

Chapter Two

When a chapter begins with “*and*,” it is not a true break, but an arbitrary one. There is no good reason to break the thought to which “*and*” ties it back. But what is that thought? A brief outline of the previous thoughts seems to indicate that these are the concluding thought of how we are to have the eyes of our hearts enlightened to know “*the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe?*” If that be the case then this is the final consideration of how to see the exceeding greatness of His mighty power. By remembering we were dead in our trespasses and God has now made us alive.

what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe,
according to the working of His mighty power

- 1 which He worked in Christ*
- 2 when He raised Him from the dead*
 - a seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,*
 - b far above all principality and power and might and dominion,*
 - c and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.*
- 3 And He put all things under His feet,*
- 4 Gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body,*
 - a the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*
- 5 And you who were dead in your trespasses*
 - a In which you once walked*
 - i according to the prince of the power of the air,*
 - ii the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,*
 - iii among whom also we all once conducted ourselves*
 - iv in the lusts of our flesh,*
 - v fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,*
 - b were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*
- 6. But God, who is rich in mercy,*
 - a because of His great love with which He loved us,*
 - b even when we were dead in trespasses,*
- 7. made us alive together with Christ*

Hence, the second chapter can be looked upon as a continuation of both 1:3-14 and 1:15-23. It adds to the list of the spiritual blessings that are found in Christ. The term “*in Christ*” is used four times in the second chapter (2:6,7,10,13). By contrasting what these Ephesians had before they became Christians with what they now have, a vivid black on white picture is created and the honor of the blessings God has conferred upon all Christians is emphasized.

The second chapter opens with all the bleak, dismal, horrible facts of human existence. The sorrow, the heartache, the misery and horror of such an existence is clearly brought into perspective against the background of God saving grace, mercy and power.

1 And you *He made alive, who were dead*

As Paul moves to his next point, there are two sections. This is an additional spiritual blessing in Christ, but before it is revealed the hopeless state of all before they obey the gospel is fully described. It is the classic white on black. The first section giving the depths of blackness of our hopeless despair when we learn the truth. It is the same process every time the gospel is preached. The good news (gospel) is that God has resolved the problem, but we also learn that bad news that we have failed, died and eternal loss is waiting for us. Here the Holy Spirit begins with this. Although it is scriptural to move God’s part from verse five to here, it is not what the Holy Spirit did and there is no reason to change it. Later translations left it out to retain the actual wording.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, NASB
And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ESV

While there is nothing unscriptural about moving the verb and using it twice, it is not what the Holy Spirit said, and there really is no good reason to add it. Without that verb the first four verses of this chapter paint the bleak picture of those who are outside of Christ and not having received the power of God that brings salvation. If we leave it out, it still makes perfect sense. It simply lists one on top of each other the terrible state of those who have not yet obeyed the gospel, and their own state before they did.

1 And **YOU** who were dead in trespasses and sins,
2 in which you once walked
according to the course of this world,
according to the prince of the power of the air,
the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience

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

The “you” is either the church at Ephesus or the Gentiles. Yet verse three makes it clear that all Christians, including the Gentiles, the Jews and all local churches are all under the same dismal circumstances.

Before God acted and made the way of escape, this was the terrible circumstances we all brought upon ourselves. Everyone is “*dead in trespasses and sins.*” The term “*dead*” means exactly the same thing in Greek as it does in English.

*For as **the body without the spirit is dead**, so faith without works is dead also. Jas. 2:26*

Yet that is not the meaning here. Whatever this death is, it is not physical death. If it was there would be no need for the gospel, because if physical death was the penalty for trespasses and sins, no one could be saved.

“*nekros... dead*, i.e. 1. prop. a. **one that has breathed his last, lifeless**:... hyperbolically and proleptically i.q. as if already dead, sure to die, destined inevitably to die... b. *deceased, departed, one whose soul is in Hades*... c. *destitute of life, without life, inanimate*... 2. trop. a. [spiritually dead i.e.] *destitute of a life that recognizes and is devoted to God, because given up to trespasses and sins; inactive as respects doing right*... b. univ. *destitute of force or power, inactive, inoperative*...” (Thayer, p. 424; 3498)

Even in the garden of Eden, God spoke of a death that would occur on the day they ate the fruit and another death when they died physically.

*17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.** ...5 So **all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.** Gen 2:17; 5:5*

The Holy Spirit actually spoke of four different deaths in the New Testament Scriptures. In all of them the basic root meaning is separation. When the spirit leaves the body, death has occurred.

1. Separation from God when we commit our first sin.

*but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**” Gen. 2:17*

*Therefore, just as through **one man sin entered the world, and death through sin**, and thus **death spread to all men, because all sinned** — Rom. 5:12*

*I was alive once without the law, but **when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.** 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, **I found to bring death.** Rom. 7:9-10*

*And you, **being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh**, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, Col 2:13-14*

2. Separation from sin at baptism

*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus **were baptized into His death**? 4 Therefore **we were buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if **we have been united together in the likeness of His death**, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that **our old man was crucified with Him**, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 **Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,** Rom 6:5-9*

This is a faithful saying: **For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him.** 2Tim. 2:11

3. Separation of the soul from the body at physical death.

"So it was that **the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.** 23 "And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. (Lk. 16:22-23).

4. Separation from God(eternally), the second death.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.**" Rev 2:11

The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. **This is the second death.** And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:13).

But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars **shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.**" Rev. 21:8

in trespasses and sins,

The words the Holy Spirit chose to describe sin look at it from many different perspective.

hamartia [266], *hamartéma* [265], *parakoé* [3876], *anomia* [458], *paranomia* [3892], *parabasis* [3847], *paraptōma* [3900], *agnoēma* [51], *hétthma* [2275]. ... **Sin... may be regarded under an infinite number of aspects**, and in all languages has been so regarded; and as the diagnosis of it belongs most of all to the Scriptures, nowhere else are we likely to find it contemplated on so many sides, set forth under such various images. It may be regarded as **the missing of a mark or aim**; it is then *hamartia* or *hamartéma*: **the overpassing or transgressing of a line**; it is then *parabasis*: **the disobedience to a voice**; in which case it is *parakoé*: **the falling where one should have stood upright**; this will be *paraptōma*: **ignorance of what one ought to have known**; this will be *agnoēma*: **diminishing of that which should have been rendered in full measure**, which is *hétthma*: **non-observance of a law**, which is *anomia* or *paranomia*: **a discord in the harmonies of God's universe**, when it is *plémmeleia*: and in other ways almost out of number...." Trench's Synonyms NT:3900)

the missing of a mark or aim;

the overpassing or transgressing of a line;

the disobedience to a voice;

the falling where one should have stood upright;

ignorance of what one ought to have known;

diminishing of what should have been rendered in full measure

non-observance of a law,

discord in the harmonies of God's universe,

Trespass is "*the falling where one should have stood upright.*" It is also "*falling by the wayside,*" "*transgressing the will of God* as a "*fault, lapse, and error.* Just as when one falls from a high cliff, or steps out into moving traffic they are killed, so also in the spiritual realm, falling and transgressing God's commands is the same it does in the material realm.

paráptōma, neuter noun from *parapiptō* (3895), **to fall by the wayside. Fault, lapse, error, mistake, wrongdoing.** ... *paraptōma*, what a person has done in **transgressing the will and law of God by some false step or failure - 'transgression, sin.'** ... 'who was handed over because of our transgressions' Rom 4:25; 'if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive your transgressions' Matt 6:15. ..." (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3900)

These two terms are joined to the sin, trespass and death in the garden of Eden. The Holy Spirit revealed that Adam sinned (9 times), transgressed (7 times) and refused to hear ending in disobedience (1 time). This resulted in the death of Adam and Eve and also of all men (6 times). When Jesus died on the cross, all of this was atoned, redeemed and paid for and the free gift was available to all.

12 Therefore, just as through one man **① SIN** entered the world, and **③ DEATH** through **① SIN**, and thus **③ DEATH** spread to all men, because all **① SINNED** — 13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but **① SIN** is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless **③ DEATH** reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not **① SINNED** according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the **② OFFENSE**. For if by the one man's **② OFFENSE** many **③ DIED**, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who **① SINNED**. For the judgment which came from one **② OFFENSE** resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many **② OFFENSES** resulted in justification. 17 For if by the one man's **② OFFENSE** **③ DEATH** reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore, as through one man's **② OFFENSE** judgment came to all men,

resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience (**PARAKOÉ - REFUSING TO HEAR**) many were made **① SINNERS**, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. 20 Moreover the law entered that the **② OFFENSE** might abound. But where **① SIN** abounded, grace abounded much more, 21 so that as **① SIN** reigned in **③ DEATH**, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom 5:12-21

Since the passage above teaches exactly the same thing here, it is certain this is not a physical death but a spiritual one. Yet, the fact that it is spiritual doesn't make it any less true. There is a spiritual death that Adam and Even endured after they ate.

Everyone was alive apart from the law before they reached the age where they knew right from wrong. At that time they are in an innocence similar to that of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit they died this death which Paul speaks of here. The death that led to their loss of fellowship with God and to their expulsion from the garden of Eden. This death is ever repeated by every member of the human race when they reach the age of knowing the difference between right and wrong and good and evil. The very moment that the soul gives in to the inner cravings of their fleshly desires they suffer the exact same fate.

The term "trespasses" is defined:

paraptoma... 1. prop. **a fall beside** or near something; but nowhere found in this sense. 2. trop. **a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness; a sin, misdeed...** (Thayer, p. 485; 3900)

paraptoma ... primarily "**a false step, a blunder**" (*para*, "aside," *pipto*, "to fall"), then "**a lapse from uprightness, a sin, a moral trespass, misdeed,**" is translated "fall" in Rom 11:11-12, of the sin and "downfall" of Israel in their refusal to acknowledge God's claims and His Christ; by reason of this the offer of salvation was made to Gentiles ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:3900)

Sin is the more general and much more used term. The word the Holy Spirit chose from the Greek language began with the idea of "*intellectual shortcoming*," and soon meant the one who is in "error" because he has "*no wisdom*." "*Aristotle also defines hamartia as a "missing of virtue, the desired goal, whether out of weakness, accident or defective knowledge" ... It is thus intellectual deficiency ...*" (Kittel, TDWNT NT:266)

In the NT, the term came to mean the missing of the mark and a failure to achieve a standard. Yet when brought into the Scriptures, since it brings immediate death, it is a terrible error and missing of the mark.

hamartia ... 1. **By far the most frequently used term for sin in the NT** (as in the LXX) is *hamartia*: there are **173 occurrences** ... 2. a) *hamartia* signifies primarily a failure to achieve a standard (whether culpable or unintentional) in the broadest sense, both as deed and as the nature of the deed. (Exegetical Dictionary NT:266)

hamartia... **a failing to hit the mark... a bad action, evil deed** ... In the N. T. always in an ethical sense, and 1. equiv. to ... *a sinning*, whether it occurs by omission or commission, in thought and feeling or in speech and action... 2. **that which is done wrong** committed or resultant *sin, an offence, a violation of the divine law in thought or in act*... 3. collectively, *the complex or aggregate of sins committed either by a single person or by many...* (Thayer, p. 31; 266)

Since all have sinned (*hamartano*) and the wages of sin (*hamartia*) is death, This is a terrible error that brings the gravest of consequences. This is what we had done to ourselves at the age of accountability, often before we were even aware of the error in judgement that led to miss the mark. This is what will make God's act of mercy in making us alive with Christ shine ever brighter.

