**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS: THE WEALTH AND WALK OF A BELIEVER**

*“Paradise Restored”*

**Intro*:*** *Last week we learned of the abundant* ***wisdom*** *that God has graciously lavished upon us through His beloved Son. This wisdom is ours to access only as we humbly confess our lack thereof, call upon our Heavenly Father for His provision through His* ***Word*** *and commit ourselves to act according to His wisdom. We would be remiss, however, if we failed to recognize the connection between verse eight and the verses which follow. The implication is that God attaches our ability to comprehend and apply this wisdom with our understanding of His ultimate* ***plan*** *for the universe.*

*Ephesians 1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:*

*10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:*

**Some terms to understand….**

* ***“mystery”*** – a truth once **hidden** now **revealed** or made known by divine revelation.
* ***“dispensation”*** – the arranging or administration of household affairs; a mode of **dealing**.
* ***“fulness of times”*** – to **fill** up or **complete**

Another “fullness of time”… (Gal. 4:4)

*I Thess. 5:1-11*

* ***“gather together in one”*** *–“gather together* ***again****”; “****re****-****gather****”*
* **The Original Condition of man/creation (Gen. 1:31; Gen. 1:26)**

*Genesis 1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was* ***very good****. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*

*Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

*27 So God created* ***man in his own image****, in the* ***image of God created he him****; male and female created he them.*

* **The Current Condition of man/creation**
* Separated from **God**
* **Conflict** with one another
* Cursed **earth**
* **Death**

* **The Future Condition of man/creation**

*“gather together all things in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him.”*

*Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of* ***refreshing*** *(refreshing your computer)shall come from the presence of the Lord;*

*20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: (2nd coming)*

*21 Whom the heaven must receive until the* ***times of restitution of all things****, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

“*refreshing*” – like your computer

“*restitution*” – restoration

**Genesis** **Revelation**

God created Heaven and Earth New Heaven/New Earth

Man’s home – a garden Man’s home – a city

Adam/bride in Garden ruling over earth Last Adam/bride in City ruling over universe

Created sun, moon, day, and night No night, no need of sun

Entrance of sin Exit of sin

Tree of life denied to man Tree of life bearing fruit

Curse imposed Curse lifted

Satan torments man Satan tormented day and night

First home beside a river Eternal home beside a river

Man’s city built/destroyed God’s eternal city revealed

Ends with man in a coffin Ends with man living eternally

Man’s fellowship with God interrupted Man’s fellowship with God eternal

Sorrow and death No more sorrow, no more death

Fall of the first Adam Victory of the last Adam

Temporary triumph of the serpent Eternal triumph of the Lamb

PARADISE LOST PARADISE RESTORED

**Lessons for us…**

1) We must remember we live in a fallen **world** with fallen **people**. We should **expect** some conflict, difficulty and heartache along the way.

2) Because of lesson #1, the following concepts are critical for us to experience victory in this life…

* **contentment**

* **mercy**
* **forgiveness**
* **faith**

3) Remember, this is “your **worst** life now!”

*Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away*.

*Philippians 3:17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.*

*18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:*

*19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame,* ***who mind earthly things.)***

*20 For our* ***conversation is in heaven****; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*

*21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

Philippians 4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so **stand fast in the Lord,** my dearly beloved.