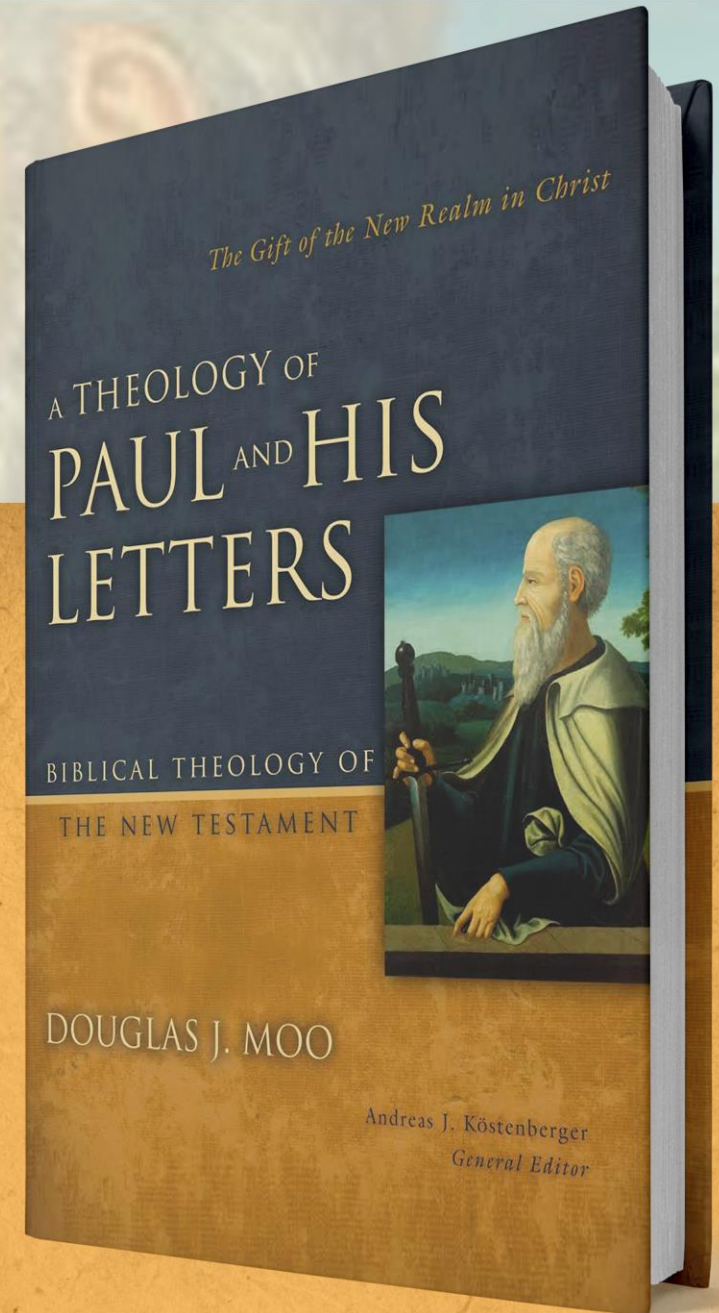
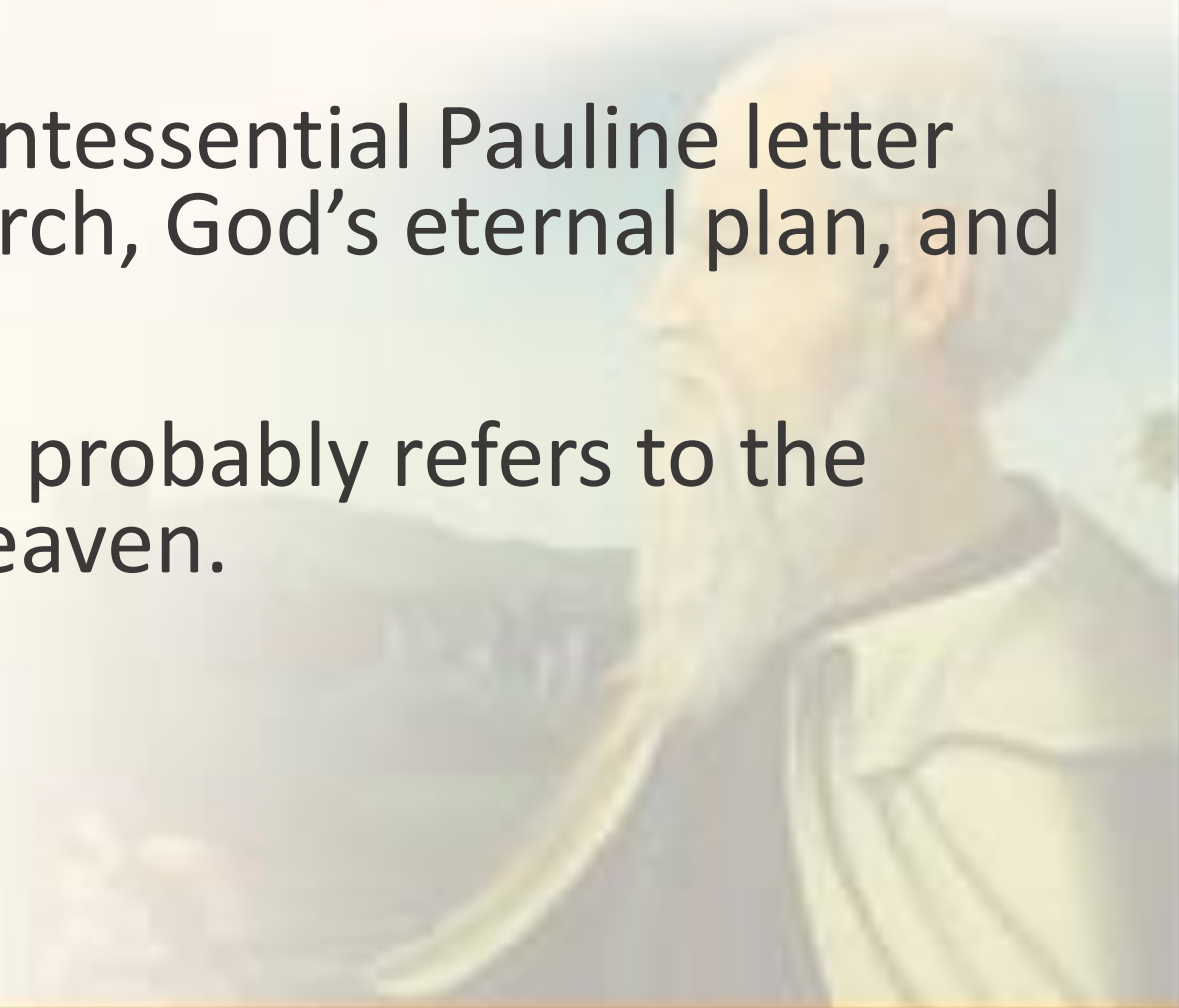