2 in which you once walked

Bad enough if this had only happened once, but the reality is far worse. It was in the midst of these trespasses and sins that we walked. The term is used 95 times in the NT. In the gospels and Acts literally for walking from place to place, but also as a figuratively way of speaking about one's lifestyle. Where one chooses to walk perfectly describes the course of one's life.

peripateō ... is used (a) **physically**, in the Synoptic Gospels (except Mark 7:5); always in the Acts except in 21:21; never in the Pauline Epistles, nor in those of John; (b) **figuratively**, "**signifying the whole round of the activities of the individual life, whether of the unregenerate, Eph 4:17, or of the believer, 1 Cor 7:17; Col 2:6**. It is applied to the observance of religious ordinances, Acts 21:21; Heb 13:9, marg., as well as to moral conduct. The

Christian is to walk **in newness of life**, Rom 6:4, **after the spirit**, 8:4, **in honesty**, 13:13, **by faith**, 2 Cor 5:7, **in good works**, Eph 2:10, **in love**, 5:2, **in wisdom**, Col 4:5, **in truth**, 2 John 4, **after the commandments of the Lord**, v. 6. And, **negatively, not after the flesh**, Rom 8:4; **not after the manner of men**, 1 Cor 3:3; **not in craftiness**, 2 Cor 4:2; **not by sight**, 5:7; **not in the vanity of the mind**, Eph 4:17; **not disorderly**, 2 Thess 3:6." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4043)

Their lifestyle included these trespasses and sins as a part of this lifestyle. The Ephesians, along with the entire human race once conducted themselves and regulated their lives by a standard of trespasses and sins.

according to the course of this world,

This wasn't something they were fighting against or trying to remove themselves from. They were living in harmony with and in conformity to it. They fit right in because it was the standard and norm they lived by and up to.

katá; prep. governing the gen. and acc. with **the primary meaning of down. Down from, down upon, down in.** ... Metaphorically, as **expressing the relation in which one thing stands towards another**, thus also everywhere implying manner. Spoken of: (1) **Accordance, conformity, e.g., (a) Of a norm, rule, standard of comparison meaning according to, conformable to, after: "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matt 9:29); "do not do according to their works" (a.t. [Matt 23:3]); "according to the tradition of the elders" (Mark 7:5); "according to the law" (Luke 2:22,39); "according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56); ..."**(Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2596)

The course of this world is an interesting concept complicated by the fact that it sums up the creation from its beginning to end and the space in which it consists. What God created, He created in the beginning and it will continue until the end. What God created in this space of time is the *kosmos* where we live. The created universe is the *kosmos* and the time that moves from generation to generation bringing change yet continuity to it is the *aion*.

kosmos [2889], *aiōn* [165]. ... **the difference between *kosmos* ... the world contemplated under aspects of space, and *aiōn* the same contemplated under aspects of time;** ... *kosmos* ... has a history of much interest ... Suidas traces four successive significations through which it passed: ... **Originally signifying 'ornament,'** and obtaining this meaning once in the N. T. (1 Peter 3:3), where we render it 'adorning,' ... **from this it passed to that of order, or arrangement** ('*lucidus ordo*'), or beauty as springing out of these; ... **Pythagoras is recorded as the first who transferred *kosmos* to the sum total of the material universe** desiring thereby to express his sense of the beauty and order which are everywhere to be traced therein: ... Plato (*Tim.* 28 b), who yet employs it also in the larger and what we might call more ideal sense, as embracing and including within itself, and in the bonds of one communion and fellowship heaven and earth and gods and men ... **From this signification of *kosmos* as the material universe, which is frequent in Scripture (Matt 13:35; John 18:5; 21:25; Acts 17:4; Rom 1:20), followed that of *kosmos* as that external framework of things in which man lives and moves, which exists for him and of which he constitutes the moral centre** ... *aiōn* is more probably connected with ... to breathe. **Like *kosmos*, it has a primary and physical, and then, superinduced on this, a secondary and ethical, sense. In its primary, it signifies time, short or long, in its unbroken duration;** ... essentially **time as the condition under which all created things exist, and the measure of their existence; signifying time, it comes presently to signify all which exists in the world under conditions of time;** ... **the course and current of this world's affairs. But this course and current being full of sin, it is nothing wonderful** ... acquires presently, like *kosmos*, an unfavorable meaning. sinners walk *kata ton aiōnos tou kosmou toutou* (Eph 2:2), too weakly translated in our Version, as in those preceding, **"according to the course of this world."** **This last is a particularly instructive passage, for in it both words occur together; ... We speak of 'the times,' attaching to the word an ethical signification; or, still more to the point, 'the age,' 'the spirit or genius of the age,' ... All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but which constitute a most real and effective power, being the moral, or immoral, atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale,—all this is included in the *aiōn*...** (Trench's Synonyms NT:2889)

Hence the course (*aion*) is the time or period in which this world (*kosmos*) exists within. While the eternal age where God dwells will not tolerate such gross selfishness, unrighteousness and ungodliness, this age relishes and thoroughly enjoys it. God keeps it in check by things like the flood and the rise and fall of nations, but always it returns to it.

"*aion*... 1. age ... a human lifetime ... life itself... 2. an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity... **the aggregate of things contained in time**... 3. ... most of the New Testament writers distinguish... this age... the time before the appointed return ... of Christ... **the period of instability, weakness, impiety, wickedness, calamity, misery**,...

Hence the things of "this age" are mentioned in the N. T. with censure... **men controlled by the thoughts and pursuits of this present time...** the devil, who rules the thoughts and deeds of the men of this age..." (Thayer, p. 18; 165).

As generations come and go the things of this present age simply pass on from one to the next. Paul uses this term in much the same way in Galatians.

who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, Gal. 1:4

When Paul adds to the term "course" the term "of this world" he simply strengthens the thought of the third meaning in the definition above. "World" is defined:

"kosmos... 1. ...an apt and harmonious arrangement or constitution, order... 3. the world, i.e. the universe... 4. the circle of the earth, the earth... 5. the inhabitants of the world... particularly the inhabitants of the earth, men, the human race... 6. **the ungodly multitude; the whole mass of men alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ...** 7. **worldly affairs; the aggregate of things earthly; the whole circle of earthly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, etc., which, although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God and are obstacles to the cause of Christ...**" (Thayer p 356-357; 2889)

The world as described in this passage is the world John described.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1Jn. 2:15-17

And the tongue is a fire, a world kosmos of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; (genesis) and it is set on fire by hell. James 3:6-7

according to the prince of the power of the air,

Once again, *kata* is used to stress the conformity and harmony with which this world and age conforms itself to the desires and plans of Satan.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (Eph. 6:11-12).

*Now is the judgment of this world; **now the ruler of this world will be cast out. Jn. 12:31***

*I will no longer talk much with you, for **the ruler of this world is coming**, and he has nothing in Me. Jn. 14:30 of judgment, **because the ruler of this world is judged. Jn. 16:11***

*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds **the god of this age has blinded, 2Cor. 4:3-4***

Satan, and the power that he wields is an often discussed theme in the New Testament. From the verse above, and the ones quoted below, it is clear that Satan can operate by himself or by means of the powerful army of evil spirits who are under his control.

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to **be tempted by the devil. Mt. 4:1***

*"And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, **Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. Mk. 4:15***

*And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, **Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. Lk. 22:31***

*And supper being ended, **the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jn. 13:2***

*But Peter said, "Ananias, **why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? Acts 5:3***

*"to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and **from the power of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' Acts 26:18*

lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices. 2Cor. 2:11

*Be sober, be vigilant; because **your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion**, seeking whom he may devour. 1Pet. 5:8*

He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was

manifested, that **He might destroy the works of the devil.** 1Jn. 3:8

You are of **your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do.** He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because **there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.** Jn. 8:44-45

It is sad yet fitting that the one responsible for all of this being in the world is here charged with it. The entire course of this world has been set by Satan. Yet only with the willing participation of the ungodly masses who prefer to make him their Father instead of God.

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Rev 20:10

The powers of the air has perplexed many. It has no an easy solution. Perhaps the following scripture will help shed some light on it.

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. 11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. 12 "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! **Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.**" (Rev. 12:9-11).

the spirit who now works

This may be a continuation of the previous thought and by a synonym for Satan, or it may be the attitude of rebellion and disposition of evil and wickedness which now fills this age. The definition of the term will allow either. Please review the definition and the comments on this term in its use in Eph 1:17.

Here from the context it appears to simply refer to the general attitude and disposition that characterizes the age and world in which they lived.

in the sons of disobedience,

The term "sons of disobedience" is a concept the Greeks and Hebrews were familiar and which we need to be educated upon. It is based on a statement found in Genesis.

12 the **herb that yields seed according to its kind, ... 21 every winged bird according to its kind ... 24 "Let the earth bring forth the living creatures according to its kind ... 25 God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind.** Gen 1:1-31

Everything produces according to its kind. Regardless of the parents, the children will be like them in every respect. John used it in this way as did Jesus.

Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, **"Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"** Lk. 3:7-8

Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Mt. 23:33

James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, **"Sons of Thunder";** Mk. 3:17

When we wish to say that someone is the worst example of whatever attribute or characteristic we simply put a few adjectives in front of it. He is "really" disobedient, or "truly" disobedient makes it a superlative in English. The worst we can come up with is something like: , "He is the "epitome" of disobedience. The Hebrews and the Greeks had a different means of saying the same thing. They would call them a "son of," "child of" or "offspring of" whatever characteristic they wanted to emphasize. When we read such terms as a "son of light", "offspring of vipers", "child of God", "son of disobedience" or "children of wrath" it conveys as strongly as their language could the true length to which that characteristic could be pushed.

"Disobedience perfectly describes those in the age, especially those who do not obey the gospel. They are unpersuadable. Obstinate, refusing and withholding belief regardless of the proofs.

apeitheo apeitheia... lit., "the condition of being unpersuadable" (a, negative, *peitho*, "to persuade"), denotes "obstinacy, obstinate rejection of the will of God"; hence, "disobedience"; ... "*peitho* and *pisteuo*, 'to trust,' are closely related etymologically; the difference in meaning is that the former implies the obedience that is produced by the latter, cf. Heb 3:18-19, where **the disobedience of the Israelites is said to be the evidence of their unbelief** Faith is of the heart, invisible to men; obedience is of the conduct and may be observed...." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:543; 544)

These then are the epitome of obstinate rebellion against the divine will of God. Truly it would take great power and be a wonderful blessing to move such people from this quality of character to that of a loving submissive servant.

He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. 11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 1Jn. 5:10-11

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." Acts 17:30-31

Even with all this they refuse to be persuaded.

3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves

The universal nature of this rebellion is brought out in the book of Romans. This was expected of the Gentiles who had been given up and left to walk in their own ways with none returning. But that the entire nation of Israel from the giving of the law to the coming of Christ is a powerful commentary on the power of sin and the powerlessness of the flesh.

For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. 10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." ... 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Rom. 3:9-18

This is the pool that all Christians must be drawn from. There is no one who can look back on their life before becoming a Christian with any sense of pride or entitlement. Israel had done no better than the Gentiles. Paul and all the righteous from Israel had nothing to boast about either. They may have been a little better prepared, but they needed the blood of Christ just as the Gentiles.

