

## Paul's letter to the Ephesian people

Paul wrote to God's people in Ephesus and he told them that they should all live in one group together with Jesus Christ. They should always remember that Jesus Christ loves them and that he is very kind and forgives them for the wrong they have done.

<sup>1</sup> I, Paul, am writing this letter to send to all you God's people who live in Ephesus. God chose me as an apostle to work for Jesus Christ. So now I am writing this to you who trust in him.

<sup>2</sup> I pray that our Father God and Jesus Christ our Lord will be kind to you people in Ephesus, and give you peace.

*About the good things God has freely given us*

<sup>3</sup> Let us praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is very kind, and he has freely given us good things from heaven. He has given us those good things for our spirits, because we have fellowship with Christ.

<sup>4</sup> Long, long ago, before God made the world, he chose us to be his own people, because we have fellowship with Christ. God wants to keep us separate for himself and to make us perfect. He loved us so much, <sup>5</sup> that he decided long ago that he would make us his people, because Jesus Christ would save us. This is what God wanted in the beginning and what pleased him.

<sup>6</sup> Let us praise God, because he is very kind and he has freely given us Jesus Christ, the Son he loves so much.

<sup>7</sup> Christ died for us. He poured out his blood for us and set us free. So God has forgiven our sins. He is very kind to us. <sup>8</sup> Yes, he is really kind to us.

God is very wise.

<sup>9-10</sup> Because of that, long ago in the beginning, he decided to make Christ ruler. He said, "I will make Christ ruler, and he will be the most important ruler of all. He will rule over everything in heaven and on earth." But we didn't know that word before. Then at last God showed himself to us and sent Christ into the world. This is what he wanted and what pleased him. And so he let us know that he will make Christ ruler. When will God do that? We don't know, but God knows. But we do know that God will make Christ ruler over everything.

<sup>11-12</sup> Some time ago we Jewish people who believed in God had fellowship with Christ. At that time God chose us to be his, because he had already decided it long before that. He is the one who controls everything as he has planned. So he chose us, who were the first to trust in Christ, so that we could praise him. And we will praise him because he is very wonderful.

<sup>13</sup> And you too are God's people. You too heard the true message, the good news that Christ can save you, and now you believe in him. First of all God made a promise and said to you, "I will give you my Holy Spirit so that it will be a sign

that you belong to me.” Then he gave the Spirit to you.

<sup>14</sup> We know that God has already given his Spirit to us his people. Because of that we know that he will give us more good things for our spirits, and he will set us free forever. So let us praise God, because he is very wonderful.

### *Paul's prayer*

<sup>15-16</sup> Because of everything I have said to you, I keep thanking God today that you believe in the Lord Jesus. Before, when you first trusted Jesus, people told me about you. They said, “These Ephesian people love all God's people.” I thanked God then and I have kept on thanking him for that. And I keep praying to God for you, <sup>17</sup> the one who is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Father and he is very great and so I am asking him to make you wise and show himself to you so that you will know him well. <sup>18</sup> And I am asking God to open your minds so that you will see his light. And I want you to hope in God and know that he will give us everything good for our spirits. He will give freely now and always.

<sup>19</sup> I want you to know that God is very strong. No one else is so powerful. He is powerful and he will make us his people strong. <sup>20</sup> He was powerful when he made Christ come alive again. And he was powerful when he took Christ up into the heavens. He made him sit at his right hand because Christ is very great.

<sup>21</sup> All rulers are important people. But even if they are very important, Christ is much greater

than they are. He rules forever over all the rulers in the heavens and in this world. And his name is greater because he himself is greater. He is very great now and he always will be. <sup>22</sup> God has made Christ Lord over everything. He gave him to us so that he would become ruler over us who belong to God. <sup>23</sup> But Christ is not alone. We, God's people, are like his body and Christ is in all places and he works in all places.