# CHAPTER 12

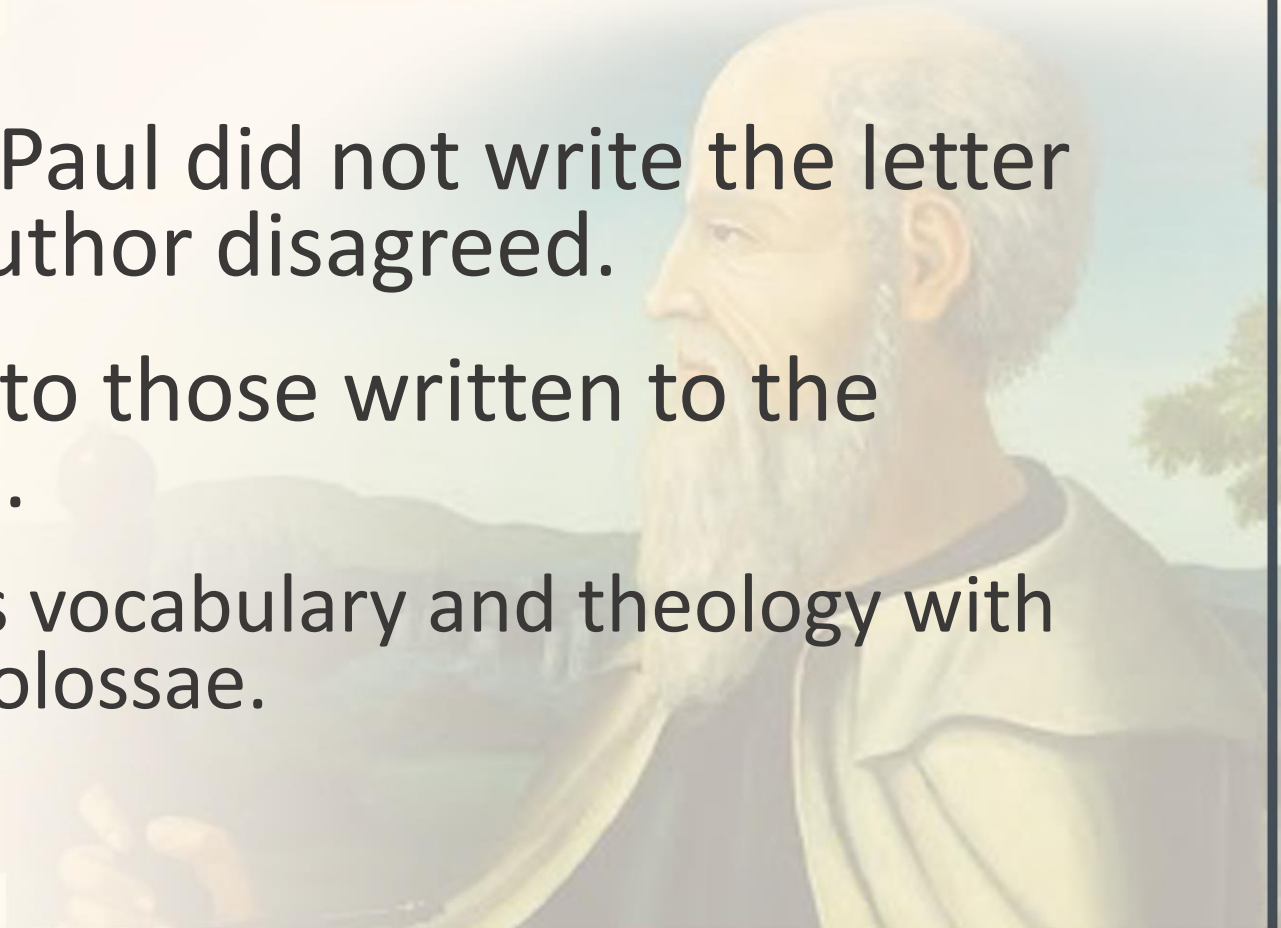
## Ephesians



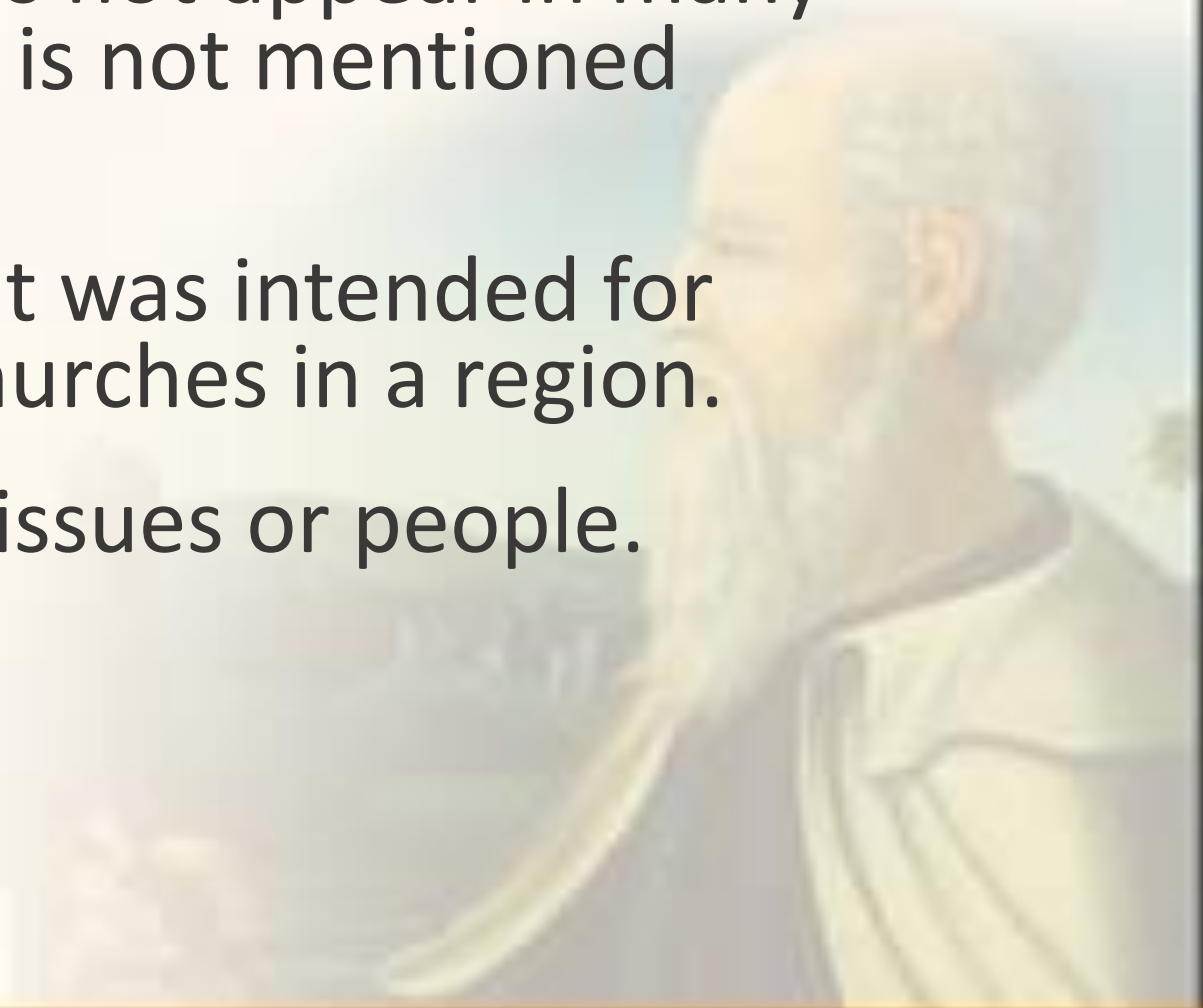
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- It is often considered the quintessential Pauline letter because it addresses the church, God's eternal plan, and Christ's role in it.
  - The phrase "heavenly realm" probably refers to the spiritual realm rather than heaven.

# Locating the Letter

- Many scholars believe that Paul did not write the letter to the Ephesians, but the author disagreed.
- The letter is closely related to those written to the Colossians and to Philemon.
  - The letter to Ephesus shares vocabulary and theology with the letter to the church in Colossae.



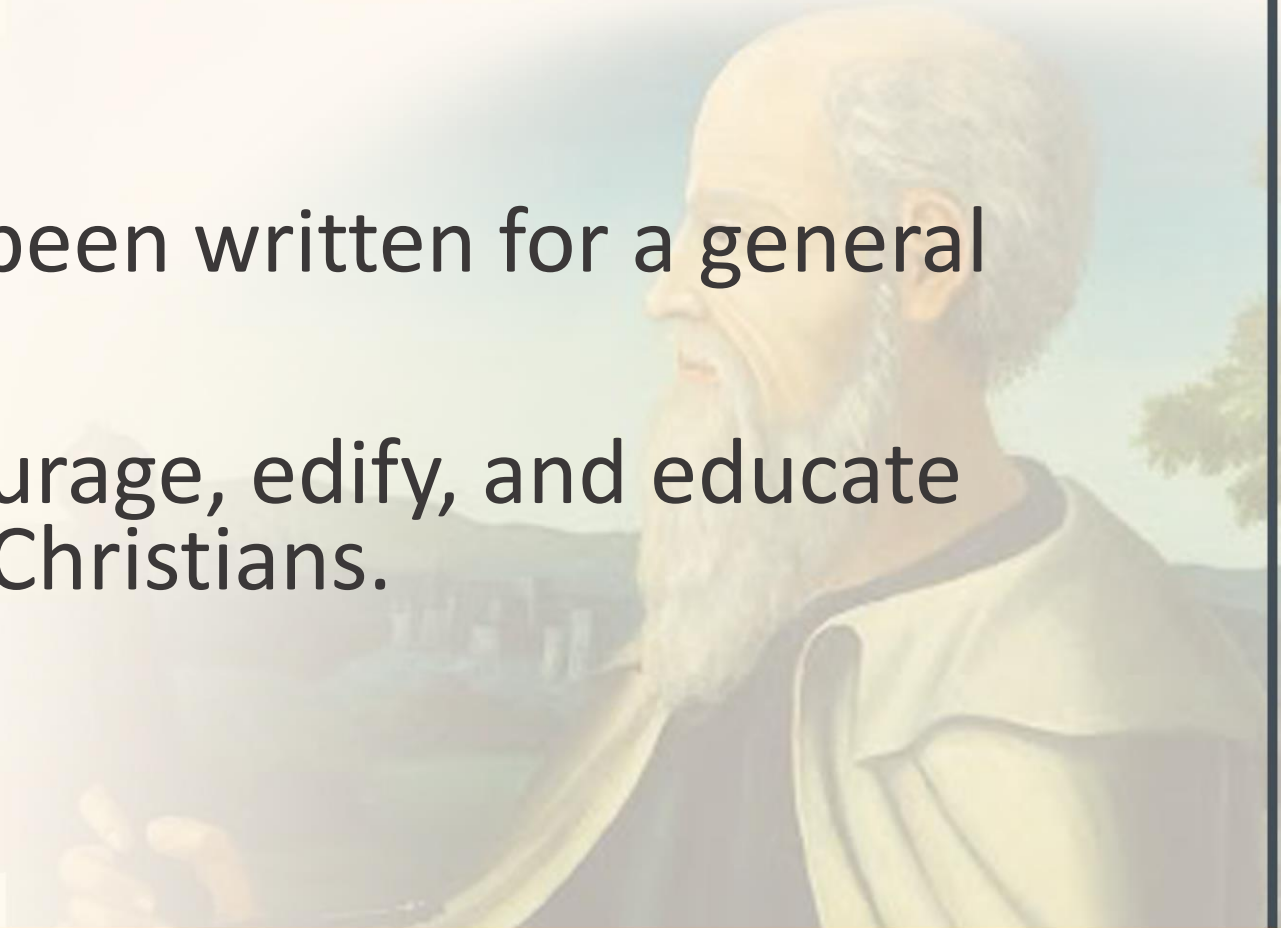
- The phrase “in Ephesus” does not appear in many manuscripts, and the church is not mentioned elsewhere in the letter.
- It may have been a letter that was intended for circulation between many churches in a region.
- It does not mention specific issues or people.





