace from God upon you"?
- D. This prayer is for those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a sincere, an incorruptible love.
- E. We love Him because He is the most lovely and loveable of all men. He is the One Great man, the one perfect Man.
 - 1. the baby Jesus
 - a) in the womb of Mary, with John the Baptist in the womb of Elizabeth, and he leaps for joy
 - b) in the manger, while angels announce Him to the shepherds
 - c) in the temple, with old Simeon and Anna adoring Him
 - d) in the house, where he was adored by the Magi, who had come all the way from the East with rich gifts
 - 2. the 12-year-old boy
 - a) in the temple with the teachers
 - b) in Nazareth
 - (1) obedient to His parents
 - (2) growing in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man
 - 3. the authoritative teacher
 - a) whipping the merchants out of the temple
 - b) rebuking the hypocrisy and false doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees
 - c) telling the parables of the kingdom of heaven
 - 4. as miracle worker
 - a) casting demons out of people
 - b) healing the sick, lame, blind, deaf
 - c) even raising the dead
 - d) walking on water
 - e) calming storms
 - 5. as suffering Savior
 - a) flogged and mocked in Jerusalem

- b) crucified on Golgotha
 - (1) Father, forgive them
 - (2) Today you shall be with me in paradise
 - c) buried in the tomb
 - 6. as risen Lord
 - a) He is not here, He is risen, as He said!
 - b) ascending in the clouds
 - c) seated in splendor at the right hand of God the Father
 - d) reigning over all things for the church
 - e) coming again to take us to be with Him
 - 7. Yes, He is eminently lovely and loveable! He is the Man we love above all others.
- F. And we love Him because He has forgiven us much! In Him God forgives sinners. In Him God justifies the ungodly.
 - 1. Luke 7:41-43 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. (42) And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" (43) Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."
- G. And so we love Him, which love is equated with obeying what He commands
 - 1. John 14:15 If you love Me, keep my commandments
 - 2. John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me
 - 3. 1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

This Study of Ephesians Has All Been About **Our Lord Jesus Christ**
 This Has All Been About **Love for Our Lord Jesus Christ**

- III. This Has All Been About the Grace of God Toward Us in Jesus Christ
 - A. Right at the beginning the apostle greeted us with "grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"

- B. He said that what God has done for us, predestining us to adoption by Jesus Christ was to the praise of the glory of His grace
- C. He taught us definitively, chapter 2, that by grace you have been saved
 - 1. favor
 - 2. unmerited favor
 - 3. not just on sinners generally, but on the saints in particular
 - a) why has any sinner been saved?
 - b) why have you been saved and not your neighbor?
- D. He taught us, chapter 3 verse 7, that the grace of God was further poured out on him in making him the minister of the gospel to preach Christ among the Gentiles
- E. He taught us, chapter 4 verse 7, that to each one of us the grace of God is measured out by Christ in gifts for the benefit of the church. Thus, some are, by God's grace, made the church's pastors and teachers. In others letters, Paul describes other gifts given for the benefit of His church.
- F. Chapter 4 verse 29 the apostle taught us that what we say must be only what is good for necessary edification, so that our speech may impart God's grace to those who hear us.
- G. Now here at the end, Paul's parting word to the Ephesians and to us is "grace"!
- H. In that we love the Lord Jesus Christ, we know that the grace of God is upon us
 - 1. Paul knows this of the Ephesian Christians
 - 2. Paul knows this of all Christians
- I. Yet the model set for us here is that those who know the grace of God is upon them are still to pray the grace of God on all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ
- J. NOT: Now we are really something! BUT: Now we know that we are really nothing, and need everything from God by His grace in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- K. May it be, may God grant it, that those He has shown so much grace in causing us to love the Lord Jesus, He will show more and more grace.

CONCLUSION

In this church, one among many, we have studied together the part of the Word of God, the bible, the scriptures, that is the letter, the epistle called Ephesians. It has been a labor of love, willingly undertaken and joyfully completed. What has it all been about? I cannot remember everything about it all the time. What is the kernel of it all?

This Study of Ephesians Has All Been About **Our Lord Jesus Christ**

This Has All Been About **Love for Our Lord Jesus Christ**

This Has All Been About **the Grace of God** Toward Us in Jesus Christ

Ephesians 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Calvin:

The meaning is, "May God continue to bestow his favor on all who love Jesus Christ with a pure conscience!"