## 2

### *About God saving us*

<sup>1</sup> Before you knew God, you were separated from him. You were like dead people, because you had disobeyed God and done wrong. <sup>2</sup> At that time you lived like people who don't know God. You were sinners, always doing what is wrong. You obeyed Satan, the one who rules over the evil spirits above. And he still works today in people who do not obey God.

<sup>3</sup> But all of us disobeyed God. We did what we wanted to do, whatever came into our minds. And we did what our bodies wanted, and anything other people were doing, we did that too.

Because of that God should have been angry with all of us, <sup>4-5</sup> but he had pity on us. While we were still doing wrong things, we were like dead people. But God's pity goes on forever; it never ends. God loves us so much. He is full of pity and love. And so he saved us so that we could have fellowship with Christ. God saved us because he is kind. <sup>6</sup> God made Jesus Christ

come alive and he took him up to heaven and made him sit down to rule there. And God has taken us to heaven too, and we too are ruling with Jesus Christ because we have fellowship with Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> God has made us rule so that everyone will know that he is always very kind. And because he is kind he sent Jesus Christ to us to show us that he really loves us.

<sup>8-9</sup> You didn't save yourself, even if you were a good person and always did good. The good things you have done didn't save you, but God was kind to you and saved you when you trusted in Jesus Christ. God saved you himself so that you would not be proud about being saved. <sup>10</sup> God has saved us all. He decided to make us and he said, "I will make my people so that they will do good, because they will have fellowship with Jesus Christ."

### *About us having fellowship with Christ*

<sup>11</sup> Now think about this, you people who aren't Jews. You know what we Jewish people used to say to you. We said, "You aren't God's people because you are not circumcised. You don't belong with us Jews. We are God's people, because we are circumcised." We were proud.

<sup>12</sup> At that time you weren't with Christ, and you were different from us Jews, the ones God had chosen. You didn't know the promises God gave us his people. He didn't make those promises to you but to us Jewish people. At that time you didn't know God. So you didn't believe in

him, and you didn't think about being with God tomorrow or next month.

<sup>13</sup> But now you have fellowship with Jesus Christ. You used to be far away from God, but now God has brought you close to himself, because Christ poured out his blood and died for you.

<sup>14</sup> Christ is the one who has stopped the fighting between us Jewish people and you who aren't Jews. When he died he stopped us all from fighting, so that we could have fellowship together. He was the one who did all that, and no one else. Because of that we have fellowship together today.

<sup>15-16</sup> Long, long ago God told Moses his laws and Moses told them to his people. And those laws made us different from you. But Christ died on the cross for us and made peace between us and made us all one group. He brought us all together to bring us all back to God. So today those laws are finished, they don't make us different any more and we are all the same. It doesn't matter that we are Jews and you are not Jews, we are all one group now.

<sup>17</sup> When Christ came into the world, he spoke to you who were far away from God and to us who were near him. He said, "Don't keep on fighting each other, but come to me so that I can give you peace." <sup>18</sup> God's Spirit helps us all today to go to our Father, because Christ died for us all. <sup>19</sup> So now you who are not Jews are no longer different from us but we are all the same. We are all God's people, like brothers and sisters.

20-21 All of us God's people are like one big building. We are like God's building. But his real building is holy, and we worship God there. That building stands on firm rock. We apostles whom God chose first and also his prophets are like that rock. But Jesus Christ is like the special stone, the most important stone in God's building. He is the one who has brought all of us different people together, so that we can all be in one group today. It is just as though we people are joined together into one holy building. <sup>22</sup> God is bringing us together today so that we can have fellowship with Jesus Christ. So now we Jewish people and you who are not Jews are slowly coming closer together. We are like God's real building, and God's Spirit lives there all the time.

### 3

#### *About Paul working for the people who are not Jews*

<sup>1</sup> I am in jail because I have been telling you people about Jesus Christ. Even though I am in jail, I am praying to God for you, because I know that you who are not Jews are God's people too.

<sup>2</sup> Maybe you have heard that God has been kind to me. He has chosen me to tell you about him, because it is good that you should know.