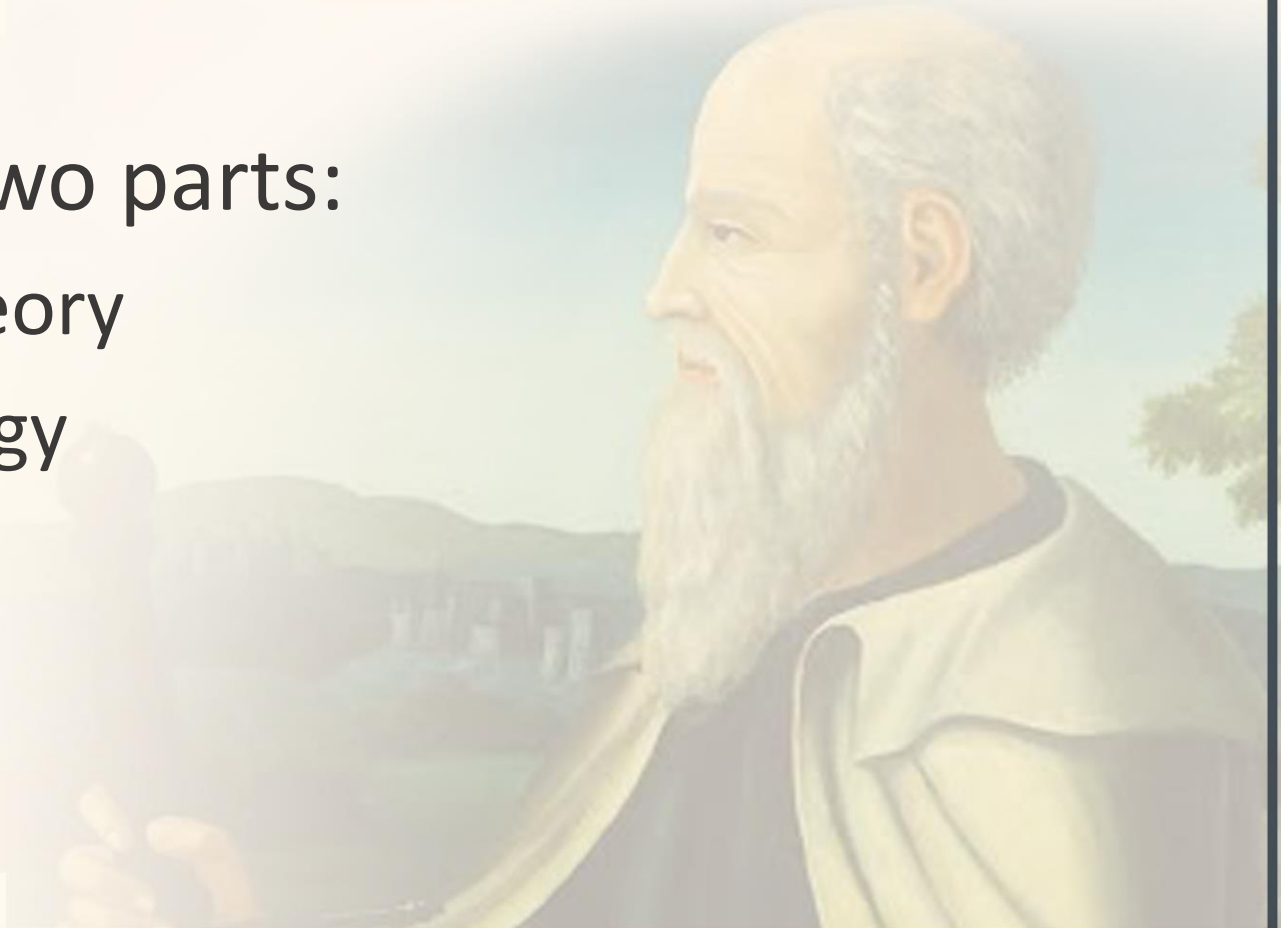
# Isolating the Issues

- The letter appears to have been written for a general audience.
- Paul's purpose was to encourage, edify, and educate believers, primarily gentile Christians.



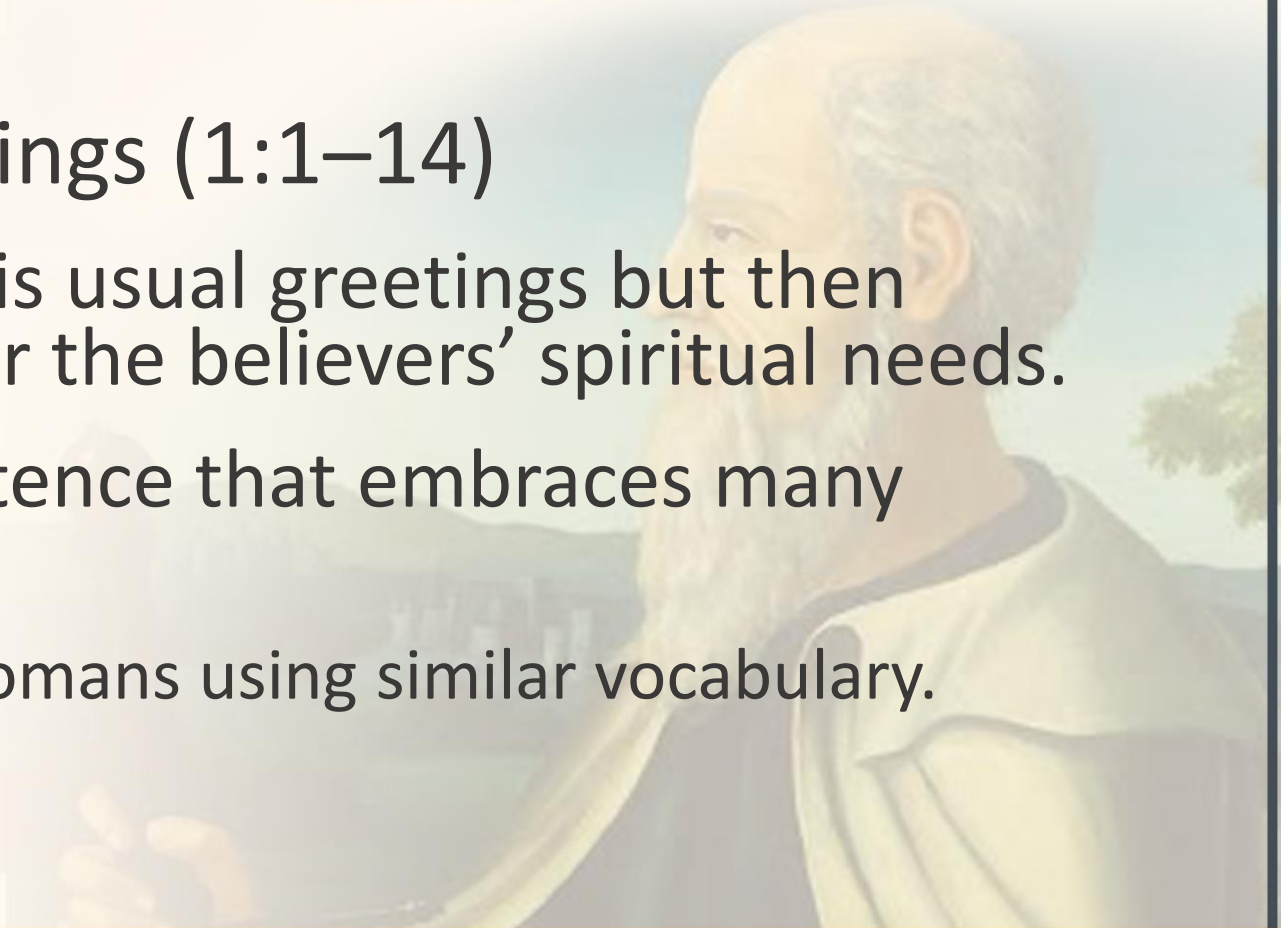
# Analyzing the Argument

- Ephesians is structured in two parts:
  1. “Theology proper,” or theory
  2. Application of the theology