The Greek word, which I follow Erasmus in translating sincerity, signifies literally uncorruptedness

This prayer conveys to us the instruction, that the only way of enjoying the light of the Divine countenance is to love sincerely God's own Son, in whom his love toward us has been declared and confirmed. But let there be no hypocrisy; for most men, while they are not unwilling to make some professions of religion, entertain exceedingly low notions of Christ, and worship him with pretended homage. I wish there were not so many instances in the present day to prove that Paul's admonition, to love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity is as necessary as ever.

Poole:

he prays here for all true believers every where

Ferguson:

God's free favour and love in Christ, the fountain and sum of all the former good things wished for

that is, not for a time only, but constantly, not in hypocrisy, or show only, but sincerely and really

God's grace, or free favour, is the sum of all which a man needeth to wish, either for himself or others; it is virtually all things, so that the man that hath it, wanteth nothing; he hath all good and necessary things in their cause and fountain, he doth also possess all such things in that measure God seeth fitting for him; for in this part of his wish, which relateth to all lovers of Christ in gdenral, he doth only make express mention of "grace," as virtually comprising peace, love, and faith

Love to Jesus Christ is a sure mark of those who have a saving interest in the good things purchased by him

the good things promised to those who love the Lord Jesus Christ do not at all belong to any of that sort (counterfeit, insincere, and not real), whatsoever their duluded hearts may fancy to the contrary, but to such only who love him really, sincerely, and testify their love unto him by keeping his commandments

Gill:

Christ is the object of love, and a lovely object he is: he is to be loved because of the loveliness of his person, and the transcendent excellencies that are in him; because of his suitableness and fulness as a Saviour; and because of his great love shown to his church and people; and because of the relations he stands in to them, and the communion they have with him: love to Christ is a grace of the Spirit, and is in all believers; and though it is imperfect, and sometimes cold, it will abide for ever; it ought to be universal and superlative; all of Christ is to be loved, and he is to be loved above all:

and it shows itself

- in a value for his Gospel, and the truths of it;
- in an esteem of his ordinances, and a regard to his commands;
- in parting with all for Christ, when called for; and
- in bearing all for his sake;
- in a well pleasedness in his company and presence, and
- in a concern for his absence, and
- in an uneasiness until he is enjoyed again:

it should be fervent, and constant, and cordial, and, as here said, in sincerity, and with all the heart, and without hypocrisy; not in word only, but in deed and in truth

“grace,” by which may be meant

- a fresh discovery of the free grace, love, and favour of God in Christ to them;
- and
- a fresh supply of grace from the fulness of it in Christ; and
- a larger measure of the grace of the Spirit to carry on the good work begun in them; as well as
- a continuation of the Gospel of the grace of God with them; and
- an increase of spiritual gifts.

Clarke:

May the Divine favor, and all the benedictions flowing from it, be with all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ, who has so loved us as to give his life to redeem ours, and to save us unto life eternal.

Many profess to love our Lord Jesus who are corrupt in all their ways; on these the grace or favor of God cannot rest; they profess to know him, but in works deny him. Such can neither expect favor here, nor hereafter.

Hodge:

implores the divine favor on all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity the meaning is either that expressed in our Version, "Who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity"; or, 'with constancy; that is, with a deathless or immortal love.' In either case the general idea is the same. The divine favor rests on those to whom the Lord Jesus is the supreme object of love.

In 1Co_16:22, Paul says, "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." These passages, though so dissimilar, both teach that love to Christ is the indispensable condition of salvation. There must be an adequate reason for this. Want of love for Christ must deserve final perdition, and love to him must include preparation for heaven. This of necessity supposes Christ to be God. Want of love to him must imply enmity to God. It is all a delusion for anyone to think he can love the Infinite Spirit as manifested in nature, or in the Scriptures, if he does not recognize and love the same God in the clearest revelation of his character, in his most definite personal manifestation, and in his most intimate relation to us, as partaking our nature, loving us, and giving himself for us. Love to Christ includes adoring admiration of his person, desire for his presence, zeal for his glory, and devotion to his service. It need not be ecstatic, but it must be controlling.

JFB:

Not a fleeting, earthly love, but a spiritual and eternal one

MacLaren:

the word 'grace' in Scripture means, first of all, the condescending love of God to inferiors, to sinners, to those who deserved something else; and, secondly, the whole fulness of blessing and gift that follow upon that love.