<sup>3</sup> God has made clear to me this news that was hidden at first. I have already written something about it. <sup>4</sup> If you read it you will understand how I found out the news about Christ that was hidden at first.

<sup>5</sup> Long ago God didn't tell even one person the news that was hidden. But today God has told us through his Spirit. He has made clear to us his apostles and also to his prophets the news that was hidden. <sup>6</sup> God has shown us that he will do good for all of us, us Jews and you people who are not Jews, all of us the same, because Jesus Christ died for us all. We are all one group. So that promise God made to us is for you too, because Jesus Christ died for us all.

<sup>7</sup> God chose me to work for him and to tell others about Jesus Christ. He was very kind to me, and he helped me by giving me his power so I could do his work. <sup>8</sup> Are there any of God's people who are not important? I am much less important. But God gave me this good work to tell you too the good news about Jesus Christ. This good news tells us that Christ is rich in good things. We will never finish finding out about his good things.

<sup>9</sup> God has also given me the work of making clear to you and to all people what he has decided that he should do. Long, long ago God made everything, but he kept hiding his good news until today. <sup>10</sup> He kept it hidden so that today all kinds of rulers above will know that he is wise and knows everything. They will know when they see God's people obeying God.

<sup>11</sup> Long ago God decided that we would all belong to him, we Jewish people and you people who are not Jews. And he decided that Jesus Christ our Lord would be the one to make us all God's own people. <sup>12</sup> So now we shouldn't be

afraid but we should come near to God boldly. We can come boldly to him because we have fellowship with Christ and because we trust in him.

<sup>13</sup> My friends, don't be discouraged about me being in jail. It doesn't matter that I am here because I have told you about Jesus Christ. Good things will happen to you later because I am here today.

#### *About Christ's love*

<sup>14</sup> I am praising our Father, because now I know his word that was hidden at first. Now I know that God has saved you people who are not Jews, just as he has saved us Jews. <sup>15</sup> God is the Father of us and of all people in this world and also in heaven above, and we take our name from him.

<sup>16</sup> God is very strong and full of power. So I am always praying, "Make the Ephesian people strong through your Spirit, so they will be strong to do good. <sup>17</sup> And may Christ stay with them because they really trust in him. And may they always know his love. When they think about him loving them, may they stand strong. <sup>18-19</sup> May all your people everywhere know clearly that Christ loves them very much. May they know that he never stops loving us all the time. Christ's love is very great and we can never know it properly. So may they know that Christ loves them, so that they can follow you completely and be like you. Amen."

<sup>20</sup> Let us praise God now, because he is very powerful and he works in us today. But we can't

even imagine the powerful things that he can do for us. <sup>21</sup> So let us praise God, all of us God's people. And when people see Christ let them too praise God. Let us keep on praising God, now and always.

## 4

### *About being in one group, like one body*

<sup>1</sup> Listen to what I, who am in jail, am telling you. I am in jail because I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. God has chosen you to be his own people. So you who belong to him should go straight on his road.

<sup>2</sup> Don't be proud, but go quietly on God's road. Be gentle and patient. And don't get tired of each other but keep loving one another all the time. <sup>3</sup> God has brought us together by his Spirit to make us friends. So you should really want to stay together, to love and help each other in peace.

<sup>4</sup> We are all one people. We are like one body. And God has given his one Spirit to us all. He has chosen us all in the same way so that we can hope in him in the same way. <sup>5</sup> There is one Lord and we trust in him in the same way, and we have been baptized in the same way. <sup>6</sup> There is only one God and one Father of us all. He rules over us all and over all the world. He takes us all to do his work and he is among us.

<sup>7-10</sup> God's word tells us that Christ has gone back to his Father in heaven. It says,  
“He went first to heaven,  
and took many people with him.”

And they followed him afterwards.

Then he gave good things to his people.”

You know that first Christ came down from above, and he was born like us and lived like us in the world. Then afterwards the same one who came down went up again, so that he could be everywhere and give us good things. Christ has freely given good things to each one of us.