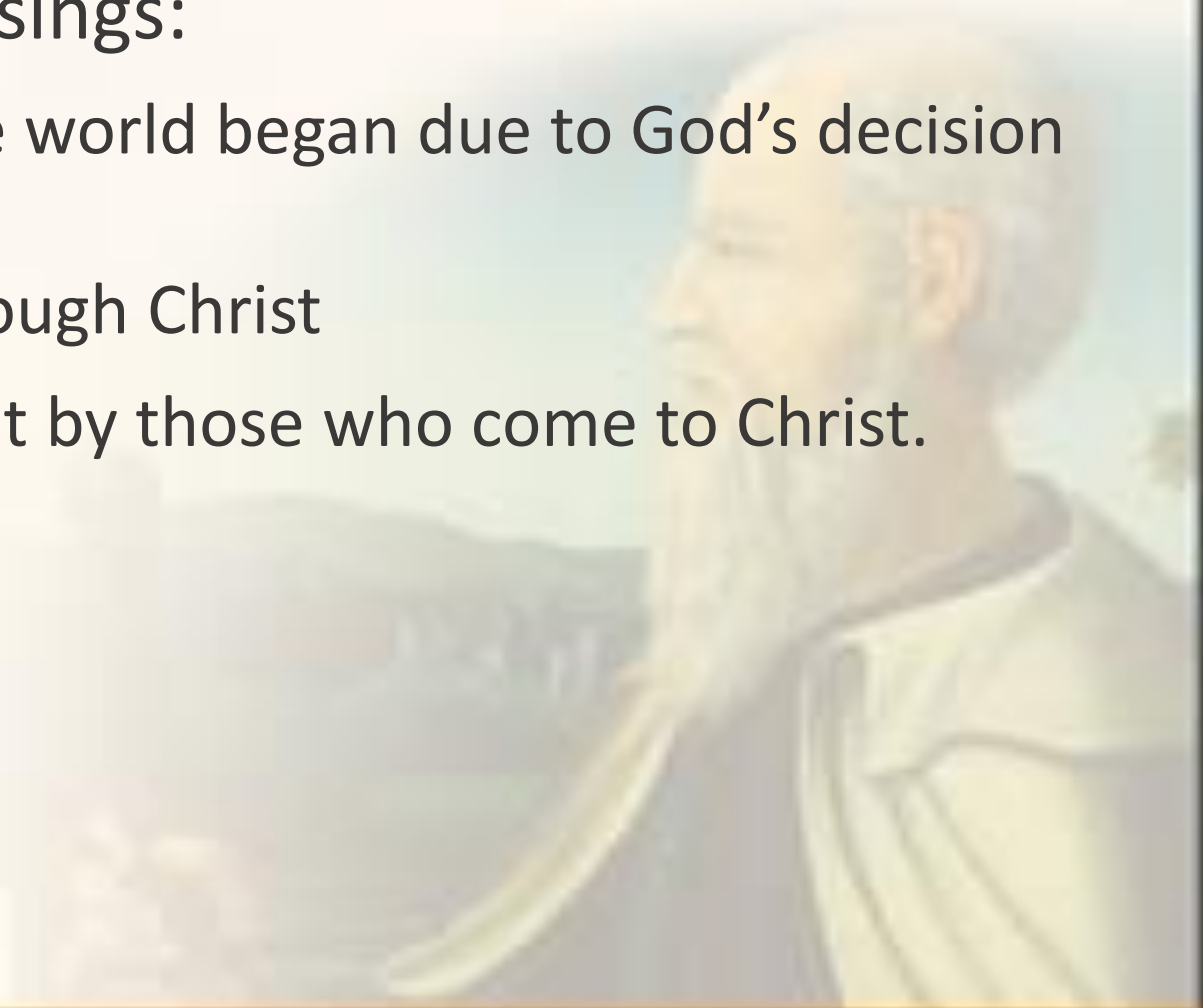


# The Benefits of Being “in Christ” (1:1–3:21)

- Innumerable Spiritual Blessings (1:1–14)
  - Paul began the letter with his usual greetings but then praised God for providing for the believers’ spiritual needs.
  - He included a very long sentence that embraces many aspects of Paul’s theology.
    - These ideas also appear in Romans using similar vocabulary.

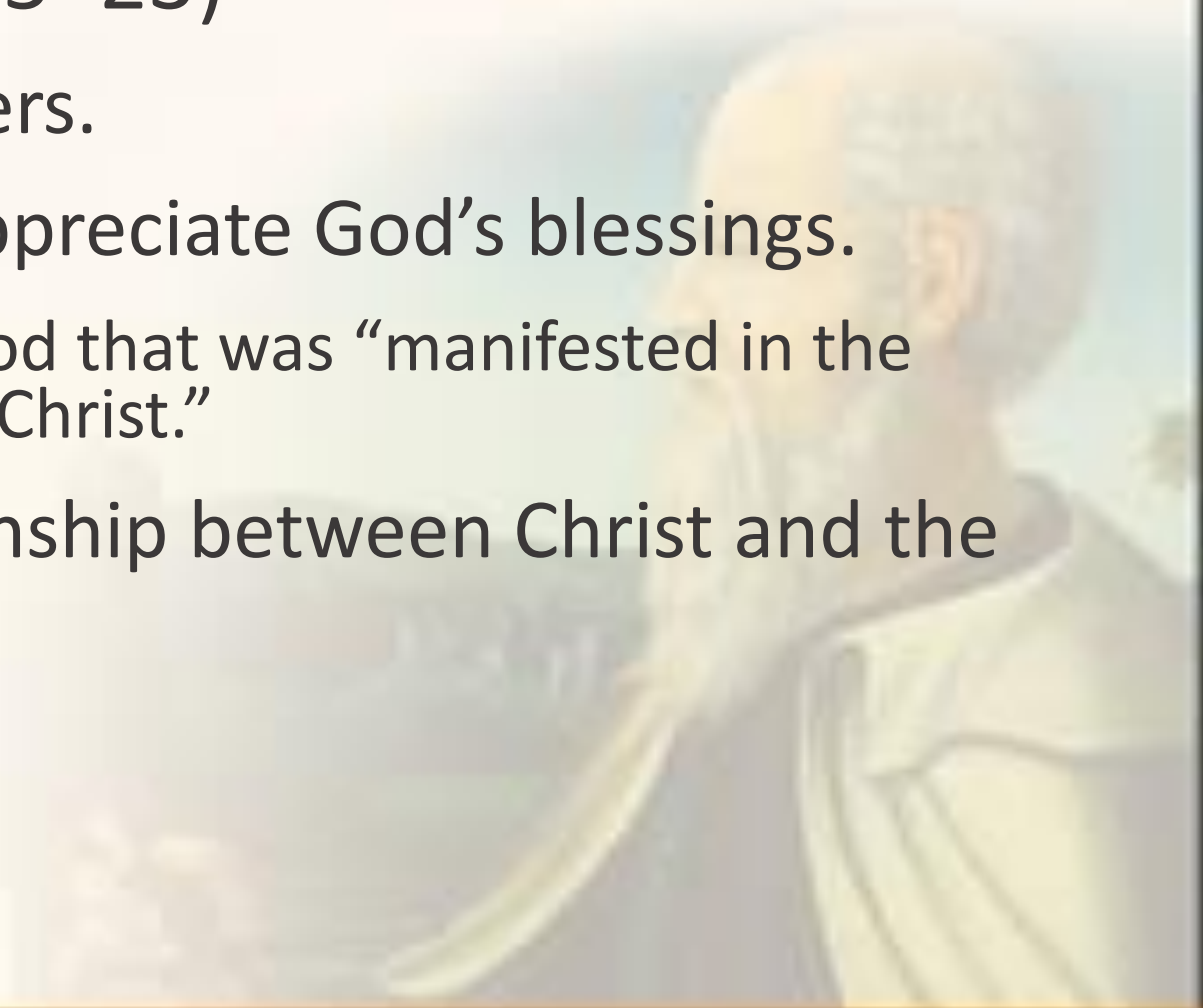


- Paul taught about God's blessings:
  - Election "in Christ" before the world began due to God's decision and love
  - God's plan of redemption through Christ
  - The receiving of the Holy Spirit by those who come to Christ.