"pas,... I. adjectivally, and 1. with anarthrous nouns; a. any, every one (sc. of the class denoted by the noun annexed to pas);... all or any of the class indicated... b. any and every, of every kind, ... 2. with nouns which have the article, all the, the whole,... with a Plural, all (the totality of the persons of things designated by the noun) ... always, perpetually,... in every condition, or in every matter, ... in everything, in every way, on every side, in every particular or relation,..." (Thayer, p. 491-493; 3956).

There just aren't any exceptions. Without the gospel of Jesus Christ and the power it contains (Rom 1:16) no one could be saved. The mode of conduct captured with the term that means manner of life or turning hither and thither. Where they walked, we walked. The mode of life they engaged in, we engaged in.

anastrophe to turn up, to move about. A turning about. In the NT, **mode of life, conduct, behavior, deportment** (Gal. 1:13; Eph. 4:22; 1Tim. 4:12; James 3:13; 1 Peter 2:7; 3:11); **life, as made up of actions** (Heb. 13:7; 1 Peter 1:15)...." (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:391)

It is important to remember that in the eyes of God, the Holy Spirit made it clear, even one such moment of leaving the right path forever leaves us off of that path.

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. Jas. 2:10-12

This is also true of the types of sins. For many the ones they commit do not seem as evil and wicked as the ones others are committing. For example one who only sins in his or her mind may not consider themselves as guilty as those who commit the act, but Jesus tore away that sophistry.

"What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil

thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man." Mk. 7:20-23

in the lusts of our flesh,

The conduct of all was the boundary (*en - within the midst of a whole*) of the lusts of the flesh. Lust is a strong craving and desire. It can be used for good things, because all emotions are in the image and likeness of God, but some like this one must be carefully controlled. Most lusts, cravings and desires tend toward the evil misuse of the fleshly desires. Again, all fleshly desires can be lawful, but the forbidden always adds an enticement and a sense of excitement that lawful fulfillment doesn't bring.

epithumia, NT:1939) denotes "**strong desire**" of any kind, the various kinds being frequently specified by some adjective (see below). **The word is used of a good desire in Luke 22:15; Phil 1:23, and 1 Thess 2:17 only. Everywhere else it has a bad sense.** In Rom 6:12 the injunction against letting sin reign in our mortal body to obey the "lust" thereof, **refers to those evil desires which are ready to express themselves in bodily activity.** They are equally the "**lusts**" of the flesh, Rom 13:14; Gal 5:16,24; Eph 2:3; 2 Peter 2:18; 1 John 2:16, a phrase which describes the emotions of the soul, the natural tendency towards things evil. Such "lusts" are not necessarily base and immoral, they may be refined in character, but are evil if inconsistent with the will of God. (Vine's NT:1939)

All understanding of lust must be kept within the context of the flesh because it is within the fleshly body of man that cravings and desires originate within the body of flesh. When God created us, he gave our souls the ability to use the flesh to fulfill all of its desires and plans. Everything our spirit seeks to accomplish in this material world is done through the fleshly body. Depending on the goal, flesh is our ally or our enemy. It is used in many different ways in the Scripture, but when flesh is joined to lust, both become evil and corrupt.

"*sarx*,... 1. prop. *flesh* (the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both men and beasts... 2. i.q. *the body*, not designating it, however, as a skillful combination of related parts... but signifying the material or substance of the living body... a. ... life on earth, which is passed in the body (flesh)... b. used of natural or physical origin, generation, relationship... c. **the sensuous nature of man, 'the animal nature with cravings that incite to sin':** ...3. *a living creature* (because possessed of a body of flesh)... *human nature, the soul included*... 4. ***sarx*, when either expressly or tacitly opposed to *to pneuma* (to the Spirit) has an ethical sense and denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God; accordingly it includes whatever in the soul is weak, low, debased, tending to ungodliness and vice...**" (Thayer, p. 569-571; 4561)

There is no right and wrong in the flesh. The flesh wants satisfaction and the more satisfaction, the greater the flesh desires, craves and lusts for it. The law created an intensified passion in the flesh. That is the basic concept of the flesh as it is used in the Scripture.

For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. Rom. 7:5

I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Rom. 7:21-24

Because the fleshly mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom. 8:7-8

If we look at all the Scriptures dealing with the "lusts of the flesh" we get a clearer picture of the terrible nature of what it means to be conducting ourselves in them. If that is all there is to life, and that is all there is to life to those who are in this world, it is bleak, corrupt and defiled.

Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. Rom. 13:13-14

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. Gal. 5:16-17

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past,

that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal. 5:19-21

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, **abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul**, 1Pet. 2:11

he **no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men**, but for the will of God. 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing **the will of the Gentiles** — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 1Pet. 4:2-4

For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, **they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness**, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. 19 While **they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage**. 2Pet. 2:18-20

For all that is in the world — **the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life** — is **not of the Father but is of the world**. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1Jn. 2:16-17

fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,

"Fulfilling" is another way of looking at the things we create and produce.

"*poieo*... I. **to make** ... 1. ... a. with the names of the things made, **to produce, construct, form, fashion**, etc. ... **to create produce**: of God, as the **author** of all things... b. joined to nouns denoting a state or condition, it signifies **to be the author or, to cause** ... II **to do** ... i.e. to follow some method in expressing by deeds the feelings and thoughts of the mind... *poieo* signifies **to carry out, to execute**..." (Thayer, p. 524-527; NT:4160)

After the mind conceives it, the flesh makes and produces.

Woe to those who **devise iniquity, And work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, Because it is in the power of their hand**. Mic 2:1

Desire is a different concept than lust. This is a settled decision that is not always based on lusts and cravings, but in the deeper parts of our being what we will, plan and intend.

thelema -atos will (noun) ... **thelema** occurs in the NT 62 times, ... **thelema** can represent both (objectively) what is willed and (subjectively) the act of willing. ... In most NT occurrences of **thelema** God's will is spoken of. Twice it is used of the will of the exalted Christ (Acts 21:14; Eph 5:17), once of that of the devil (2 Tim 2:26), and 12 times of human will, most often in contrast to God's will. (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2307)

Both the will and the lusts all reside in the mind. This is the place where we think, plan and make decisions. It is our intellect and place where all conscious thought occurs.

diánoia, fem. noun from *dianoóomai* ... **to agitate in mind, which is from *diá* (1223), denoting separation, and *noéō* (3539), to think over. Understanding, intellect, intellectual faculty, thought, mind.** (I) By metonymy the mind, thoughts, intellect, i.e., the thinking faculty..." (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1271)

These things are not always wrong in other passages but in the context here they are evil and wicked leading us to become children of wrath in the sight of God.

and were by nature

"By nature" has created a controversy in the minds of some. Those who see this as something fixed and unchangeable attribute to God our state of "*total depravity*." Although it is the nature of a horse to run and breathe air, it is the nature of a fish to swim and breath under water because God created them that way. This is only one way the term is used.

"*phusis*... a. **the nature of things, the force, laws, order, or nature**; as opp. to what is monstrous, abnormal, perverse... that which is contrary to nature's laws... b. **birth, physical origin**... , we so far as our origin is considered, i. e. by birth, are Jews, Gal 2:15 ... c. **a mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature**... , by (our depraved) nature we were exposed to the wrath of God, Eph 2:3 ... d. **the sum of innate properties and powers by which one person differs from others**, distinctive native peculiarities, natural characteristics... the ability, art, skill, of men, the qualities which are proper to their nature and necessarily emanate from it, James 3:7 (the holiness distinctive of the divine nature is specially referred to), 2 Peter 1:4 ..." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon NT: 5449)

This is a "*nature*" of "*learned behavior*." "*A mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature*." This is the only way it can be understood because no one is born "*a child of wrath*."

*But sin, taking opportunity by **the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire.** For apart from the law sin was dead. 9 **I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.** 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. 11 For **sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.** Rom 7:8-12*

Sin is a learned behavior, but done often enough it becomes part of our nature. God makes it very clear that it can't be inherited or passed down from father to son.

*Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; **The soul who sins shall die.** ... 19 **The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.** Ezek. 18:4*

Those who teach otherwise ignore the complete unfairness of the system that have devised. For a child to be born into wrath not having done anything good or bad, is not something we would expect God to do and unless we are compelled to accept that conclusion, it is a stretch to even consider it. There are passages such as this one that "seem" to teach this, but with the passages above, God is vindicated and the false teacher condemned.

children of wrath, just as the others.

The concept of the phrase "*children of*" goes back to the creation. Every act of creation beginning with grass and vegetation, then to fish and birds, animals and every creeping thing produces after its kind. Whatever the child, it resembles always not just resembles its parents but is exactly like its parents. Hence when John and Jesus call the Pharisees offspring of vipers, He is expressing their complete resemblance in character. Here it is wrath. God's wrath is the after its kind that perfectly fits these individuals of whom we were once in fellowship.

This is the best man could produce. It was a hopeless mess and man had no hope to fix or resolve it. Only God with all His wisdom, power, love and mercy could devise such a plan and we should all praise and adore Him for doing so.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy,

After painting the dismal conditions we were living in due to our own devises, the Holy Spirit now moves to God's side. First His emotions and then His deeds. It was mercy and love in God's heart that found the solution. But this is not enough. It was rich mercy and great love that brought about the conditions for God to act. It is difficult for guilty children of wrath to conceive of this kind of mercy and love. So undeserved that at times many still feel they are unworthy of it. Yet like many things, worth and value are in the eyes of the beholder. The creature may not always see his value, but the Creator knows.

Although we have and do feel the emotions of mercy and love, ours is a mere shadow of what God's image should have made us. We have to carefully consider the uses in Scripture to see the fulness of this emotion. The definitions center on one thing. The emotions that are created when we see someone in need. Ours is often based on selfish considerations of how we feel about the nature of the affliction. If they brought it on themselves, man tends to feel less or even no pity and compassion, and consequently less or no mercy.

Jesus doesn't tell us what motivated the good Samaritan, or why the priest and the Levite left him there.

*fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, **leaving him half dead.** 31 Now by chance **a certain priest** came down that road. And when **he saw him, he passed by on the other side.** 32 Likewise **a Levite**, when he arrived at the place, **came and looked, and passed by on the other side.** 33 But **a certain Samaritan**, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when **he saw him, he had compassion.** Lk. 10:30-33*

They all saw the same thing. But two felt nothing. No pity, compassion, sympathy or empathy. This is the problem with human mercy. It is variable and based on feelings that often have nothing to do with the circumstances themselves.

"In Greek, *eleos*(mercy) is a *pathos*(strong emotion), ...the **emotion roused by contact with an affliction which**

comes undeservedly on someone else. ... in the face of the unfortunate this emotion is an *eleein* which includes the elements of both awe and mercy... in this sense of mercy, sympathy is very common. (Kittel Vol 2 p. 477-487)

The emotion that comes when we see affliction for man is the first and most important step because without it, we will not act.

eleos [NT:1656], *oiktirmos* [NT:3628] Both words denote sympathy, fellow-feeling with misery, mercy, compassion. *eleos* [NT:1656], however, manifests itself chiefly in acts rather than words, while *oiktirmos* [NT:3628] is used rather of the inward feeling of compassion which abides in the heart. A criminal might ask for *eleos* [NT:1656], mercy, from his judge; but hopeless suffering may be the object of *oiktirmos* [NT:3628], compassion. (Berry's Synonyms, NT:3628)

God acted because of pity and that pity led to mercy which is half mercy and have action. We can pity and do nothing, but if we show mercy we have pity and we do something.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. Ps. 103:11-14

The Holy Spirit qualifies God' mercy as being rich and abundant. It was greater than our need and so He did all that was necessary out of rich pity and abounding desire to do something about it.