<sup>11</sup> What kinds of good things has Christ given to us? He has given different kinds of work to us his people and he helps us to do that work. He has chosen some of us to be apostles, and some to be prophets to tell people his word, and some to tell people who don't know him about Jesus Christ so that they may believe in him too. And he has chosen some to look after his people and some to teach them his word.

<sup>12</sup> Yes, that's right, Christ has chosen us workers to make each other strong. We should help each other to be strong to work for him all the time. <sup>13</sup> We should help each other until we all have the same faith in God's Son. And we should help each other until we all know him in the same way, until we become really strong. We should let our minds keep growing until we become wise like Christ. Then we will understand God's word. We shouldn't be like children who don't understand yet.

<sup>14</sup> Listen. Some people might tell us lies, first one thing and then another. They might make up different things and then want to teach them to us, but we mustn't listen to things like that. We should be strong and keep on going on God's straight road.

<sup>15</sup> We must speak the truth. We mustn't speak angrily to people but quietly, so that they know that we love them. We must try to be like Christ, the one who rules over us. He is like the head and we are like his body, <sup>16</sup> with its arms and legs. The head controls the arms and the legs. When your legs are doing good work and getting strong, and when your arms are also doing good work and getting strong, then your body will work well and be strong. In that way Christ controls us God's people. And we must each keep on working well and loving each other. Then we will make each other strong in one group.

*Start living like new people*

<sup>17</sup> I am speaking to you for the Lord Jesus Christ, and so I am warning you. Don't go on living like people who don't know God. Their thoughts are no good. So don't be like them.

<sup>18</sup> Those people are hard. They don't want God and they have turned their backs on him. They don't have the real life that God gives us. They walk in the dark. They are blind. <sup>19</sup> They are no longer ashamed of what they are doing. They have decided to do wrong. They don't think about anything good, only what is bad. They keep on running off with people they shouldn't be with. Those people who don't know God are always doing all kinds of bad things.

<sup>20</sup> But those who taught you didn't tell you to do those kinds of things. <sup>21</sup> They taught you the truth about Jesus and you heard their words and so you know about him. <sup>22</sup> So don't go on

doing what you used to do, because those bad things you wanted were spoiling you. Get rid of sin, just like you get rid of old clothes that are no use now. <sup>23</sup> Do what is good with a clean mind, just as though you are putting on good, new clothes. <sup>24</sup> Start that good new way like new people, because God has made you new like himself. So walk straight on God's road all the time.

<sup>25</sup> So you must not tell lies any more. When God's people are talking together, you must tell the truth, because we are all in one group with Christ like friends. <sup>26</sup> When you get angry, don't do wrong. And don't stay angry all day. <sup>27</sup> And don't let Satan get into you. <sup>28</sup> You thieves who have been stealing things must stop stealing and work now. You must do good work to get honest money so you can share with poor people.

<sup>29</sup> And this is another thing. Don't speak carelessly with unkind words. Only use good words so that you can help other people and encourage them. <sup>30</sup> God has chosen you to be his own people. And he has freely given you his Holy Spirit, so that you will know that you are truly his, and that he will set you free. So don't make God's Spirit sad. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of swearing and angry words. Don't keep on shouting. Don't tease other people. And don't keep telling bad things about other people. And don't be always hating each other, <sup>32</sup> but be kind to one another and love each other. And forgive each other's sins as God forgives you your sins. God forgives you because Christ has died for you.

## 5

### *About living in the light*

<sup>1</sup> You are God's children whom he loves very much. So you must keep trying to be like him.

<sup>2</sup> You must love each other all the time, just as Christ loved us. He loved us so much that he died on the cross for us, and God was very pleased with him.

<sup>3</sup> So don't think about wrong things. Don't take other people's wives or husbands, don't think about running off with women and don't be greedy, always wanting what belongs to someone else. Don't even talk about those things, because you belong to God. <sup>4</sup> And never use bad language. You should only speak good words and give thanks to God.