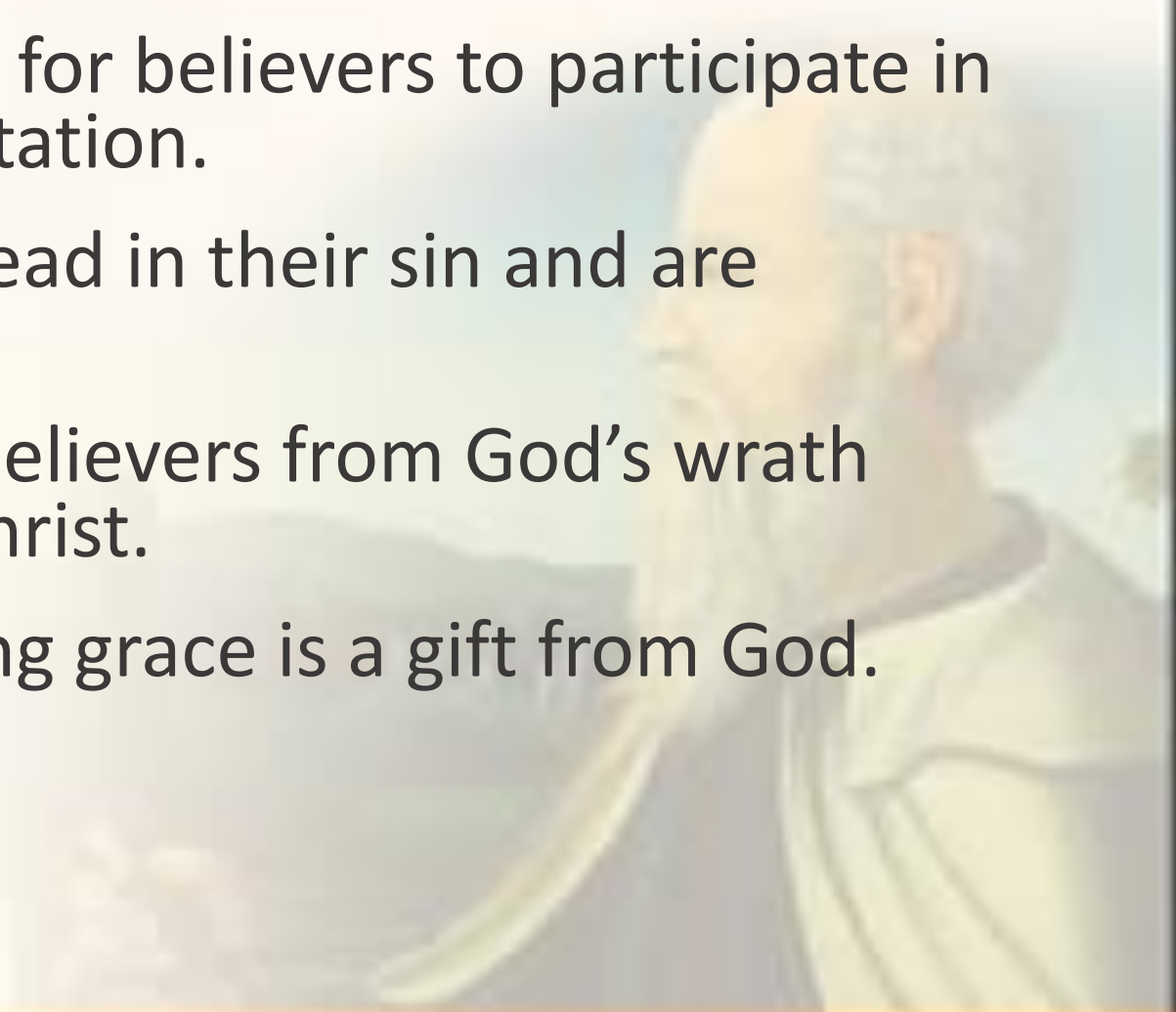


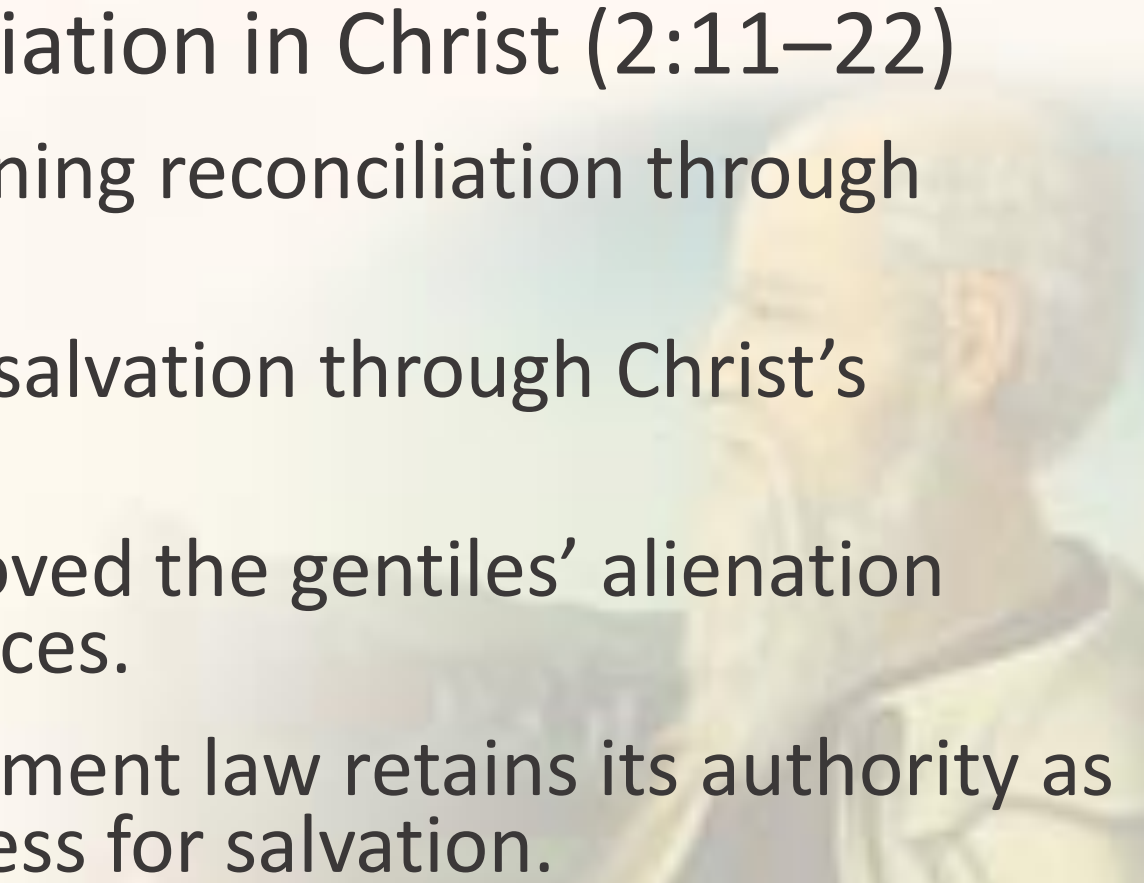
- Thanksgiving and Prayer (1:15–23)
  - Paul gave thanks for his readers.
  - He prayed that they would appreciate God’s blessings.
    - He referred to the power of God that was “manifested in the resurrection and exaltation of Christ.”
  - Paul taught about the relationship between Christ and the church.



- From Death to Life in Christ (2:1–10)

- Paul explained what it means for believers to participate in Christ's resurrection and exaltation.
- He taught that humans are dead in their sin and are therefore under God's wrath.
- Jesus's resurrection rescues believers from God's wrath because of their unity with Christ.
- He emphasized that this saving grace is a gift from God.