"*plousios... rich; a. prop. wealthy, abounding in material resources... b. metaph. and univ. abounding, abundantly supplied... of the thing in which one abounds... "* (Thayer, p. 519; 4145)

The depth of mercy to which God is moved as he looks upon mankind in their plight abounds in wealth. It overflows in His heart. Thus since mercy differs from pity and compassion in action, both are under consideration. Compassion, pity, sympathy, and empathy are feelings within the heart that no one can see, but the Holy Spirit who knows the deep things of God can see it. He wants us to know that this pity and compassion is far greater than we can imagine.

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. 9 He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. 10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. ... 17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, 18 To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them. Ps. 103:8-14,17-18

This pity and compassion is attested to in the Scriptures as being of the highest quality. Yet one can also judge God's mercy by the act of sacrifice that it prompted. God's mercy sent Jesus to the cross. God's mercy purchased our salvation with the death of his own Son. How much mercy is there in the pity and compassion that would bring about such an act of sacrifice to help another? Truly it is wealthy.

because of His great love with which He loved us,

The basic meaning of the preposition "*because*" is the ground, basis and reason that the great mercy occurred. These deep feelings of pity and compassion came because of and for the reason of love.

"*dia... B. with the accusative ... II. of the Ground or Reason on account of which anything is or is not done; by reason of, because of... 1. of the reason for which a thing is done, or of the efficient reason, when for greater perspicuity it may be rendered by... 2. of the reason or cause on account of which anything is or is done, or ought to be done; on account of, because of ...*" (Thayer, 132-135; 1223)

Once again the Holy Spirit is not content to just say love, because after seeing it in God's heart over this situation, it needed an adjective to intensify and develop its scope. This term speaks of abundance, but not just abundance, but intensity and force. It is great, abundant, plenteous, but it is also strong intense and large.

"*polus,... much used a. Of multitude, number, many numerous, great... abundant, plenteous... b. with nouns denoting an action an emotion, a state, which can be said to have as it were measure, weight, force, intensity, size, continuance, or repetition, much l. q. great, strong, intense, large... c. of time much, long... d. Neut.*

sing. *Polu, much*, substantively, I. q. many things... *much*, adverbially, of the mode and degree of an action..." (Thayer, p. 529; 4183)

Whether God's love be looked upon as being measured, weighed, or sized up, whether that love be gauged for intensity and force, or looked to for continuance or repetition over and over again in the life of one who needs it, the adjective above assures us that in measurement and weight it is large, in intensity and force it is strong, and in continuance it goes on and on and on.

This is the divine love introduced by the Holy Spirit to the human race by the act of Jesus leaving heaven and coming to this earth to die for man. This love can only be measured by that. We can only gauge God's love by the things it prompted Him to do.

*A new commandment I give to you, that **you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.** Jn. 13:34*

*For **God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son**, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jn. 3:16-17*

*But **God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 10 For if when **we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. Rom. 5:8-11*

Since no human definition will help us, all we can do is draw it from these and other Scriptures. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was the greatest demonstration the world has ever seen of the love of God. The great, intense and magnificent love of God. It has to be contemplated and meditated upon, but Paul simply puts it forth here as the reason for our redemption and the gift of every spiritual blessing in Christ.

5 even when we were dead in trespasses,

The Holy Spirit returns to the words which began this revelation. These are the bleak and tragic circumstances we all created. There is no way to blame this entirely on Adam and Eve.

*Therefore, just as **through one man sin entered the world**, and death through sin, and thus **death spread to all men, because all sinned** — Rom. 5:2*

They allowed sin to enter the world, but each of us has proven that we would have had the same difficulties if we had faced the same temptation they did. They illustrated the terrible damage of sin. This is where "*dead in trespasses*" began.

*but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**" Gen. 2:17*

God made it clear that no one bears the guilt of another. Each soul comes from God and belongs to Him. The man who sins will die just as Adam and Even died.

*"Behold, **all souls are Mine**; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; **The soul who sins shall die.** ... 20 The soul who sins shall die. The **son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son.** The **righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.** Ezek 18:4; 20*

This is exactly how Paul said he died.

***I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.** 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. 11 For **sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.** Rom 7:9-11*

Each one of them and each one of us is dead in trespasses for exactly the same reason as Adam and Eve. We all (2) walked in the course of this world (3) doing the will of Satan. That (4) evil attitude we see in the world used to be our attitude. (5) We all conducted ourselves like this and no amount of time living under the gospel can change that! We allowed (6) the lusts of the flesh and mind to control us and (7) and fulfill their desires. (8) By our own actions children of wrath like everyone else. Such is our dark and dismal past.

(1) dead in trespasses and sins,	(5) among whom also we all once conducted ourselves
(2) you once walked according to the course of this world	(6) in the lusts of our flesh
(3) according to the prince of the power of the air,	(7) fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,
(4) the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,	(8) were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Now the Spirit reveals the wonderful gift of grace, mercy and love that God has given the entire human race and how those in Ephesus had been given that gift. It all started in God's character. He is (1) rich in mercy and great in love. Although (2) we were dead and beyond hope, (3) God made us alive together with Christ and (5) raised us up together and we now sit together. (7) In the ages that will follow this one, God will reveal more and more how exceedingly rich His grace was to us, (8) in His kindness in Christ Jesus. (9) our salvation is based entirely in God's grace who made it possible for faith to bring it. (10) there is nothing in ourselves to base this one because it is the gift of God. No one can say that faith was such an amazing attribute that we worked for it ourselves. (11) Even our faith is a gift from God coming from the same gospel. Thus there is only room for humility and gratitude and no room for boasting.

(1) God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love	(7) in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace
(2) even when we were dead in trespasses,	(8) in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus
(3) made us alive together with Christ	(9) For by grace you have been saved through faith,
(4) (by grace you have been saved),	(10) and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
(5) 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together	(11) not of works, lest anyone should boast.
(6) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,	

How could God love and feel compassion to such "enemies?" How could He sacrifice so deeply for those who not only had no concern for him but who actively felt hostility toward him? These are questions to ponder for their answer gives to the hope of our calling the wonderful quality of giving it the expectation that even the lowest of the low can still receive it.

*For when **we were still without strength**, in due time **Christ died for the ungodly**. ... 8 **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 **Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.** 10 **For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.** Rom 5:6-11*

All the evil consequences of verse 1-3 were removed with a brush of God's mighty omnipotent hand. The wonderful spiritual blessing lies waiting for all with enough faith to submit to him thus manifesting that they truly want his mercy and grace.

made us alive together with Christ

Just as God has revealed exactly when we died and became dead in our trespasses, He has also revealed exactly when we were made alive.

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that **whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.** 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.** Jn. 3:14-16*

*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.** Jn. 20:31*

*When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then **God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.**" Acts 11:18*

*And this is the testimony: that **God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.** 12 **He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.** 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that **you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.** 1Jn. 5:11-13*

It is made clear in these passage that our eternal life begins the moment our faith in Jesus has led us to repentance and baptism. "Made us alive together" is a single term in the Greek. It is not a term found outside of Scripture because it has never happened outside of Scripture.

szōopoiēō, from sún (4862), together with, and zōopoiēō (2227), to make alive, quicken. To make alive or quicken

with, as being raised from death to life with Christ; (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4806)

Because this is the first of three times Paul will combine a verb with *sun*,” he is emphasizing the closeness of these things we have done along with and in fellowship with Christ. All the great things God has done to save us all came through Christ and all that great things that God has done with us have also been done through Christ. It is only because of our relationship with Jesus that these things could have been done. That is how he began the book and will continue with that them until the end of the book. God has “*blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.*”

This is where it all started. God made us alive together with Christ, He raised us up together with Christ and made us sit together (fellowship) with Christ.

This passage so closely resembles two other passages that also speak of that moment when we were made alive. All three of them are talking about the same event and the same moment. The moment we joined Him in His death, burial and resurrection.

Each passage shares words that are not used anywhere else in the NT. Since the other passage are clearly identified with baptism and there is no other time in prior to our conversion that these things can occur, they are all speaking of the same event. Each Christian must do all of these.

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| (1) Crucified together | (4) Raised together |
| (2) Buried together | (5) Spring up together |
| (3) Made alive together | (6) Sit together |

They are only done in baptism.

*made us **alive together** with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and **raised us up together**, and **made us sit together** in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph. 2:*

***buried with Him** in baptism, in which **you also were raised with Him** through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has **made alive together with Him**, having forgiven you all trespasses, Col. 2:11-13.*

*Therefore we were **buried with Him** through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been **united together** in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was **crucified with Him**, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. Rom. 6:3-4*

Colossians

- (1) *suntháptō* from *sún* (4862), **together with**, and *itháptō* (2290), to bury. To **bury with someone**. NT:4916
(2) *sunegeirō*, from *sún* (4862), **together**, and *egeirō* (1453), to raise. To **raise together**. NT:4891
(3) *suzōopoiēō* from *sún* (4862), **together with**, and *zōopoiēō* (2227), **make alive**, quicken. **make alive with** NT:4806

Romans:

- (1) *suntháptō* from *sún* (4862), **together with**, and *itháptō* (2290), to bury. To **bury with someone**. NT:4916
sumphútos from *sún* (4862), **together**, and *phúō* (5453) **spring up** from *sumphúō* (4855), to **grow together**. 4584
sustaurōō from *sún* (4862), **together with**, and parenthesis (4717), to **crucify**. To **crucify together** with,

Ephesians

- (3) *suzōopoiēō* from *sún* (4862), **together with**, and *zōopoiēō* (2227), **make alive**, quicken. **make alive with** NT:4806
(2) *sunegeirō*, from *sún* (4862), **together**, and *egeirō* (1453), to **raise**. To **raise together**. NT:4891
sugkathizō from *sún* (4862), **with**, and *kathizō* (2523), to **set** or sit. cause to **sit down with**, seat with NT:4776

It begins with faith, but out of gratitude for that faith and a recognition of what we were before we heard the gospel we repent in sorrow and joyfully confess that Jesus is Lord. None of these are works of merit to earn, they are works that God has asked for and faith joyfully gives them. But not until the act of baptism does everything come to completion. In each of these things we see the grace of God. Giving impossible things beyond our power with such simple things like faith repentance, confession and baptism.

(by grace you have been saved),

This is such an important part of our salvation that the Holy Spirit adds it in parentheses, even in the midst of still revealing what this grace has brought to us. To be made alive together with Christ after being dead in our trespasses is such an amazing act of grace that it needed to be mentioned here and then repeated in its proper place. Grace from God to man has two distinction stages. The first is the gracious kindness and goodwill in the heart of God. God, because of His love and mercy had a strong desire to show us favor.

The second stage of grace is on the part of the recipient. In this case, how could man have even conceive of the depth of his plight. At the same time he is hearing it (from the gospel) he is also learning of God's favor and gracious gift. This creates a sense of awe that such a great favor could have been bestowed. This leads to gratitude and a strong sense of obligation and indebtedness.

*“charis... grace; Latin gratia: I. **outward grace or favour** (as we say well or ill favoured), grace, loveliness, Hom., etc.; II. **grace or favour felt**, whether on the part of the Doer or the Receiver: 1. **on the part of the Doer**, grace, graciousness, kindness, goodwill, ... for or towards one, ... 2. **on the part of the Receiver**, the **sense of favour received, thankfulness, thanks, gratitude**, ... for a thing, ... **to acknowledge a sense of favour, feel grateful**, ... to feel *gratitude* to one for a thing, ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT: 5485)*

Grace bestows favor to one who desperately needs it, but has nothing about them that would make them worthy to receive it. God's good will must stoop far lower and give a favor far higher than anything man can conceive.