<sup>5</sup> Don't forget this. If you do wrong and take other people's wives or husbands or run off with other women and if you are greedy, always wanting what belongs to someone else, you can't go to God. Wanting other people's things is like obeying idols instead of obeying God. If you do wrong things like that you can't have fellowship with people who God and Christ rule over.

<sup>6</sup> So don't take any notice of people who want to trick you with silly words. They want you to do wrong, but God will be angry with you if you don't obey him and you keep on doing wrong all the time. <sup>7</sup> So stay away from people like that and don't go with them.

<sup>8</sup> Before you belonged to God, you were doing bad things, just as though you were in the dark.

But now you belong to him, and that is just like being in the light. So stay in the light, <sup>9</sup> because when you stay in the light you can be good, righteous and true. <sup>10</sup> And find out what the Lord Jesus Christ wants.

<sup>11</sup> You should refuse everything bad that people do who walk in the dark. But you should say to them, "What you are doing is wrong." <sup>12</sup> We should be ashamed when we hear the things that bad people do in secret. We are really very ashamed and we shouldn't even talk about those things. <sup>13</sup> When those bad people hear you, it will be just as though you are bringing the wrong things they have been doing out of the dark into the light. <sup>14</sup> That light makes everything clear. Because of that this word has been written. "You people are asleep.

You are like dead people,  
but get up now!

Then Christ will be a light for you."

<sup>15</sup> So you should think carefully about what you should do and how you should live. Don't be like people who don't know about doing good, but be sensible like wise people. <sup>16</sup> Work for God now all the time. Don't be lazy about following him, because many people are doing all kinds of bad things. <sup>17</sup> So don't be silly, but find out what the Lord wants you to do.

<sup>18</sup> Don't get drunk with beer, because it will spoil you. Don't fill yourselves with it, but be filled with God's Spirit.

<sup>19</sup> When God's people talk together you should tell each other about God. Rejoice and sing

songs to him, not carelessly but from your hearts.  
<sup>20</sup> You should thank God our Father all the time. When you worship him you should use the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*About men and women*

<sup>21</sup> Don't think of yourselves but obey other people because you respect Christ.

<sup>22-23</sup> Wives, let your husbands lead, but you follow them. That is right. Christ leads and God's people follow him, so it is all right for the husband to lead. Christ saves us. He leads and controls us, and that is good. So it is right when a man leads and controls his wife. <sup>24</sup> God's people obey him. So a woman should obey her husband.

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives in the same way that Christ loved God's people. Christ loved us and he died for us, <sup>26</sup> so that we would become God's people. And he gave us his word that makes us clean. We make our clothes clean when we wash them with water. That is like Christ making us clean. <sup>27</sup> Christ died so that he could make us perfect and so that he could give us to himself, just as a husband gives himself his beautiful wife. He died so that all God's people will be without sin.

<sup>28</sup> Christ really loves us very much. And you men should love your wives. You love your bodies and look after them all the time. So you should love your wives all the time. When you love them, you are really loving yourselves.

<sup>29-30</sup> Do you men hate your own bodies? Of course not! You love your bodies and you look after them. Of course you love yourselves. And

Christ loves God's people. We are like his arms and his legs, so he loves us and he looks after us all the time.

<sup>31</sup> Long, long ago, God said,  
“When a man marries, he leaves his father and mother and goes to his wife. Then when the man and the woman are together, they are like one person.” <sup>32</sup> This word of God's tells us about Christ and God's people in this world. At first that word was hidden but now I am making it clear for you.

<sup>33</sup> You men must each love your wife in the same way as you love yourself. And you wives must obey your husbands.

## 6

### *About children and their parents*

<sup>1</sup> Children, listen carefully to what I tell you. You must obey your fathers and mothers. You must obey them all the time, because God has told you to and it is right. You mustn't disobey them, you must obey them.

