

## THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS “We Are His Workmanship”

Date: 10-6-24 Lesson: 22

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### THE TEXT - (Ephesians 3:20-4:6)

(20) Now **to him** who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,  
(21) **to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus**

throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.



(1 Ki 3:13; Rom 11:36; 16:25-27; 1 Cor 9:8; 1 Tim 1:17; Jude 24-25)

(4:1) I therefore, a prisoner **for the Lord**,  
urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,  
(2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,  
(3) eager to maintain **the unity of the Spirit** in the bond of peace.

(Mt 11:29; 21:5; Ac 8:23; 20:19; Rom 8:28-30; 15:5; 2 Cor 10:1; Gal 5:23; Php 1:27; 2:3; Col 1:10,11; 2:6,7,18,23; 3:12-15; 1 Th 2:12; 1 Pet 3:8; 5:5)

(4) There is one body and **one Spirit**--just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call--  
(5) **one Lord**, one faith, one baptism,  
(6) **one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.**

(Dt 6:4; Zech 14:9; Mal 2:10; Mt 3:15; Rom 6:3,4; 9:5; 10:9,12; 11:36; 12:5; 1 Cor 1:13; 8:4-6; 12:3-6,13; Gal 3:27,28; Jude 3)

### STUDY HELPS

#### PREFACE TO THE CHRISTIAN BOOK OF CONCORD

[1] To the readers, one and all, of these our writings: we are the electors, princes, and deputies of the Holy Roman Empire in Germany, supporters of the Augsburg Confession, who subscribed our names to that document. We announce and declare— according to the dignity and rank of each person — our devotion, friendship, and greeting, combined with willing service.

[The Issues] [2] In these Last Times and in this old age of the world [Acts 2: 17], what a remarkable favor of **almighty God** has arisen after the darkness of papal superstitions! According to His unspeakable love, patience, and mercy, **He willed that** the light of His Gospel [2 Corinthians 4: 4] and **Word**— through which alone we receive **true salvation**— should arise and shine clearly and purely in Germany, our most beloved fatherland. Therefore, a brief and succinct Confession was prepared from **God’s Word**— the most holy writings of the prophets and apostles [2 Peter 3: 2]. At the Diet of Augsburg, in the year 1530, this Confession was offered in the German and Latin languages by our most godly ancestors, to the Emperor Charles V, of excellent memory. It was laid before the

deputies of the Empire. Finally, it was circulated publicly in the entire world among all people professing **Christian doctrine**. So it was spread everywhere and began to be found in the mouths and speech of all.

[3] Later, many churches and schools embraced and defended this Confession as a current symbol for **the chief articles of faith**. This was done especially by those involved in controversy with the Romanists and various corruptions of **the heavenly doctrine**. With lasting agreement they appealed to the Augsburg Confession without any controversy and doubt. They knew that the doctrine included in it was both supported by **firm testimonies of Scripture** and approved by the ancient and accepted **symbols [creeds]**. They have also constantly judged this Confession to be the only and lasting consensus of the **true, believing Church**.

In the past this consensus was defended against many heresies and errors— now it is repeated.

[4] No one can be ignorant of this fact: immediately after Dr. Martin Luther (that most distinguished hero, endowed with most eminent piety) was removed from human affairs, Germany, our dear fatherland, experienced most perilous times and most severe disturbances. In these difficulties, and in the sad division of a government that was earlier flourishing and well regulated, the enemy of mortals [Satan] cunningly labored. He scattered the seeds of false doctrine and dissensions in the churches and schools [Matthew 13: 24– 30].

He also labored to stir up divisions [Romans 16: 17] combined with offense. **By these arts of his, he labored**

**to corrupt the purity of the heavenly doctrine, to sever the bond of Christian love and godly agreement**

**[Ephesians 4: 3],** and to hinder and delay to a greater degree the spread of **the most holy Gospel**. It is also known to all how the enemies of **the heavenly doctrine** seized this opportunity to speak against our churches and schools, to disguise their errors, and to draw alarmed and erring consciences away from **the purity of Gospel teaching**. They did this to make people more willing to bear and tolerate the yoke of papal slavery, and also to embrace other corruptions conflicting with **God's Word**.

[5] We conclude that nothing more agreeable could happen or should be sought more eagerly and prayerfully from **almighty God than** the following: (a) both our churches and our schools should persevere in **the pure doctrine of God's Word** and in that longed-for and godly oneness of mind [1 Corinthians 1: 10], and, (b) as was the case while Luther was still alive, they should be regulated by **the divine Word**, which was handed down to posterity in a godly and excellent way. However, we notice something else happening. (This happened in apostolic times, in those churches where the apostles themselves had planted **the Gospel of Christ** [1 Corinthians 3: 6].) Corruptions were introduced by false brethren [Galatians 2: 4]. So, because of our sins and the looseness of these times, this trouble has been allowed by **an angry God** against our churches

[Hebrews 10: 30– 31].

[6] Therefore, mindful of our duty (we know this has been divinely commanded to us) we think that we should apply ourselves diligently to the work of attacking the false teachings that have been spread in our provinces and realms. Such teachings are gradually gaining favor for themselves in the manner and familiarity of the people.

We should see to it that the subjects in our government may persevere in the straight **way of godliness** [Hebrews 12: 13] and in **the truth of the heavenly doctrine**. This has been acknowledged, retained, and defended so far. The people should not be allowed to be led away from it. In this matter, indeed, partly our most worthy predecessors, partly we ourselves, were eagerly at work. Then, in the year of Christ 1558, the Diet was held by the electors at Frankfurt on the Main. A resolution was adopted by a unanimous vote that a special, general assembly should be held. In a thorough but friendly manner, there would be a conference among us about the things that are hatefully charged by our adversaries against our churches and schools.

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### LIFE APPLICATION

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism,  
one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

How do we affirm this every week in the confession of the Creeds?  
(Apostles, Nicene, Athanasian)