Consequently, when a Christian seeks to comprehend the idea of being saved by God's grace, they must first recognize that this grace was not only a favor offered to them that they do not and could never deserve, but that it was a favor offered in lovingkindness and with good will on God's part. God loves us, He wanted to help us and longed to save us. The grace and mercy He offers come from a heart of pity, compassion and mercy.

For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him. Ps. 103:11-14

God rescued us from the dangers and destruction which our previous lifestyle was leading us to. He saved us from perishing, he healed and restored us to spiritual health.

*sozo occurs **fifty-four times** in the Gospels ... Of the instances where sozo is used, **fourteen relate to deliverance from disease or demon possession...** in **twenty instances, the inference is to the rescue of physical life from some impending peril or instant death ... the remaining twenty times, the reference is to spiritual salvation...** (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4982)*

All of this is involved in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is one of the many spiritual blessings found in Christ and exhibits the power of God.

6 and raised us up together,

The two parallel passages in Romans and Colossians make it very clear that when one is baptized they are not only buried with Him, but also raised with him. The Holy Spirit connected our being made alive with our being raised up with Him.

*Therefore **we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom. 6:4***

buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. Col. 2:12

Since our being raised up with him is only connected in the New Testament with baptism, it is clear that the Holy Spirit is speaking of the new birth where we are born again of water and the Spirit. In that water, we enter Christ and in that entrance we die with Him, having been buried with Him, and subsequently being raised with Him.

*sunegeirō **awaken together, cause to rise up together** ... Ephesians and Colossians use this compound verb of **believers' participation, effected by God, in Christ's resurrection.** Eph 2:6: and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ... Rom 6:4 ff. **understands the new life of believers under grace as participation in the reality of Christ's resurrection.** ... Similarly Col 2:12: In which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (Exegetical Dictionary*

NT:2891)

While the term “*raised egeiro*” is used many times in the gospels and the book of Acts to describe Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. Only here and in colossians do we enter into fellowship and joint participation with that resurrection. Just as Jesus arose from the dead and was recalled back to life, even so are we.

The Holy Spirit links Christ’s resurrection with our baptism. What we saw in Christ’s resurrection, God sees in our baptism. The spiritual blessing of being restored to spiritual life after being spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins. God’s rich mercy and abundant grace brought this about.

We have been raised together with Christ in a way very similar to when two people rise from a chair at the same time. When a Christian is buried in the waters of baptism he is being buried spiritually with Christ, when a Christian is raised up from the waters of baptism he is being spiritually raised with Christ. He is then in Christ, has all spiritual blessings one of which is spiritual life.

and made us sit together in the heavenly places

It is not difficult to understand the words “*sit together*.” What is complex is understanding how we are doing this and what significance it has that we know it. Since it is placed with “*alive together*” and “*raised together*,” it all occurs at the same moment. This is simply another ways of expressing that we are in Christ. Just as Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God we are sitting together with Him. There isn’t much more to look at as far as how to understand this. Since we are alive together and sitting together with Him, the best way to see this is fellowship.

Because we have been made alive, we now live not only in this age, but our citizenship and our life also exists in the spiritual realm. We exist in both realms.

*For **OUR CITIZENSHIP IS** in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. Phil. 3:20-21*

*Let us therefore **draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace**, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help (us) in time of need. Heb. 4:16*

*But **YOU HAVE COME** to Mount Zion and to the **city of the living God**, the **heavenly Jerusalem**, to an **innumerable company of angels**, 23 to the **general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven**, to **God the Judge of all**, to the **spirits of just men made perfect**, 24 to **Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant**, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. Heb. 12:22-24*

in Christ Jesus,

Again, Paul continues to emphasize where all these blessings have been placed. If one is in Christ he has every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. One of these blessings is the right to be spiritually alive and to sit with Christ in the heavenly places.

7 that in the ages to come

There was an important purpose that transcends the simple fact of our salvation. With “*hina* — the purpose and end are revealed. It was “*to the intent that; to the end that, in order that...*” these things were done. “The ages to come” refer to all the immensity and longevity of eternity. The term “ages” is defined:

aiōn ... In its primary, it signifies time, short or long, in its unbroken duration; ... essentially time as the condition under which all created things exist, and the measure of their existence; signifying time, ...” (Trench’s Synonyms NT:2889)

aiōn ... (I) Age, an indefinitely long period or lapse of time, perpetuity, ever, forever, eternity. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:165)

Whether there is one age after another, or whether the plural is simply given as an emphasis for eternity is impossible for us to understand or describe. The only ages we are aware of right now is the present age in which we live and the one promised after this life is over when we receive a

new heavens and new earth. Perhaps there will be subsequent ages, perhaps not. Whatever is to come, we will be there. In these ages to come God had a purpose and intent for us which we could only do if He saved us in the manner spoken above. Now that we are saved by God's grace, we ought to meditate on why He did it and what He had in mind.

He might show the exceeding riches of His grace

There is something God wanted to show and reveal to us that would have been impossible if He had not done these things. At this point in our walk with Christ, we have a dim understanding of what God has done for us. Paul already spoke three times of God's intent that as we better understood these things we would better praise Him.

predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. Eph. 1:5-6

the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. Eph. 1:11-12

until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. Eph. 1:14-15

But looking at things from this side of eternity cannot give us the vista of what we will see on the other side. God wanted to demonstrate and reveal something that could not have otherwise been done. This act of Jesus' death on the cross will appear ever more glorious and amazing in the ages to come.

"endeiknuni: to point out, ... in the N. T. only in Middle... to show one's self in something, show something in one's self... 1. to show, demonstrate, prove, whether by arguments or by acts... 2. to manifest, display, put forth..." (Thayer, p. 213; 1731)

"endeiknuni: ... show, prove, demonstrate ... In the NT only the middle appears; all 11 NT occurrences are in the Epistles, and all have an accusative object Rom 2:15: they demonstrate that the work of the law (i.e., the deeds demanded by the law) is written ... 9:17: my power; v. 22: the wrath (of God); Eph 2:7: the wealth of his grace; 1 Tim 1:16: his complete patience; ..." Exegetical Dictionary NT:1732

Often a gift can only be understood in the context of its value and usefulness. We might give a child a precious gift, but having never used it and not understanding the fulness of its value, he might not have the gratitude and appreciation that will come over time as he understands more and more fully the sacrifice that was made and the great blessings it has brought to him.

How can we possibly fully understand the greatness of His grace until we have passed through the judgment day and witnessed those who did not receive it? How can we understand the value of this grace until we are given our new spiritual body and living in our new spiritual home?

In the ages to come we will see its "exceeding riches." These are two massive superlatives. They are used of things that are truly beyond our ability to take in or comprehend. "Exceeding" is used of things that "exceed extraordinarily" and are "supreme."

hyperballō ... f: a degree which exceeds extraordinarily a point on an implied or overt scale of extent - 'extraordinary, extreme, supreme, far more, much greater, to a far greater degree.' 'the extraordinary greatness of his grace' Eph 2:7. In this expression in Eph 2:7, both hyperballō and ploutos (78.15) serve as expressions of degree; ... hyperballō indicates an implied comparison, while ploutos suggests not only a high degree of something, but also value. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:5235)

The Holy Spirit then speaks of riches and wealth. Yet the riches of the grace of God exceed what we can ever comprehend, yet many answers can be found in His Word and we should seek to learn as much as possible. The more we understand about the wealth of the grace that has been given to us the better able we will be to thank and appreciate Him for it. "Riches" actually adds on to this. This is an abundance and plenitude. The highest point on any scale. The richest and most abundant.

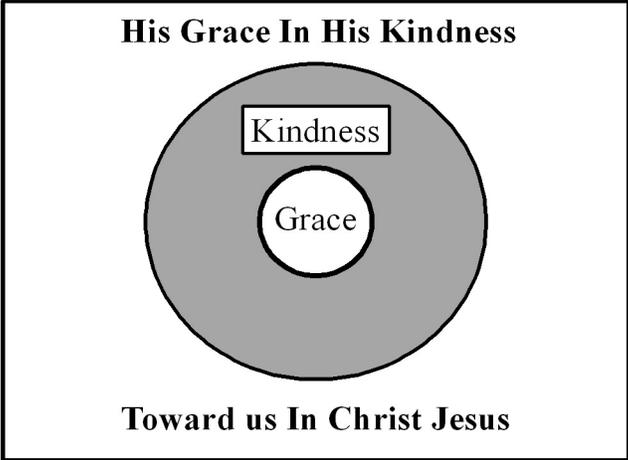
"ploutos,... riches, wealth; a. prop. and absol. abundance of external possessions... b. univ. fullness, abundance, plenitude ..." (Thayer, p. 519; 4149)

ploutos ... a high point on any scale and having the implication of value as well as abundance - 'great, abundant, abundantly, greatly, extremely.' ..." (Lou & Nida, from Greek-English Lexicon NT:4149)

So the value of the grace of God is already the highest point on the scale. It is abundant both in value and in abundance. But this doesn't really capture it. It is far more! It is a wealth and abundance that exceeds extraordinarily above what one would normally consider wealth. It exceeds our ability to comprehend. Yet it will lead to *"to the praise of the glory of His grace."* When this age comes to an end and the next age begins, we will learn more and more fully what a loving act of gracious giving, along with the amazing value that it actually holds.

of His grace in His kindness toward us

By placing "en" between "grace," and "kindness" this grace is found in the midst of His kindness. This is very similar to 2:4 where His rich mercy came through (*dia*) His great love. His great mercy (feelings of pity and compassion with a desire to help) were created through His great love (benevolent concern for the needs of others). So now His grace (unmerited favor) is found *"in the interior of, within the limits of,"* His kindness. Possibly this kindness is even *"assisted and became the means"* for His grace.



"en...a preposition taking the dative after it;... Eng. **in, on, at, with, by among.** | LOCALLY; 1. of Place proper; a. in the interior of some whole; within the limits of some space... 5. used of that with which a person is surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted, or acts... d. of the instrument or means by or with which anything is accomplished, owing to the influence of the Hebr. prep... much more common in the sacred writ. than in the prof... where we say **with, by means of, by(through)**..." (Thayer, p. 209-212; 1722)

Since these two words are working in tandem, it is important to use their broad definitions to help narrow down the exact meaning here. This is especially true when we are now made to understand that the gospel was designed to show them to us, but that their fulness will not be gained until this age is done. Yet that doesn't keep us from studying, comparing and seeking to grasp them as far as possible while here in this life.

First, we want to get a survey of the lay of the land. These two qualities are set forth not only in the midst of the rich mercy and great love, but also of salvation by faith and the gift of God.

<u>In The Ages To Come</u>	
Rich mercy through (<i>dia</i>) great love	By grace through (<i>dia</i>) faith you have been saved
Exceeding riches of grace in (<i>en</i>) kindness	Not out of (<i>ek</i>) yourselves the gift of God.

This passage is especially helpful because there are two different meanings for grace depending on the context. The first is the giving of the grace and the second the receiving of the grace. Since it is connected with kindness here and with the gift of God in the next verse, both sides of grace are set forth together.

