

All Things Under His Feet

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[0:00] If you've got the Bibles with me please and turn to the book of Ephesians chapter 1.

! This is my 21st Easter at Little Oak Church.! Before I started on an Easter I was installed as pastor of Little Oak Church on Easter Sunday 20, 2006.

Wow! Amen! Right Ron? Isn't that about right? So in the early days, in the early days on Easter and Christmas I would pick a Christmas text for Christmas and an Easter text for Easter.

After a few years of doing that, there's not any new texts or it's hard to come up with something new.

And so I started a number of years ago just staying in the texts that we're in and relating Easter to that text. It's kind of like Spurgeon when he would preach.

[1:24] He would just preach and then make a beeline to the cross. Amen! Right? Just head to the cross from any text. And actually, where we are in Ephesians at the end of chapter 1 of Ephesians, it is about his resurrection.

It is. It's about the results of his resurrection. It's about what Jesus did after he was raised from the dead.

What was his next thing? So, what I want to do first is read the text and then we'll pray and then we'll dig into it. I think it would be wise if I started at the beginning of the prayer, verse 17.

So, Ephesians 1, 17, that's where we'll start, but we'll focus on verses 20 through 23. So, if you're able, please stand as I read.

Paul is praying for the church and he prays in verse 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.

[2:40] Having the eyes of our heart enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power toward us who are believing in accordance with the working of the strength of his might which he brought about in Christ.

When he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named not only in this age but also in the one to come.

So, it reads, let us pray. Father, guide us this great day, this resurrection day. Fill us with new hope. Fill us with new assurance. Fill us with wonder at our Lord Jesus.

How magnificent he is, how wondrous he is. That he, the one who was already above all before the world began, was once again above all when he raised from the dead.

[4:14] And so, Father, give us insight into our Lord Jesus. May we love him more. May we see how much he loves us.

And may we see and recognize and appreciate what he does now. Because it's for us. And for God's glory. We pray this and ask it in Christ's name.

Amen. Please be seated. So, it's Easter. And at Easter, we focus on the joy of a risen, victorious Savior.

His resurrection is so important. His resurrection confirms God's acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice. If he had not raised from the dead, then his death would have meant nothing.

But the fact that God raised him from the dead showed that God accepted his sacrifice. That he paid the debt for us. So, his death and resurrection is good news for rebels.

[5:24] Any rebels here? In natural state? In natural state? See, without both, both the death and the resurrection.

Without both, our faith is futile. And we are still in our sins. So, resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus. What we call Easter.

And if you look that word up, I don't even know what it means. It means something weird. Like, from the East. Resurrection Sunday is what we should call this.

It, it, it, resurrection of Jesus accomplished many, many rich, rich blessings for the believer. But my question today is this. What happened to Jesus after his resurrection?

I mean, I don't mean the first 40 days in Acts, you know. I don't mean that, that initial little time. I mean, what happened to him? What, that now is his role.

[6:28] What is he doing? And, and Paul describes two, two results of what he's doing. The context in which we find this is Paul's request for the church.

He's praying, right? He's praying in verse 17 that, that God would give to these dear folks, these believers, a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of him.

In, in knowing God. It's a personal prayer. To know God in a richer, deeper, more experiential, personal way. Intimate way. Intimate way. And then he adds that having the eyes of our hearts and open, our inner eyes able to see that we would begin to understand the hope of our calling, which means assurance of salvation, that we would really grasp that our salvation is sure.

We can't lose it. If God has given it, we can't take it away from him. It's God's work. And then secondly, that we would know the richness of our inheritance, that it's more than just that we go to heaven someday, but how rich and deep and, and magnificent and glorious that is.

And then thirdly, this practical thing in verse 19, that we would come to know the surpassing greatness of his power, not just the power, but the surpassing greatness of his power toward us who are believing, who are actively believing.

[7:55] And how great is that power? And that's what he expounds on in verse 20. The same power which he brought about in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand.

How much power is that? How much power raised Jesus from the dead? And the second part of that, how much power seats him at the right hand of the Father, the highest place in all of heaven? How much power? And that kind of power is toward us. That's what's stunning. Staggering. That power toward us.

