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In coming from Galatians to this epistle we seem to enter a different atmosphere. It is no longer the region of conflict and contest with perverters of the Gospel, but a calm meditation upon the deep and profound truths concerning the heavenly calling of the Church. The sphere into which it takes us is above that of Galatians. In Romans and Galatians we have the foundation truths of the gospel of salvation through faith in Christ, who died for us and rose again. But when we touch Ephesians, we are lifted into the very presence of God, and from the exalted height of "heavenly places in Christ," we get for the first time a view of the length and breadth and depth and height of the love of God as seen in His eternal purpose and plan of redemption.

Into this sphere we enter as we take up this wonderful epistle. May God grant that as we go through it, the "eyes of our heart" may be opened to take in the vision in all its fulness.

1. THE SALUTATION (vs. 1, 2):

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God.— Though confined in a Roman dungeon, and perhaps in chains, here is a divinely commissioned officer of the royal court of heaven. An apostle is "one sent" and commissioned to speak with authority. The commission carries with it divine inspiration. He is not left to speak his own thoughts, or to make the least mistake in the choice of language in which to clothe them. The utterances of the true apostles of Jesus Christ are as reliable as those of Christ Himself, and they deal with far higher and deeper things than the prophets of old, or even the Lord Jesus Himself ever taught—the things which they then were "not able to bear."