He might show the exceeding riches of HIS GRACE IN HIS KINDNESS TOWARD US in Christ Jesus. 8 For BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is THE GIFT OF GOD, Eph. 2:7-9

"His grace in His kindness" expresses His emotions as the giver of the grace. "grace — the gift of God" captures the emotions we feel as we realize this value of the gift we could never deserve or earn.

A composite of the definitions and how "grace" was used prior to its selection by the Holy Spirit helps us get a broad spectrum of the color and texture of this amazing word. In the midst of the kindness of God, this word means "graciousness, kindness, goodwill toward one." "the friendly

disposition from which the kindly act proceeds, graciousness, loving-kindness, goodwill," "demonstrations of a ruler's favor," and "gracious disposition."

*“charis... grace; Latin gratia: I. **outward grace or favour** (as we say well or ill favoured), grace, loveliness, Hom., etc.; II. **grace or favour felt**, whether on the part of the Doer or the Receiver: 1. **on the part of the Doer, grace, graciousness, kindness, goodwill**, ... for or towards one, ... 2. **on the part of the Receiver, the sense of favour received, thankfulness, thanks, gratitude**, ... for a thing, ... **to acknowledge a sense of favour, feel grateful**, ... to feel *gratitude* to one for a thing, ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT: 5485)*

charis has various uses, (a) objective, that which bestows or occasions pleasure, delight, or causes favorable regard; it is applied, e. g., to beauty, or gracefulness of person, Luke 2:40; act, 2 Cor 8:6, or speech, Luke 4:22, RV, "words of grace" (KJV, "gracious words"); Col 4:6; (b) subjective, (1) on the part of the bestower, the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds, graciousness, loving-kindness, goodwill ... especially with reference to the divine favor or "grace," ... there is stress on its freeness and universality, its spontaneous character, as in the case of God's redemptive mercy, and the pleasure or joy He designs for the recipient; thus it is set in contrast with debt, Rom 4:4,16, with works, 11:6, and with law, John 1:17; ... (2) on the part of the receiver, a sense of the favor bestowed, a feeling of gratitude, e. g., Rom 6:17 ("thanks"); in this respect it sometimes signifies "to be thankful," e. g., Luke 17:9 ("doth he thank the servant?" lit., "hath he thanks to"); 1 Tim 1:12; ... (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:5485)

charis The basis of the usage is the relation to *chairō* ... *charis* is **what delights** ... It may be a state causing joy or an act accompanying it ... It is joyous being, "charm," understood not in terms of the beautiful but of the element of the delightful in the beautiful, ... it is the happy state, the "favour" of fortune, ... can be a mood or emotion, e.g., "sympathy," (© 374 , 22 ff.) plus its expression in gestures and deeds, "kindness, **As kindness charis is an act that causes pleasure ... from the standpoint of the recipient ... "thanks,"** ... There is play on the two senses of gift and thanks in *Soph.* ... *charis* is a fixed term for demonstrations of a ruler's favour, often used in inscriptions: ... Mostly we have the plural in the concrete sense of "gift," ... In the singular, *charis* can also mean "gracious disposition,"... A special use is for the showing of grace in court. ... (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:5485)

charis ... connected with *charin* is first of all that property in a thing which causes it to give joy to the hearers or beholders of it,... and then, seeing that to a Greek there was nothing so joy-inspiring as grace or beauty, it implied the presence of this, ... *charis* after a while came to signify not necessarily the grace or beauty of a thing, as a quality appertaining to it; but the gracious or beautiful thing, act, thought, speech, or person it might be, itself—the grace embodying and uttering itself, where there was room or call for this, in gracious outcomings toward such as might be its objects; not any longer 'favour' in the sense of beauty, but 'the favour'; (Trench's Synonyms NT:5485)

When we look at this “graciousness, kindness, and goodwill, friendly disposition, loving-kindness and favor through the lens of kindness, it becomes all the more vibrant and powerful. But kindness in the language the Holy Spirit expressed the things of God to those whose eye could not see and ears could not hear and it never could have entered into the hearts of men. The Holy Spirit revealed them, not in man’s wisdom but which the Holy Spirit teaches. He chose the words in Greek, so we must look at the words if we can in Greek.

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ... 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 1Cor. 2:9-10; 13-14

Kindness in English is a single dimension word. “friendly, generous, considerate, helpful and caring.” In comparison, the Greek definition is three dimensional. It has a much broader spectrum of emotions and attitudes than simple kindness. When trying to understand the character of God, this becomes much more complex. This is a term of “kindness,” “friendliness,” and “mildness,” and of being “good and pleasant.” It is “kindness,” but it is also “goodness” “gentleness,” “benignity” and “sweetness.” These synonyms open up God’s character and attitude toward us.

chrestotes... In profane Gk. the noun, ... is used only to characterize person, and along the lines of the adj., it means a. “honesty,” “respectability,” “worthiness.” ... It then means b. “kindness,” “friendliness,” “mildness,” whether publicly or privately. The ruler’s mildness... In private life it denotes marital love when used with *philostorgia*... The New Testament... b. It is used only in the Pauline corpus. Here it means the same thing as the Adj., and like it denotes God’s gracious attitude and acts toward sinners, both before Christ... and also in and through Christ... “Kittel, Vol 9, P. 489-492; 5544).

chrestos primarily signifies “fit for use, able to be used” (akin to *chraomai*, “to use”), hence, “good, virtuous, mild,

pleasant" (in **contrast to what is hard, harsh, sharp, bitter**). It is said (a) of the **character of God as "kind, gracious,"** Luke 6:35; 1 Peter 2:3; "good," Rom 2:4, where the neuter of the adjective is used as a noun, "the goodness" (cf. the corresponding noun *chrestotes*, "goodness," in the same verse); of the yoke of Christ, Matt 11:30, "easy" (a suitable rendering would be "kindly"); (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:5543)

chrestotes... **a beautiful word, as it is the expression of a beautiful grace** The A. V. renders it '**good**' (Rom 3:12); '**kindness**' (2 Cor 6:6; Eph 2:7; Col 3:12; Titus 3:4); '**gentleness**' (Gal 5:22). The Rheims, which has for it '**benignity**,' **a great improvement on 'gentleness'** (Gal 5:22), '**sweetness**' (2 Cor 6:6), **has seized more successfully the central notion of the word.** ... So far from being this mere grace of word and countenance, **it is one pervading and penetrating the whole nature, mellowing there all which would have been harsh and austere; thus wine is *chréstos*, which has been mellowed with age** (Luke 5:39); **Christ's yoke is *chréstos*, as having nothing harsh or galling about it** (Matt 11:30). ..." (Trench, Synonyms, NT:5544)

chrestotes... in the LXX is used only of God and designates **his kind and merciful disposition or actions** (including the resulting gifts of fortune and redemption); In the NT, too, ***chrestotes* refers to goodness (the character trait or virtue manifesting itself in a kind disposition and behavior toward others)** in its **various nuances (uprightness, mildness, kindness, graciousness, etc.)**. ... occurs 3 times in **Rom 11:22**, "Therefore consider the **goodness and severity of God**: on those who fell, severity; but **toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness**. Otherwise you also will be cut off." ... Eph 2:7 directly associates *chréstotés* with God's *charis*... In the five-member catalog of virtues in Col 3:12 *chréstotés* appears after *splangchna oiktirmou* ("heartfelt compassion") and before *tapeinophrosuné* ("humility"), *prautés* ("meekness"), and *makrothumia* ("forbearance"). This sequence might be explained as follows: "Heartfelt compassion" refers to what for Christian behavior is the decisive, fundamental disposition: The view of antiquity was that the *splangchna* were the seat of emotions and feelings ... The four terms that follow refer, then, to the resulting external behavior. *chréstotés* stands at the center, (Exegetical Dictionary NT:5544)

It's use in Scripture, the definitions above, and the words used in connection with it help round out our understanding of this word. It is used with *forbearance longsuffering*, and *love with God*.

*Or do you despise the riches of His **goodness (kindness)**, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the **goodness (kindness)** of God leads you to repentance? Rom. 2:4-5*

*Therefore consider the **goodness (kindness)** and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, **goodness (kindness)**, if you continue in His **goodness (kindness)**. Otherwise you also will be cut off. Rom. 11:22-23*

*But when the **kindness** and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:4-6*

It is used with "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and tender mercy, humility, meekness, bearing with and forgiving."

*But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control**. Against such there is no law. Gal. 5:22-24*

*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on **tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another** Col. 3:12-13*

God's grace stems from this kindness. Together they form the foundation of the amazing things we will learn about God as the eternal ages unfold.

in Christ Jesus.

This is all tied back to Eph 1:3 where "every *spiritual blessing in the heavenly places* is found in the interior of and within (*en*) *Christ*. Again, The Holy Spirit manifests the importance of our relationship with Christ. Since Jesus made it possible, we can have nothing with the close relationship God created for us to have with Him in the church which is His body.

8 For by grace you have been saved

As the Holy Spirit sums up the extreme extraordinary greatness of the wealth, plenitude and abundance of His grace that will become ever clearer as the ages pass, every word is important. The term "*for*" is the fourth most common conjunction (1042 times) in the NT. It is used to give the reason for a previous statement or further explain it.

For this reason, these two passages must be taken together. It is the grace in the midst of kindness that brought the gift of salvation.

“gar is the fourth most common conjunction in the NT (after kai, de, and hoti). ... It appears 1,042 times in the NT. ... generally indicates a causal relation between two statements, whereby the second statement gives a reason for or explains the first.” (Exegetical Dictionary NT:1063)

The entire scope of our salvation and everything that it brings to us is all based on His grace in His kindness. As we learn more and more about this gift of salvation, ever more will we learn to praise, glorify and honor Him for doing this.

Salvation infers two things. We are lost, in danger and facing a grave peril. We were not simply going to miss out on heaven and eternal life which would have been a great tragedy, but much worse. Jesus came to save us from what He described as darkness, fire, torment, worms, weeping, gnashing of teeth.

*Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and **cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**' Mt. 22:13*

*And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be **cast into hell fire** — 48 where **'Their worm does not die And the fire is not quenched.'** Mk. 9:47-48*

*The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And **being in torments in Hades**, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Lk. 16:22-23*

*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:** Mt. 25:41*

*And **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.** Rev. 20:10*

The free gift undeserved, the offer of pardon upon no other basis than the good will of the one in position to show mercy or condemn. Our position as brought out in 1-3 left no room or logical reason for God to offer pardon. We were rebels, sinners, trespassers. We were dead, we walked the broad path of the age, we were epitome of disobedience, and the epitome of the type of being God pours out his wrath on. Of our own freewill we fulfilled the desires of the flesh and of the mind. What could we do to deserve or earn God's pardon and the creation of the gospel with the great sacrifice of Jesus?

Yet salvation has another side. Not only does it infer escape from the terrible nature of the loss, but also the wonderful blessings of salvation. Through God's grace we now have eternal life, a new resurrected spiritual body and a new heavens and earth with a city whose builder and maker is God. How can we fathom all of these things while still in this life and only vaguely aware of all that it entails?

In connection with this gift, we now look at grace from the perspective of the one who is receiving it. The sense of the favor bestowed, the sense of gratitude and thanksgiving. We have been given a gift we do not deserve, could never earn and only have because of the gracious kindness of God. This is the starting point from which He *“might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”*

To call this ASTONISHING! BEYOND BELIEF! ASTOUNDING! AMAZING! MARVELLOUS! WONDERFUL! hardly captures the reality of what God has already done. Yet He did not this and it is done! There is no way to doubt the power of the grace and mercy of God as we see it all around us. God saved us! There can be no qualifications to this statement.