Who are believing. As we believe, do we trust him? Do we trust him? Do we trust him? It's not magic power. It's not, not, not, if I could snap, you know, it's not like that.

But it's, as we wait upon him, it's power that can change our lives, rock our world. So, so that was the prayer.

[8:58] Now, now he gets into it, turns, he turns a corner. So, so as he talks about the power toward us, which is like Christ who was raised from the dead and seated at the right hand. Now he begins to talk about Christ.

So now he turns his focus to Christ and the results of the resurrection. What are the results? What are the amazing results? Excuse me, of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Not toward us, but for him. I guess I need a drink. It's a good time for all of you to take a drink, right?

So there are two results that Paul shows here. And both are in verse 22. Although the first one starts in verse 20. But verse 22, he says he put all things in subjection under his feet.

So that's one. One result is, is that all things are put in subjection under the feet of Jesus. So he's king.

[10:07] He's king. He's reigning as king. And then secondly, notice the second part of verse, verse 22. And he gave him, he gave Jesus as head over all things to the church.

He gave Jesus to the church as head of the church. So two things. What are the roles of Jesus? What does Jesus do? One, he is on his throne reigning, actively reigning.

And two, all kinds of exciting things going on back there. And two, you're good, you're good, you're fine. I'm just enjoying it. Two, that he gave Christ to the church as our head, as our director, as the one who leads us.

Okay, so let's look at those two things. First result is that he's, he was raised to reign as king over all. He's raised.

So in verse 20, we see, when he raised him from the dead and what? And seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places. Seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.

[11:24] So what does that mean? To be at God's right hand, to be at the Father's right hand. Right hand. Right? Well, that means a number of things. It is a place of honor.

It's the highest honor and glory. But it's also a place of power and authority. Right hand. Right? So when God talks about, talks about redeeming Israel from Egypt with his right hand, he rescued them.

His power. Right? He, he humiliated the gods of Egypt with each of the, each of the plagues. Each plague was striking at one of the gods of Egypt.

And so God humiliated and destroyed the whole God thing of Egypt and rescued his people in an unprecedented way.

So place of power and authority and control. So he's rules. He's ruling events of the world. And then verse 21. Well, who does he rule? So verse 21 talks about his power is far above all rule and authority and power and dominion.

[12:40] He aims four different things. Rule and authority and power and dominion. Far above those positions, those places. Right?

Those are, those are rulers. Those are both earthly rulers and spiritual rulers. Those are earthly authorities and spiritual authorities. So it is both, he is far above, not just earthly, but spiritual, heavenly powers and authorities.

Whether angelic or demonic, he's above them all. I mean, he was above them on, on earth when the, you know, when, remember when Jesus would preach, demons would pop up, right? They, they, they try to react and try to stop him.

And what did he do? Just, ah, shh, ah, shh, just a word and cast him out. I mean, they had no chance.

Even the herd of, the herd, of, you know, the, the legion, right? So he has, he has that power over all, all of those forces.

[13:50] And he adds verse 21 and every name, every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And a name is a designation of honor, reputation or fame.

So whoever, whoever has made a name for themselves, whoever has a reputation, a fame, right? Right? So the highest name, what's the highest name of history you can think of besides Jesus? Probably depends on what's your favorite part of history. Is it recent history, George Washington? Is it old history?

Is it Caesar? Is it Genghis Khan? No, probably not. A lot of famous names. Good embed.

His name is above, far above any name, any reputation, any fame. Both of this age, meaning this time, the time that we live on earth and the age to come.

[14:55] The age to come is the time after this world. Right? So he is, he is far above now and forever. Far above. So what's his position?

Verse 22. So then he summarizes. So he put, God the Father put all things in subjection under his feet, under Jesus' feet.

So the Father gave Jesus this exalted position. He put all things. He put all things. Father had the, you know, Father's over all. So he put it all under his son.

All of it. Everything in subjection. Literally arranged under his feet. Under his authority.

So what this means, folks, is that when Jesus raised from the dead and ascended to heaven, it's kind of like, okay, I guess we don't see him again until he comes back.