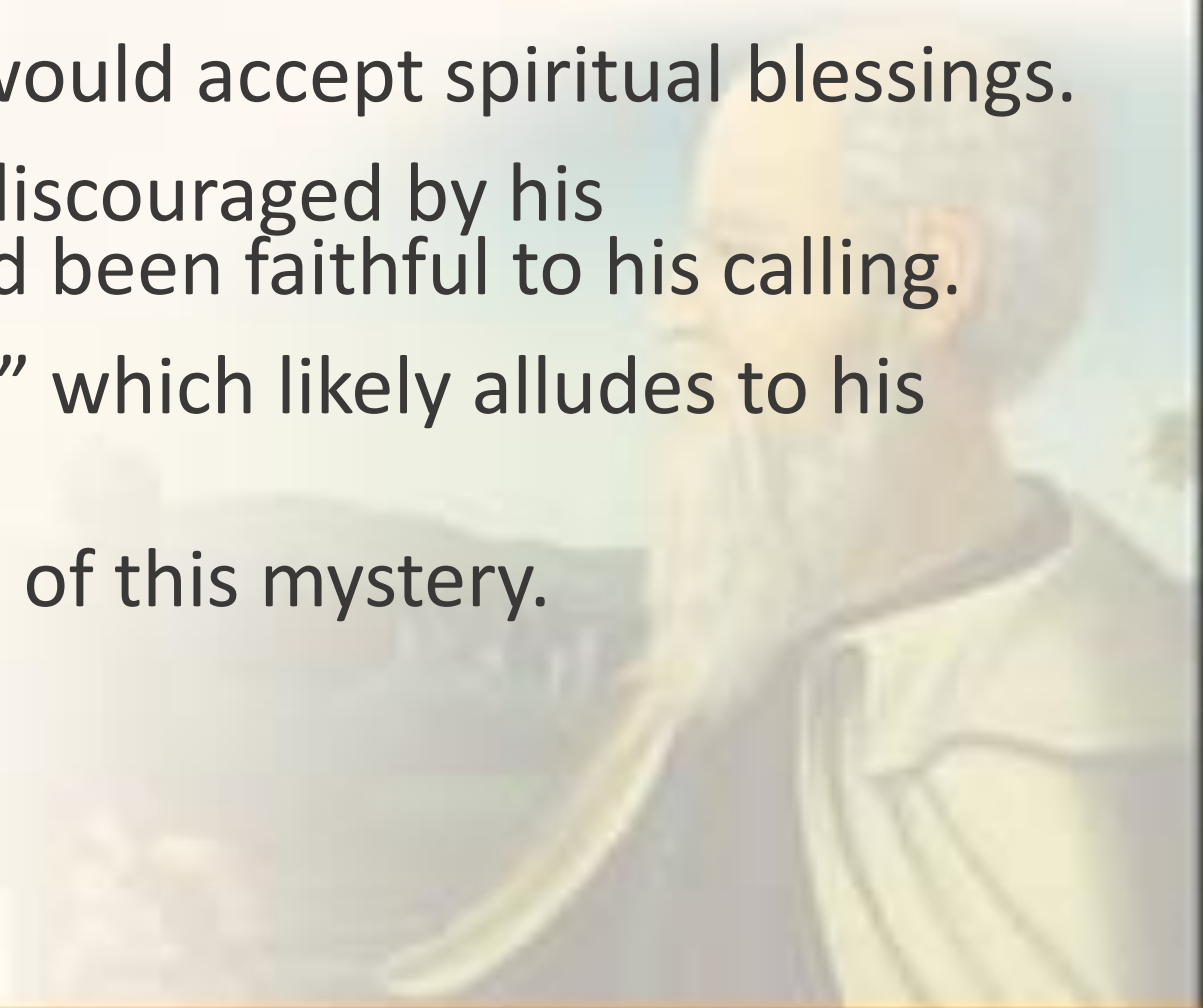


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- From Alienation to Reconciliation in Christ (2:11–22)
    - Paul spent more time explaining reconciliation through Christ.
    - He assured gentiles of their salvation through Christ's sacrifice.
    - He explained how God removed the gentiles' alienation using Old Testament references.
    - He taught that the Old Testament law retains its authority as Scripture but is now powerless for salvation.

- Paul stated that God has created peace between Jews and gentiles.
- Paul used the temple to help readers understand that gentiles are now members of God's household. He said that God now dwells in his people.
- Paul described the new community of believers that formed through Christ's work.

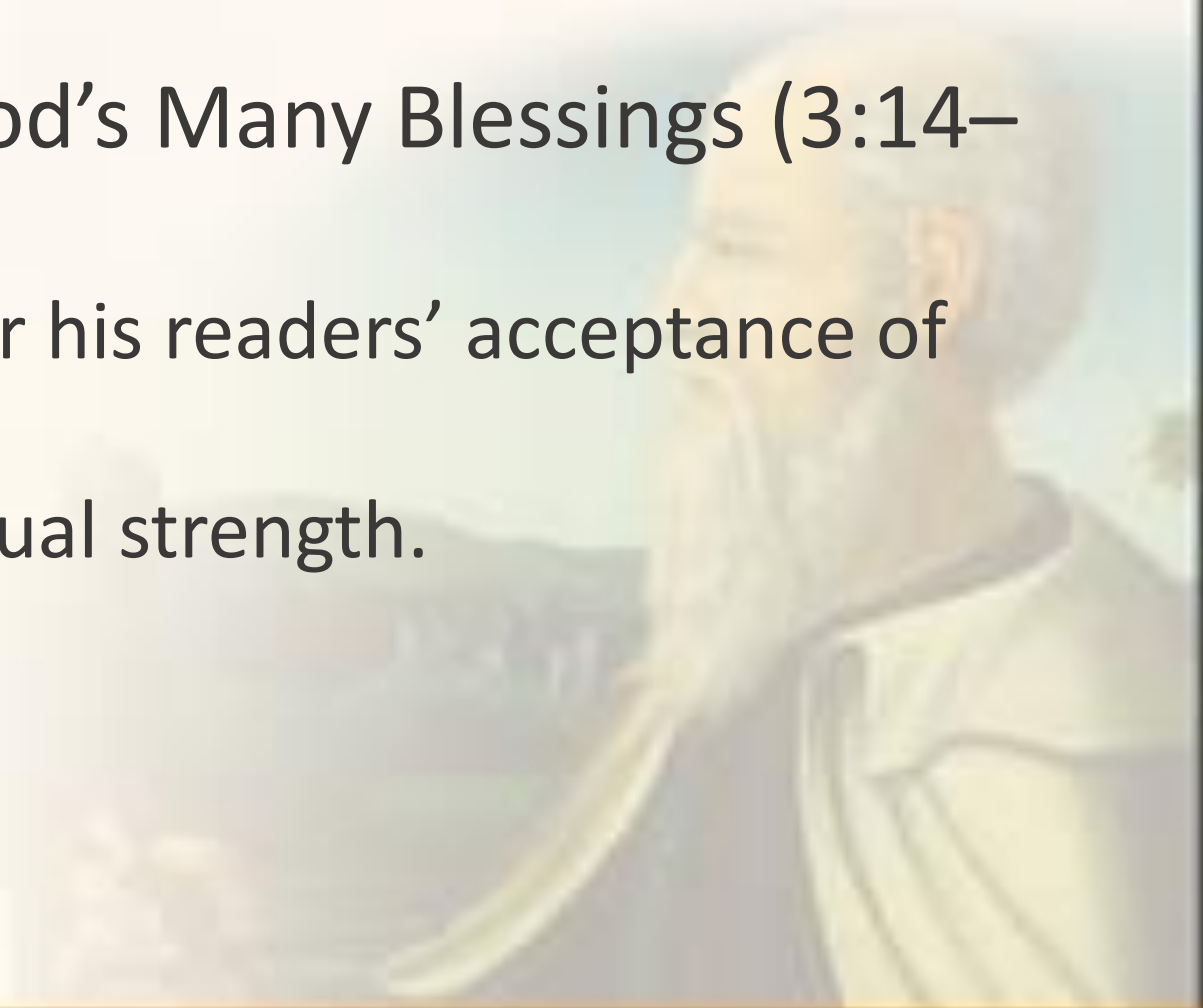
- Proclaiming the Mystery (3:1–13)

- Paul prayed that his readers would accept spiritual blessings.
- He exhorted them to not be discouraged by his circumstances because he had been faithful to his calling.
- Paul referred to the “mystery,” which likely alludes to his revelation from Christ.
- He believed he was a steward of this mystery.



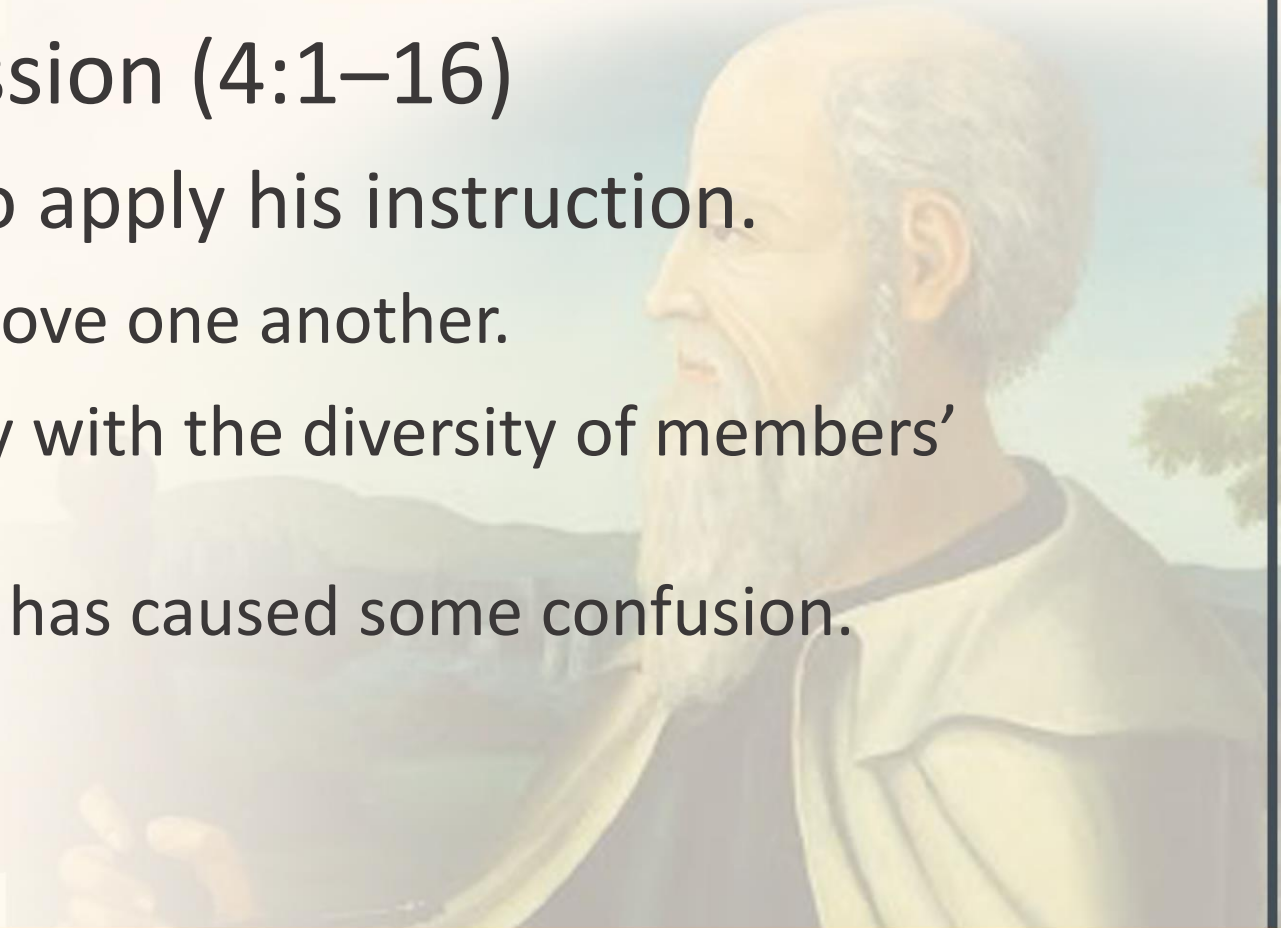


- Prayer for Appreciation of God's Many Blessings (3:14–21)
  - Paul returned to his prayer for his readers' acceptance of spiritual blessings.
  - He also prayed for their spiritual strength.