<sup>2-3</sup> You know the laws that God gave our Jewish people long ago. One of those laws tells us,  
“You must respect your fathers and mothers so that all may go well with you, and so that you may live in the land until you are old.”  
That is the first law that tells us that God will do good for us. So you must respect your fathers and mothers.

<sup>4</sup> Fathers, don't be angry with your children but be kind to them, so that they won't get angry when you speak to them. Bring them up

properly. Keep teaching them carefully to obey Jesus Christ so that God's word will keep them going straight.

*About bosses and the servants they have bought*

<sup>5</sup> For some of you people, bosses have paid money to others for you so that you could work for those bosses. You must never trick your bosses, you should be honest and straight with them. Even if you are afraid of them you must obey them every day. Work for them as though you are working for Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup> Don't do careless work, but work well for them. You should work well for them when they can see you and when they can't see you. Do everything properly, everything that God wants you to do. <sup>7</sup> And don't grumble, just work well, because you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. So when you work for other people, work as though you are working for him.

<sup>8</sup> If you work well, the Lord Jesus Christ will be good to you. It doesn't matter if you work for bosses who have paid money to other people for you. And it doesn't matter if you work for bosses who pay you, because you don't belong to them. He will do good for all of you.

<sup>9</sup> You bosses who have bought people to work for you, you must be honest and straight with them too. Don't say to them, "I will beat you if you don't work well!" You bosses and your servants are all the same to God. He is the Lord of you all, bosses and workers too. He doesn't

say, “Maybe this man is a boss, maybe he is a servant.” He says, “Maybe this man is good, maybe he is not.”

### *About fighting Satan*

<sup>10</sup> Dear friends, I haven't got a lot more to say, just a few words. Stay close to the Lord. He is very powerful, so don't leave him, stay close to him so that he can make you strong.

<sup>11</sup> God has given us strong things for fighting Satan and you must take them and wear them so that when Satan tries to trick you and tempt you to do wrong, you can keep standing strong.

<sup>12</sup> We really are in a fight with Satan now. We aren't fighting with other people, but with Satan and with his evil spirits. They rule over this dark world and they are the evil ones in the heavenly world. Satan has many different evil spirits and they are all very bad. <sup>13</sup> So take all those strong things God has given you for fighting Satan so that when Satan and his evil spirits come to you, you may be able to stand straight. Take those strong things so that you will be able to keep standing without falling.

<sup>14</sup> So stand up and be like God's soldier. Speak true words that God gives you. That is like tying a strong belt around your waist. Go straight all the time without doing wrong. That is like wearing iron on your chest. <sup>15</sup> Take God's good news to people. That is like wearing something strong on your feet. You must take God's word to them so that his word will give them peace. <sup>16</sup> Trust God all the time. That is like carrying a wooden shield

all the time so that Satan's burning spears won't hit you. <sup>17</sup> Believe that Jesus Christ has saved you. That is like wearing those hard helmets that soldiers wear on their heads. And take God's word. That is like taking a sword. And God's Spirit will help you to drive Satan away with God's word, just like soldiers who drive people away with their swords.

<sup>18</sup> You should also pray to God. His Spirit will teach you the words to say to him. So don't stop praying but keep on asking him every day to help you and all of us who belong to him.

<sup>19</sup> And also I want you all to ask God to help me too. Ask him to give me the right words, so that I won't be afraid but I will speak strongly when I tell other people the good news that was hidden about Jesus Christ. <sup>20</sup> Even though I am in jail, I should keep on working for Jesus Christ and speaking for him. So ask him to make me strong, so that I can keep on speaking boldly for him all the time.

### *Last words*

<sup>21-22</sup> I want you to know about me. So I have sent Tychicus to you, the one I love and who always works well for the Lord Jesus Christ. He will tell you good news about me and about all God's people here. So don't be upset.

<sup>23</sup> I am praying that God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ will give you peace, and that you will keep on loving each other and loving God and trusting in him. <sup>24</sup> And I pray that God will be kind to you who truly love the Lord Jesus Christ.

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