[15:55] Right? He's just kind of sitting up there waiting, you know, not doing anything. We just kind of, you know, now we work with the Holy Spirit and Jesus is, you know, we'll see you when we get there.

What this text is telling us, if that was your thinking at all or you hadn't really thought about it, is that no, not at all. Jesus has a most significant role. He is ruling.

He is controlling. He is directing the events of history. Nothing is outside his authority. All is under his feet.

Now, there may be some things going on in history you don't like, still under his feet. Okay? Otherwise, he would say, everything's under his feet except for the stuff that goes bad. No, the stuff that we think goes bad. Look at history. Look at biblical history. A lot of things went bad, right? God was it.

[16:58] Was God in control then? Yeah? Yeah? Was God in control when Joseph suffered? Yeah? Was humiliated by his brothers?

Sold into slavery? How about all the people of Israel that were sold into slavery for two, no, 400 years?

God was obviously in control because when he brought them out, he could have done that 400 years before that. So he has a purpose. So he has a purpose. In other words, what we have to trust about Jesus as the one who is reigning is that he knows what he's doing.

So it's not just that he's exalted over them, but that he rules over them. He's not, it's not just that all are inferior to him, but all must obey him. Because he has conquered them.

And so our lack of patience wants that to be done. Be done, Jesus.

[18:05] Take us home. Right? Knock them all out. Right? Get those bad guys. Well, he does it. Well, let's look at what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15.

How is this Jesus reigning right now? What does it involve? So consider the words of Paul. Again, he's talking about Jesus was raised and now he's reigning. 1 Corinthians 15, 20.

But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. The first few first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, that's Adam, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order, Christ, the first fruits.

Then at his coming, those who belong to Christ. So we will all in Christ be raised. Then comes the end. So Paul's given a big span here.

[19:06] All of a sudden, then comes the end. When he, Jesus, delivers the kingdom to God the Father. When does he do that? After.

After destroying every rule and every authority and power. And power. Same terms as in, we saw here in Ephesians 1.

For he must reign. Jesus must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

Jesus is actively putting his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed was the last enemy.

Death. You ever thought of death as an enemy? Death as an enemy. Then he puts that one under his feet. One under his feet.

[20:04] When he puts death under his feet. Then it's done. Right? For God has put all things in subjection under his feet. But when it says all things are put in subjection.

It's plain, obvious that he, the Father, is accepted who put all things in subjection under Jesus.

When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the Father who put all things in subjection under him.

That God may be all in all. Paul's being careful of this theology. Didn't mean to say the Father subjected himself to Jesus. So note that his reign is active. He's not sitting on his throne waiting. He is putting enemies down. He is destroying every rule and authority and power. All are in subjection under his feet.

None act without his permission. None act without his authority. So what does it mean for us?

[21:09] He has put the whole world in his hands. Doesn't that sound like a song? We sing that a long time ago. He got the whole world in his hands.

I never knew what that really meant. He's got the whole world in his hands. He died. He died. He died.

He died. He died. He died. He died. He died. He died. He died. He died. He died.

He died. He died. He died. He died. He died. He died. He died. He died.

died. died. hill our God is still on his throne our king is still on his throne he knows what he's doing his timing's not our timing that's the that's the rub that's the rub so though the nations rage though the wrong seems off so strong our king is on his throne so what's what are the results of the

resurrection first of all for Jesus it means that he's is at the right hand of the father ruling over all secondly he's given to the church we find verse 22 part the second part of verse 22 and he gave him gave Jesus as head over all things to the church so he's not only raised to reign as king but he's raised to direct and fill his church as its head he was raised to head the church which means to direct and fill the church what does that mean right so he's given for a headship so what does heads what does it mean that he's the head of the church or as this passage brings out the church is also pictured as a body right so he we are the body he's the head so what does it mean that he's the head of the church the head of the body what does the head do depends on whose head it is it's it directs the body directs the body it leads the body it it is his responsibility to to direct and lead the body so so it's compared to marriage remember that marriage uh husbands in a christian marriage are compared to christ as the head wives are compared to the church right so so what does that mean for a husband what is a husband has the head what does the husband do does that mean he rules the roost it didn't work all it did was hurt my hand does he rule the roost i mean you obey i am your lord some guys do that and then i think they're absolutely wrong no christ never did that doesn't do that he leads gently he he leads by love right loves the body loves the church he the husband loves the wife right so it's in a loving way but he has a responsibility what i tell husbands is they have the responsibility to lead now they can give the wife the husband to decide the wife's going to do this and this this this but he has the responsibility of what she does he will answer for it does that make sense just like uh in the in the garden right who who took the lead in the garden when the dragon showed up right eve did well it it was adam's job to guard the garden wasn't it who let the dragon in who's responsible for that right that that's what i mean is the responsibility comes down to him his responsibility to lead and direct can be in gracious and in in very different ways but it's his responsibility to the church so he's given to the church so what's the church we we often say uh well this is little log church