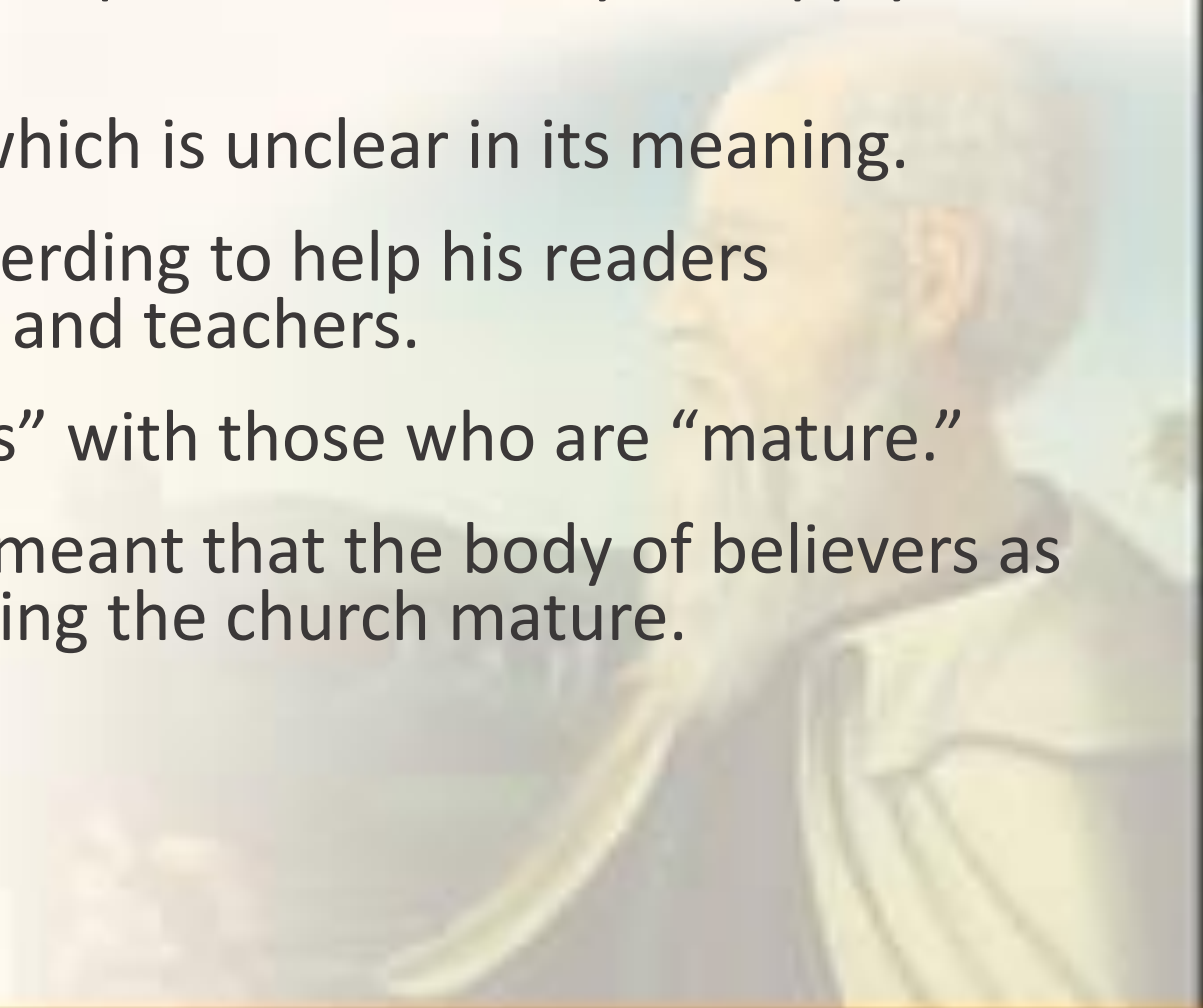


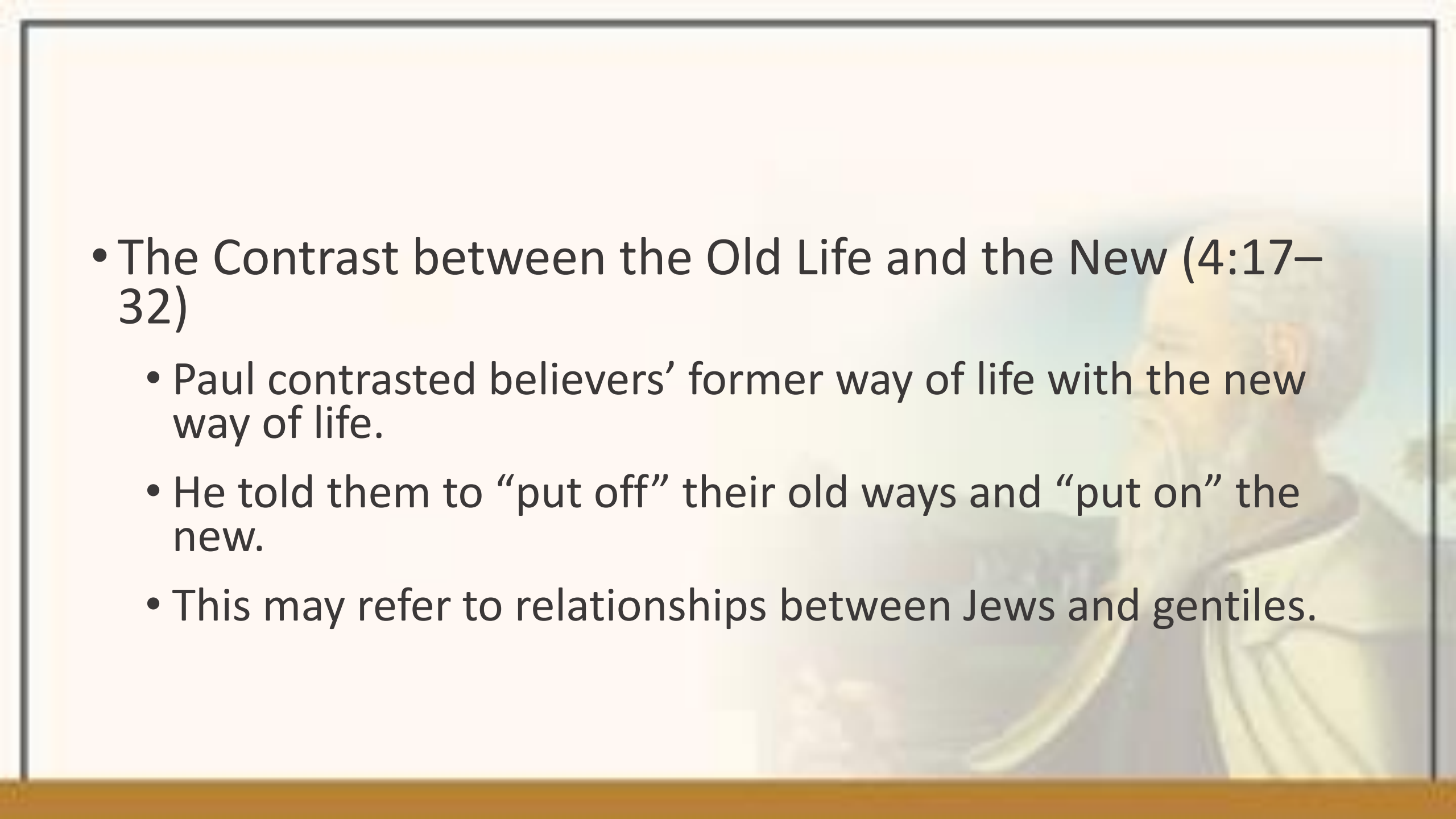
# Living in Christ (4:1–6:24)

- The One Church and Its Mission (4:1–16)
  - Paul taught believers how to apply his instruction.
    - They should be humble and love one another.
    - The church should have unity with the diversity of members' spiritual gifts.
    - His reference to Psalm 68:18 has caused some confusion.