Ellicott:

"Grace be with you," in various forms, is, as St. Paul himself says in 2Th_3:17, "the token," or characteristic signature, in every one of his Epistles, written with his own hand

Here, however, it is at once general and conditional, "to all them who love the Lord Jesus Christ." So in 1Co_16:22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema."

Here it evidently means "with a love immortal and imperishable," incapable either of corruption or of decay, a foretaste of the eternal communion in heaven.

JRY:

the loveliness of His person, whether
-as babe

- in the womb
- in the manger
- in the house

- as child
 - in the temple
 - in Nazareth
 - obedient to His parents
 - growing in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man
- as teacher
- as Savior
 - on the cross
 - in the tomb
 - risen again
 - preaching peace to *me!*
- as King
 - reigning in heaven
 - coming again

John 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

John 14:15-24 "If you love Me, keep My commandments. (16) And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- (17) the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. (18) I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. (19) "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. (20) At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. (21) He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And **he who loves Me will be loved by My Father**, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." (22) Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?" (23) Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (24) He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

John 21:15-19 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." (16) He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." (17) He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. (18) Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you

wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." (19) This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

Luke 7:41-43 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. (42) And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" (43) Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."

1 John 4:9-21 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. (10) In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (11) Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (12) No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. (13) By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. (14) And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. (15) Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. (16) And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. (17) Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. (18) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. (19) We love Him because He first loved us. (20) If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? (21) And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

1 John 5:1-5 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. (2) By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. (3) For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. (4) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. (5) Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

1 Corinthians 16:22

NKJV If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!

ESV If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come!

KJV If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

Matthew 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Calvin:

he inveighs against those that falsely took upon themselves the Lord's name, while not loving him from the heart. For he is not speaking of strangers, who avowedly hated the Christian name, but of pretenders and hypocrites, who troubled the Churches for the sake of their own belly, or from empty boasting.

Poole:

If any man, by any notorious acts, declareth that he loveth not the Lord Jesus, whether he be a hypocrite, owning the name of Christ, but living in a contempt of and disobedience to his commandments; or an apostate, who showeth his want of love to Christ by denying him in an hour of danger and persecution, or an open enemy and persecutor of Christ and his gospel.

Gill:

The apostle here does not so much mean profane and unregenerate sinners, who are destitute of love to Christ, from ignorance of him; nor such who, from the same principle, might persecute him in his members, for such are to be even prayed for, and wished well unto; and oftentimes such are called by grace, and become true and sincere lovers of Christ; and the apostle himself was an instance of it

some persons in this church, or that infested it, are referred to as the false teachers, and those who sided with them, who made factions and divisions in the church of Christ; allowed themselves in the commission of fornication and incest, and such like impurities; had no regard to the peace of the consciences of weak brethren, but laid stumblingblocks in their way; behaved in a very irreverent manner at the Lord's table, and gave in to very pernicious errors and heresies, particularly denying the resurrection of the dead; and by their many bad principles and practices plainly showed that they did not in deed and in truth love our Lord Jesus

Hodge:

If our Lord be "God over all and blessed for ever," want of love to him is the violation of our whole duty. If he be not only truly God, but God manifested in the flesh for our salvation; if he unites in himself all divine and all human excellence; if he has so loved us as to unite our nature to his own, and to humble himself and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that we might not perish, but have everlasting life; then our own hearts must assent to the justness of the malediction pronounced even against ourselves, if we do not love him. We must feel that in that case we deserve to be anathema. Nay, we thereby are a thing accursed; we are an object of execration and loathing to all holy beings by the same necessity that holiness is opposed to sin. Maran atha are two Aramaean words signifying "The Lord," or "our Lord comes." It is a solemn warning. The Lord, whom men refuse to recognize and love, is about to come in the glory of this Father and with all his holy angels, to take vengeance on those who know not God, and who obey not the gospel. So deeply were the apostles impressed with the divinity of Christ, so fully were they convinced that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, that the refusal or inability to recognize him as such, seemed to them a mark of reprobation.

Hawker:

the sense is, that, if any lived and died without being regenerated, and, consequently, not loving Christ, because a state of nature in the carnal mind is enmity against God, he was of necessity in this state, and, as such, is justly exposed to everlasting wrath

RWP:

the refusal to love Christ (ou philei) on the part of a nominal Christian