*For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But **God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 Much more then, **having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.** Rom. 5:6-9*

*He who **did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?** Rom. 8:32*

through faith,

Prepositions form the heart of the relationships between words. When The Spirit placed “eis” between repent and be baptized and salvation he revealed the relationship was one of entrance

into. When He places “*dia*” between salvation and faith, He was revealing their relationship, defining and revealing the exact role of faith. It is important to know the definition of the preposition Paul uses here. While it is a complex preposition with many variations, there is no doubt here that it means “agency or means. Faith is the instrument, the manner and the way through which salvation is received.

“*dia*... A. with the *genitive*: **through**... III. of the **Means or Instrument by which anything is effected**; because what is done by means of a person or thing seems to pass as it were through the same... 2. of the **instrument used to accomplish a thing**: or the **instrumental cause in the stricter sense**:... *by the service, the intervention of, by means of, with the help of*... 3. with the *gen.* of a thing *dia* is used to denote the manner in which a thing is done, or the formal cause...” (Thayer, 132-135; 1223)

dia, preposition governing Genitive and Accusative ... **radical sense, through**. A. With genitive I. of **Place or Space**: 1. of motion **in a line, through, right through**, ... 2. of motion **through a space**, but **not in a line, all through, over**, ... 3. of **Intervals of Space**, II. of **Time**: 1. **throughout, during**, ... **all day long, ... continually, for a short time**, ... 2. of the **interval between two points of Time**, ... **after** a long time, **after** a time, *chronos dia chronou time after time*, ... 3. of **successive Intervals**, ... III. **Causal, through, by** 1. of the **Agent**, by the mouth of messengers, ... 2. of the **Instrument or Means**, ... 3. of the **Manner or Way**, in haste, hastily, IV. to **express conditions or states**, to be in a state of quiet, to be tranquil, to be at war with one, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT 1223)

When Jesus cried it is finished, His work on earth was completed. After He returned to heaven He built the church and sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth. With the close of the first century, the gospel plan of salvation was complete and needed nothing further. It was once for all delivered. Faith doesn't add anything to this. It only opens and gives access to the power of salvation that exists within.

God gives salvation by grace only to those who meet His stringent conditions of faith. God can offer salvation as a gift which is beyond price, in any manner He chose. We can't change the conditions He has set forth. Multitudes of people today redefine faith to fit their own ideas.

But God has already defined the quality of faith. It must be a faith like Abraham's (Rom. 4). It must fit all the parameters of Heb 11, following the examples of the faith of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and all the prophets.

James tells us it must be a working faith, Paul tells us it must be a love of the truth faith, Jesus tells us it is a narrow and straitened faith of one who does the will of His Father and in this way building itself upon the rock.

Faith is not an easy condition many have watered it down to mean today. It takes effort and constant supervision on our part to keep it pure and strong, but for those who fulfill this condition, the power has worked and they are saved.

and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

With another preposition another relationship between these words of revelation is revealed. This time it is a preposition of source and origin. The fundamental meaning is that of exiting out from somewhere or something.

ek, a **preposition** governing the *genitive*. Also, it denotes **exit or emission out of, as separation from, something with which there has been close connection**; ... **from out of, out from, forth from, from**, it is used ... I. of place, and 1. universally, **of the place from which; from a surrounding or enclosing place, from the interior of**: ... 5. **of the condition or state out of which one comes or is brought**: ... 6. of any kind of separation or dissolution of connection with a thing or person ... II **of the origin, source, cause**; ... 5... **is used of the cause** (whether thing or person) by which the act expressed by the accompanying verb is aided, sustained, effected... ” (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:1537)

But there are some questions. The demonstrative pronoun “*that*” “*refers to what precedes, referring to the substance of the previous discourse.*

touto... the neuter **touto a. Refers to what precedes... for this very cause... for this reason... it refers to the substance of the preceding discourse**... b. **it prepares the reader or hearer and renders him attentive to what follows, which thus gets special weight**...” *dia touto*. . .” (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:3778)

But there are two points in the previous discourse. It can be salvation or it can be faith.

*Salvation is not out of yourselves it is a gift of God
Faith is not out of yourself it is the gift of God.*

Grammatically, it can be either. Doctrinally it could also be either. While some would like to proclaim that faith is what they must produce, when we dig a little deeper to determine where faith comes from we find that it comes by hearing the word of God.

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Rom 10:17

While everyone understand that we must hear and produce the faith is anyone really ready to say that their faith is totally what they produced? There is no doubt that we must hear and believe, but their is also no doubt that God gave us everything necessary to believe.

*If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is **the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. 10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself**; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son 1Jn. 5:9-10*

In no way can we say our faith or our salvation is of ourselves. To say that would ignore all that Paul just said and all that is said in other passages.

We did not plan this in eternity, we did give the proofs that make it so believable through prophecy and miracles, we did not give the precious and exceeding great promises that are so motivational in keeping our faith strong. All these were gifts of God.

There is nothing wrong with accepting that every facet of our salvation is a gift of God and something we should glorify and honor Him for. All should consider their faith and trust in God is another of His gifts of grace. That was in our praise for such a gift, we can work ever harder to bring it into harmony with all God wants from our faith.

Truly it a gift that must be worked for (through study, and effort to hear and properly comprehend), but not something that has been merited or earned. Without the gospel, without Christ, without miracles, signs and wonders, who could believe? Objectively and subjectively faith is a special gift of God.

Yet as with all conditional promises, the result is the gift we didn't deserve, but all our efforts and toil must be put forth to meet the conditions. But if the gift is far greater than the work done to receive it, even the work is a product of grace. This is what Paul affirmed about Abraham.

*For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**" 4 Now **to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.** 5 **But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,** 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: 7 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin." Rom. 4:2-8*

We too have righteousness imputed and reckoned to us by faith, but this doesn't make faith a part of earning righteousness. Making the faith possible through the Scriptures and giving to faith the power through the blood of Jesus is all grace. Only our yielding up of our will is truly all we can bring. Everything else is a gift from God that we are using.

Eph. 2:9-14

In The Ages To Come

Rich mercy through (*dia*) great love

Exceeding riches of grace in (*en*) kindness

Not out of works,

By grace through (*dia*) faith you have been saved

Not out of (*ek*) yourselves the gift of God.

In order that no one can boast

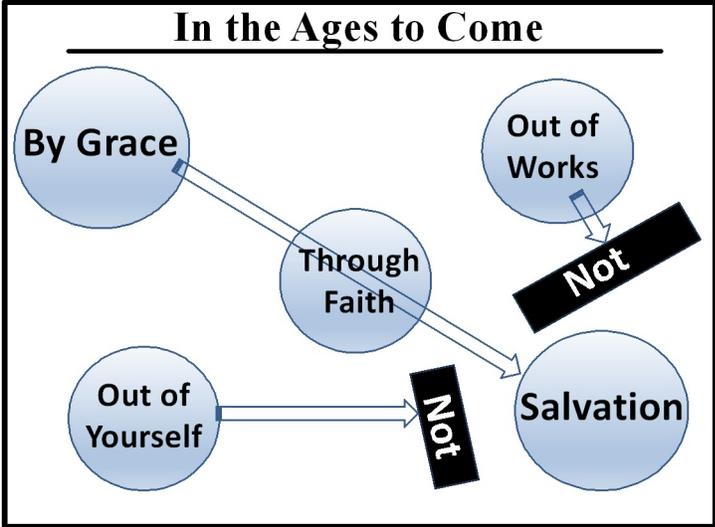
9 not of works,

Once again the preposition (*ek*) reveals the relationship between grace - faith - works. But this time it is a negation. It is **not** out of works. Works is not the source or origin or salvation.

There are few subjects that have generated more controversy than the relationship between grace, faith, and works. The passage itself is clear enough. The source of our salvation is not of works. Works includes anything man can produce by labor and toil. His efforts, his accomplishments, possessions, things produced, and deeds.

ergon ... *mind your own business*, 1. in ll. mostly of deeds of war, to engage in battle, ... 2. **of works of industry, tilled lands, fields, farms**, Hom.; the tilled lands of Ithaca, ... then, generally, **property, wealth, possessions**, ... b. of women's work, weaving, c. of other occupations, *fishing*, as a way of life, Od.; ... also **of all kinds of works, such as mines, iron-works**, ... 3. a hard piece of work, a hard task, ... 4. **a deed, action, often, ... deed**, not word, ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:2041)

"*ergon*... 1. **business, employment, that with which anyone is occupied**... 2. **any product whatever, any thing accomplished by hand, art, industry, mind**... 3. *an act, deed, thing done*: ..." (Thayer, p. 248; 2041)



The works we produced were listed above. By our efforts the only things we produced were:

were dead in trespasses and sins, conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, were by nature children of wrath	the sons of disobedience, fulfilling desires of the flesh and mind
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Since the wages of a single sin is death, there was nothing we could bring to God. We were completely destitute.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 6:23

"There is **none righteous, no, not one**; 11 There is **none who understands**; There is **none who seeks after God**. 12 They have **all turned aside**; They have **together become unprofitable**; There is **none who does good, no, not one**." ... 19 **every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God**. 20 Therefore **by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Rom 3:10-12; 19-20**

This is the state of mankind stated over and over again in different ways and by different figures. There was no possible way mankind could please God by their own works and efforts. All were dead in their trespasses and sins.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned Rom. 5:10

Man was helpless and hopeless. No amount of work could save us from the works of sin we had already produced. God has pronounced this over and over again.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith APART FROM THE DEEDS OF THE LAW. Rom. 3:27-29

4 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**" 4 Now **to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.** 5 **But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, Rom. 4:1-6**

Even so then, at this present time there is **a remnant according to the election of grace**. 6 And if **by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.** Rom. 11:5-6

knowing that **a man is NOT JUSTIFIED BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW but by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be **justified by faith in Christ and NOT BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW; for BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW NO FLESH SHALL BE JUSTIFIED.** Gal. 2:16

For **AS MANY AS ARE OF THE WORKS OF THE LAW ARE UNDER THE CURSE**; for it is written, "**Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.**" 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "**the just shall live by faith.**" 12 Yet **the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them."** Gal. 3:10-12

who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, **not according to our works**, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, 2Tim. 1:9-10

God can't make it any clearer than this. Man is not saved by works! But what type of works is NOT saved by? The works described above are works of merit, wages earned, and works of the Law. There is not salvation outside of grace and faith!

The door is forever closed after the first sin. We cannot be saved by our own efforts! The moment we accept this truth, we are halfway to understanding how we are saved.

The problem is simple, but man has made it complex. God uses the exact same word for the efforts and products He wants us to produce after we have received His grace as He did for the efforts and products we produced before we received His grace. The first are "**works of faith**" and the second "**works of merit.**" It's as simple as the Holy Spirit reveals it through James.

What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he HAS FAITH BUT DOES NOT HAVE WORKS? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also FAITH BY ITSELF, IF IT DOES NOT HAVE WORKS, IS DEAD. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that A MAN IS JUSTIFIED BY WORKS, AND NOT BY FAITH ONLY. 25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? 26 For AS THE BODY WITHOUT THE SPIRIT IS DEAD, SO FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD ALSO. Jas. 2:14-26

After we accept that works of merit and wages has been ruled out. After we have grasped that man is saved by faith and not by works of the Law. We must talk about this faith. It is the quality of faith that James is speaking about, not works of merit and wages.