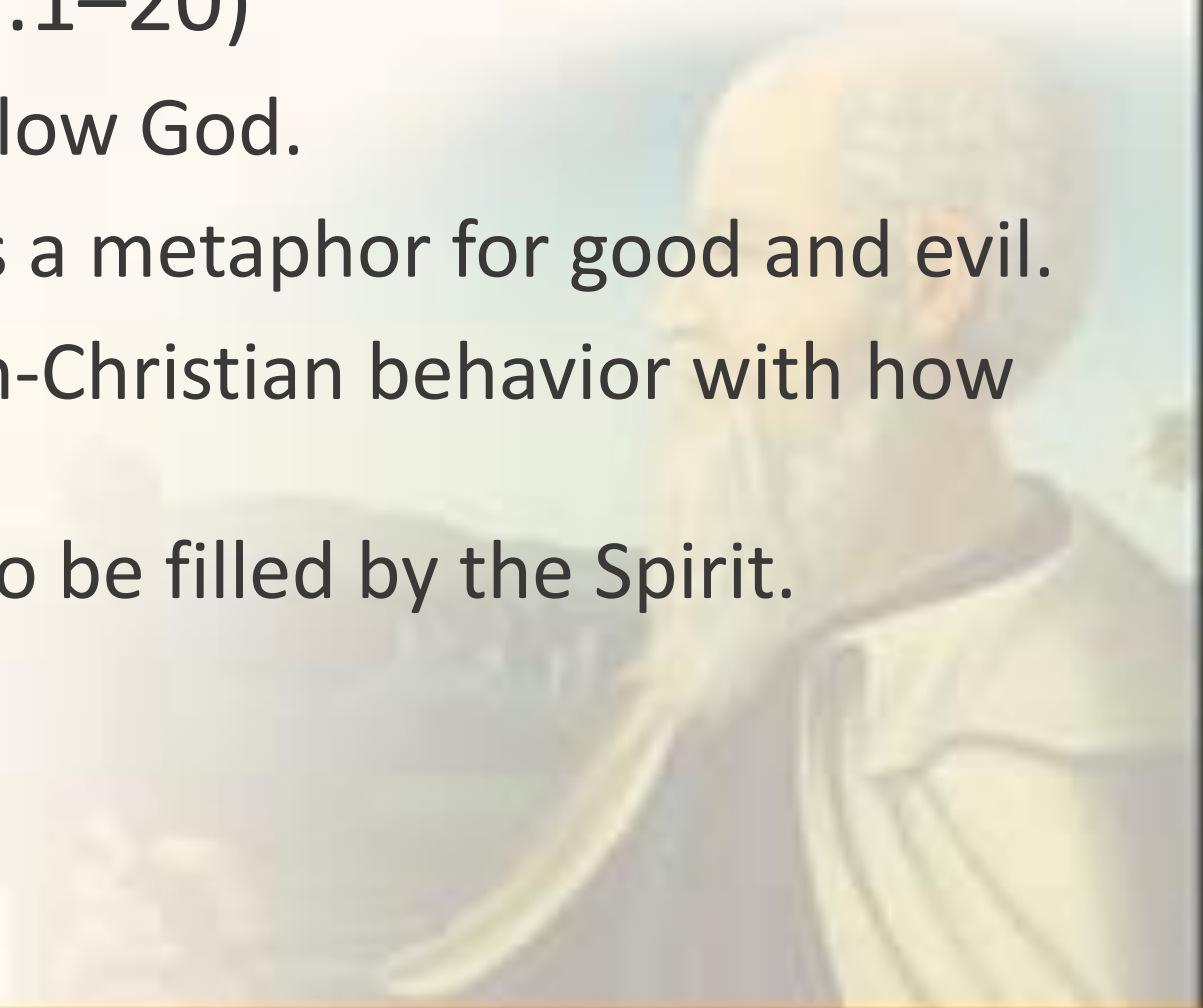


- Paul reminded readers of Christ's power and ability to supply all they need.
- He spoke of Christ's descent, which is unclear in its meaning.
- Paul invoked imagery of shepherding to help his readers understand the role of pastors and teachers.
- He contrasted spiritual "infants" with those who are "mature."
- The author believed that Paul meant that the body of believers as a whole is responsible for helping the church mature.



- 
- The Contrast between the Old Life and the New (4:17–32)
    - Paul contrasted believers' former way of life with the new way of life.
    - He told them to “put off” their old ways and “put on” the new.
    - This may refer to relationships between Jews and gentiles.

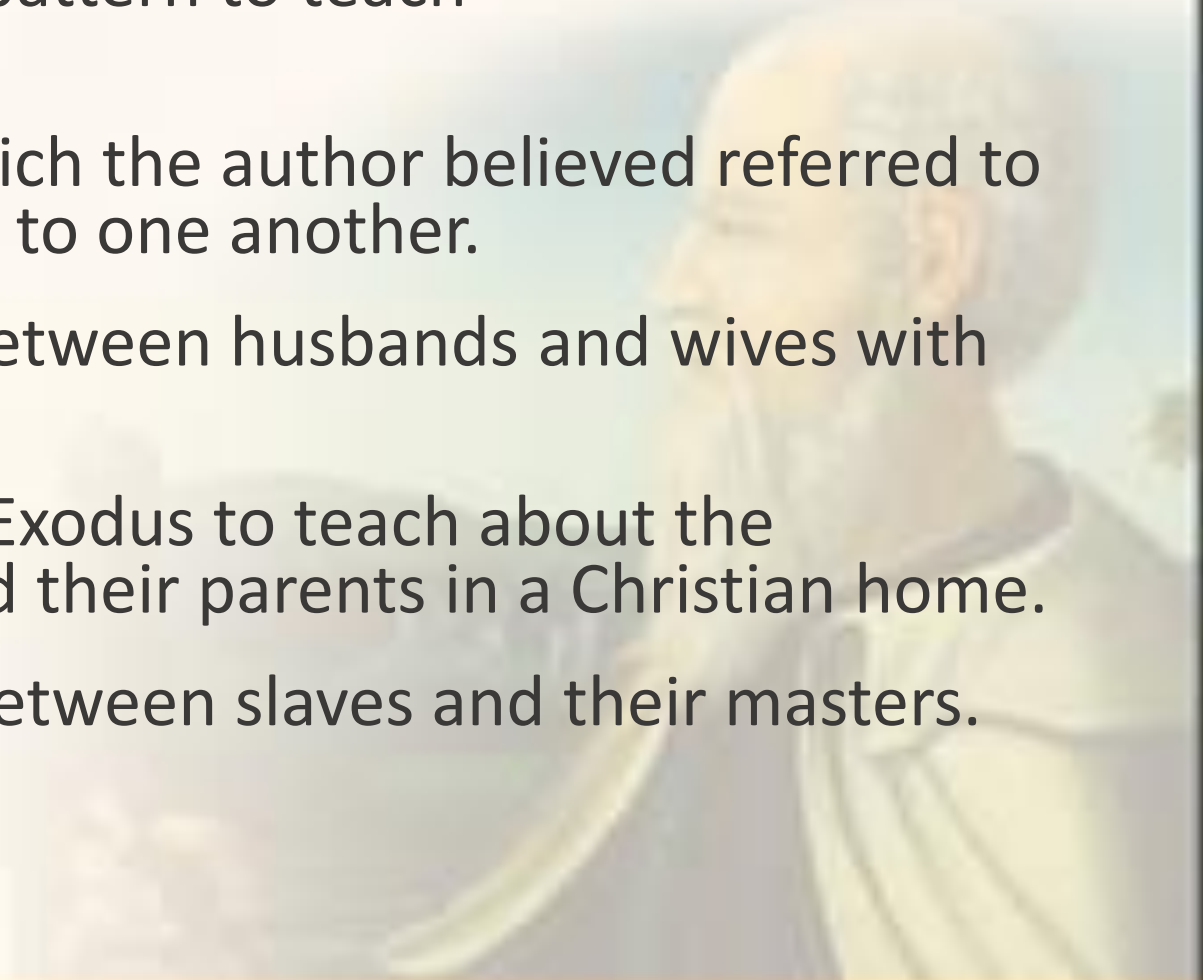
- The Shape of the New Life (5:1–20)
  - Paul exhorted believers to follow God.
  - He used light and darkness as a metaphor for good and evil.
  - He repeatedly contrasted non-Christian behavior with how Christians should live.
  - He explained what it means to be filled by the Spirit.





## • Instructions for the Christian Household (5:21–6:9)

- Paul gave instructions for Christian relationships.
- He followed a “household code” pattern to teach submission/obedience.
- He taught mutual submission, which the author believed referred to the Christian practice of deferring to one another.
- Paul compared the relationship between husbands and wives with that of Christ and the church.
- He also quoted the Decalogue in Exodus to teach about the relationship between children and their parents in a Christian home.
- Paul addressed the relationship between slaves and their masters.



- Spiritual Warfare and Letter Closing (6:10–20)

- Paul continued his exhortations with the “armor of God” passage.
- He reminded believers that they will struggle with both human and supernatural powers of evil.
- He described the full armor of God to help believers understand that God prepares them for threats.
- He closed the letter with a reminder of the power of prayer and a request for prayers for himself.