It is actually so simple. Hebrews 11 expresses it clearly. By faith ... each of the characters listed did something! It was what they did that gave their faith meaning. Without works of faith, what is faith? If faith doesn't motivate one to work then it is a dead faith. The problem is not in the works. The problem is in the faith. Every passage that speaks of works for the Christian are always works of faith and every passage that speaks of works before becoming a Christian are works with wages, works that come only from ourselves.

Paul makes this clear to Titus. He says it all:

1. It is not by works of righteousness that we have done.
2. According to His mercy He saved us
3. Having been justified by His grace.
4. Those who have believed must be careful to maintain good works.

not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that **having been justified by His grace** we should become heirs according to the hope of

eternal life. 8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm **constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.** These things are good and profitable to men. Titus 3:5-8

He also made it clear here in Ephesians

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. by grace you have been saved through faith | 5. created in Christ Jesus for good works, |
| 2. that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, | 6. which God prepared beforehand |
| 3. not of works, lest anyone should boast. | 7. that we should walk in them. |
| 4. For we are His workmanship, | |

There are multitudes of passages that speak of the works God expects us to do after we become a Christian. They are not works of merit and God will not give wages for them. But they are works of faith that make faith strong and powerful enough to save us. It isn't the quality of the works. It is the fact that whatever you hand finds to do you do it with all your might. True faith doesn't say, I want to work to be saved. True faith says I am saved by faith and I want to work. Even when we have done everything possible, we are still only unprofitable servants and those with true faith know that.

Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. 10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.' Lk. 17:9-10

This is why we dare not proclaim that our faith is a work. It is only our duty, and even the lowering of our duty. It will always be a gift because it must be coupled with the bloody sacrifice of Jesus on the cross to pay for the debt. Even if God asked us for a work such as our own death it would not pay for even one sin. God asks for faith. Gives us the means to get it and then proclaims that those who make that effort will be saved.

lest anyone should boast.

This is the critical indicator that allows us to see ourselves clearly. Lest is made up of (*hina — to the intent that; to the end that, in order that of the purpose or end*) and *mé (denying the thought that it might happen)*. This should never ever happen! If anyone feels the slightest desire to boast or have any sense of self-esteem based on what we have done, then we cross this line. It is not to remove human effort, it is not to stop the labor and toil which Christians want to expend in the labor for their Lord. It is not to deny the plain statements of James that a man must have works if his faith is to save him.

God doesn't want anyone to feel that he/she in any way has done something that would allow them to feel they earned it. Not even in the slightest way should it be possible for them to *"take pride in what they have accomplished."* There should be no *"high degree of confidence."* There is nothing in ourselves. Not faith, not works, it is all a gift.

"kauchaomai : to express an unusually high degree of confidence in someone or something being exceptionally noteworthy - 'to boast.' ... 'whoever boasts must boast of the Lord' 1 Cor 1:31. 'your boasting is not right' 1 Cor 5:6. 'all such boasting is wrong' James 4:16. ... 'that is why we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God' 2 Thess 1:4. 'this is how it is with the tongue: small as it is, it can boast about great things' James 3:5. **Whether in any particular context the boasting is legitimate or not depends upon what is boasted about.** In a number of languages, however, quite different terms are employed, depending upon the differing degrees of justification for such boasting. (Lou & Nida Greek-English Lexicon NT 2744)

There is no reason with or without a proper understanding of the gospel in which a person could find one reason in which he might boast. The entire focus of the gospel beginning to end is that of salvation by the grace mercy and kindness of God. Let all beware! Let the fate of the Pharisee become ours.

9 Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 ""Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 ""The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men-- extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 "I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' 13 ""And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast,

saying, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" 14 "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Lk. 18:9-14).

Every day, as we confess our sins of commission and of omission, we are reminded that we can never be saved by what we have done. Paul always attributed all of the works he had done after he became a Christian to God's grace. When looking at himself, he only saw the chief of sinners, saved by grace and working hard because of that grace.

*For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But **by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.** 1Cor. 15:9-10*

*And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 **And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.** 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, **that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.** 1Tim. 1:12-15*

10 For we are His workmanship,

With another "gar" he gives the reason and cause of a foregoing statement. This is another reason why we could never boast and why in the ages to come the glory and praise to God for what He has done will become more and more evident to us.

We are His workmanship. From every perspective this is the truth. He created our bodies and our souls. He created our world and our lives and what we do with it. After we sinned, He made us a new creation, making us alive and giving us the gospel to believe in and giving to faith the power to bring salvation to us. This word is only used twice in the NT and always of the results of God's creative power.

poiéma, neuter noun from *poiéō* (4160), **to make. Something made, a work, workpiece, workmanship** (Rom 1:20)... Eph 2:10; Figuratively in Eph 2:10; Sept.: Ps 143:5 Eccl 3:11; Isa 29:16. It **denotes the result of work, what is produced** as contrasted to *poiésis* which is the act of making, the doing itself and not that which is made. He who does the making is *poiétés* (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4161)

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, Rom. 1:20-21

We are a work of God. This is a play on words. We are not saved by our works, but we are a work of God. We were made by Him. The only other place in the entire NT where this term is used is in Romans 1:20 where it refers to the things that God created in the physical universe. A tree, a star, or a mountain are examples of the things that God has made. Paul now explains that every Christian is like that. Each of us is a special creation of God.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.** 2Cor. 5:17-18*

Our faith makes it possible for us to become His workmanship. That is all.

created in Christ Jesus

While in English we use create and created for anything that man and God have created. In English we can easily say that man has created many masterpieces. In Scripture, this word is exclusively used of God's activity in creation. It is "always an act of God whether in the natural creation" or "in the spiritual creation."

ktizō ... **to make or create something which has not existed before - 'to create, creation'** (in the NT, used **exclusively of God's activity in creation**). ... (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2936)

ktizō used among the Greeks to mean the founding of a place, a city or colony, **signifies, in Scripture, "to create," always of the act of God, whether (a) in the natural creation**, Mark 13:19; Rom 1:25 ... 1 Cor 11:9; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16; 1 Tim 4:3; Rev 4:11; 10:6, **or (b) in the spiritual creation**, Eph 2:10,15; 4:24; Col 3:10. (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:2936)

ktizō (NT:2936) create, establish, *ktisis* (NT:2937) creation, creature, that which is created, *ktisma* (NT:2938) creature, that which is created *ktistés* (NT:2939) creator ... *ktizō* create, establish ... appears 15 times in the NT,

... 19 occurrences of *ktisis*, *ktisma* appears only in 1 Tim 4:4; James 1:18; Rev 5:13; 8:9. *ktistés* in 1 Peter 4:19. ... **All the words of the group refer to God as Creator or to his creation and creatures.** ... The word group is used in the NT in speaking of (a) the Creator, (b) the creation, (c) the new creation, and (d) the individual creature (being). (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2936)

Hence being “*created in Christ Jesus*” was intended by the Holy Spirit to be understood as a creative act of God. We struggle with this concept. We don’t want to take it further than it was intended, but we do not want to make it less than it is. The best solution is to take into context everything that was said and understand this as the new creation. With the material creation as our template, what can we understand about being created in Christ Jesus?

First, in the context of this chapter we have to understand this “*created in Christ Jesus*” to include “*making us alive*,” “*raising us up together*” and “*making us to sit together in the heavenly places*.” It would also include “*create in Himself one new man*.”

made us alive together with Christ ... 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Eph 2:5-7

to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, Eph. 2:15

put on the new man which was created according to God, Eph. 4:24

When we add in other passages that also speak of this moment when we were created in Christ Jesus, we get even more. We were “*circumcised with a circumcision made without hands*,” “*putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*,” and “*the circumcision of Christ*.” When “*buried with Him in baptism*,” “*we were raised with Him*,” “*being dead in your trespasses and sins He made us alive together with him*.”

In Him, you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, Col. 2:11-13

Finally, the creation in Christ Jesus makes us “*a new creation*.” As the new tabernacle where we serve God is not of this creation, we are now “*the firstfruits of His creatures*.”

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2Cor. 5:17

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. Gal. 6:15

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Heb. 9:11

Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. Jas. 1:18

It is impossible for us to fully understand how far to carry this facts. But they are facts, and we have to be careful to consider how great the transition the new birth actually has brought about.

Whatever we understand by being created in Christ Jesus, as new creatures, we have been created for good works.

for good works, which God prepared beforehand

As noted above, we are not saved by works, we are saved by grace. Once saved, God has prepared the good works. Nothing is left to us. We do not even choose the good works. All good works are recorded in the pages of the NT. If they are not there, then they are not among the good works God prepared for us to do.

The condition of a sinner when he hears the gospel is recorded in the first few verses. We were dead in sin, living in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. God felt pity and mercy and by grace saved us. But we could not be trusted to set our own path. Nothing has changed it has never been nor will it ever be that man can direct his own steps.

O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. Jer.

10:23

All the good works done in the church and individually have been prepared beforehand. It is all part of God's eternal purpose prepared from the beginning of the ages. Even the good works reflect His manifold wisdom.

*make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which **from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph. 3:9-12***

God determined and prepared exactly what these the good works would be.

*hetoimazo "to prepare, make ready," is used (I) absolutely, e. g., Mark 14:15; Luke 9:52; (II), with an object, e. g., (a) **of those things which are ordained (1) by God**, such as **future positions of authority**, Matt 20:23; **the coming Kingdom**, 25:34; salvation personified in Christ, Luke 2:31; **future blessings**, 1 Cor 2:9; **a city**, Heb 11:16; **a place of refuge** for the Jewish remnant, Rev 12:6; **Divine judgments on the world**, Rev 8:6; 9:7,15; 16:12; **eternal fire, for the Devil and his angels**, Matt 25:41; (2) **by Christ: a place in Heaven for His followers**, John 14:2,3; ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:2090)*

proetoimazo "to prepare beforehand" (pro, "before," and No. 1), is used of good works which God "afore prepared," for fulfillment by believers, Eph 2:10, RV (KJV, "hath before ordained," marg., "prepared"); of "vessels of mercy," as "afore prepared" by God "unto glory," Rom 9:23. ..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:4282)

that we should walk in them.

The purpose and end are now revealed. *"That (hina) is used to reveal "the intent, the end, and the purpose."* God knows what the good works are, He planned them in eternity and revealed them in the fulness of time. They have been revealed to us in the Scriptures for the purpose of our walking in them. It is interesting that Jesus would call this path we are to walk in a narrow and difficult one.

*"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and **broad is the way that leads to destruction**, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and **difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. Mt. 7:13-14***

Evidently, not everyone will be content to walk in the good works God prepared beforehand. Some will create their own good works and not remain in the ones God prepared. There are no good works for the faithful disciple to walk in except those which God prepared beforehand.

*Thus says the Lord: "Stand in the ways and see, And **ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'** Jer. 6:16*

Only in the pages of Scripture can the man of God be thoroughly furnished for every good work.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17

The conclusion is inescapable. If it is a good work it must be found in the scriptures. If it cannot be found there, then it cannot be a good work. No matter how much good "we" might think it could do if God did not reveal it then he did not so deem it. Saul thought he was doing a good work by bringing the cattle and king of the Amalekites back instead of destroying them. God did not view it that way, he considered it an act of rebellion. This is multiplied again and again in the scriptures. Only those who in total submission to God, with humility and meekness, seeking only for his glory by doing things his way are going to fulfill their purpose of being created in Christ Jesus.