[25:53] what does that mean well this building is little log church right very thank you very that was a test that was good yeah this is a chapel this is a chapel this is not a sanctuary i know our old we grow up we used to call the the church building the sanctuary i grew up with that language too i had to kind of weed it out because that's not the sanctuary it's a sacred place i'll give you that this this chapel is dedicated it's a holy sanctified place but it's not the church and it's not the sanctuary what's the sanctuary where does the holy spirit dwell in in our hearts so we have a sanctuary we are the temple both individually and corporately we are the temple of the holy spirit later in this book of ephesians he's going to talk about that we're the temple now not a building right so so let's think of the church rightly church is the people right so um he he is given to the church he's given to the people he's given church means called out ones called out ecclesia ek meaning out to call so called out ones where are we called out from where'd you get called out darkness in the world right the and and colossians one actually says we've been called out of the authority of darkness not just the darkness of the dark world but under we were under the authority of the spirits of darkness we'll get to that next week in chapter two because because he talks about who where we were before we were saved so we're called out of the authority of darkness and we're transferred if colossians one says we're transferred into the kingdom of his beloved son the kingdom of light so that's the church the body and now he pictures it as a body now there's a lot of pictures of the church it's called the the body it's called the bride right it's called the building a lot of different metaphors for what the church is but here he's focusing on body the church is pictured as a body so how does it look well we can kind of follow this word body through ephesians because he talks about this church body in chapter 216 there's two groups that are united into one body and he's talking about the jews and the gentiles are united into one body now we're one two groups reconciled together not independent not loosely attached but reconciled together not an organization but an organism it's a living organism we're used to

organizations and we want to kind of force that on the church we want the church to be an organization that's where I think all of the marketing and the church growth principles come from you know that we can just make and manipulate this thing and make it grow and make it do things because it's an organization if you use the principles of the growth process not like that this is God's people it's a spiritual organism it's dynamic it changes not every church is supposed to look like every other church they really are not it's a pity that many do really is because the power is diminished it's all man-made

but a God church is going to move it's going to just move how we've been waiting for God to move right we've been doing what we're supposed to be doing but we're waiting for God to say now I want you to go in this direction why?

we don't set our plans and our visions out ahead and hope God joins us we wait for God to move and we watch for where he's working and then that's where we go remember Israel in the wilderness?

how'd they go? we've been here long enough we gotta move not tell the God moved sometimes it would be every day and sometimes it would be months and months in between who are you gonna wait on?

whose church are we? do we believe Jesus is the head? will he not direct his church? see so whether we're able whether we're willing to wait or not shows how much we trust him to really dynamically work in our church so the body is one that the work of ministry builds in chapter 4:12 we'll get to that how the church is equipped and the equipped church begins to build the body and 4:16 the body grows as each part does its work under the direction of the head if you look at Ephesians 4 that is 4:12 to 16 is the whole nucleus of of the theology of the church what is the church?

[31:34] how are we to function? Paul has laid it down in those verses that's our vision sometimes we get asked what's your vision? what's the vision of the little log church? well God already wrote it for us it's in Ephesians 4:12 to 16 it's not up to us to change it that's our vision now we're talking about waiting for God to show us now that might be called another kind of practical vision for a limited time but not our so then he says verse 23 so the head over all things which is his body the fullness of him who fills all in all the body so the church is his body and then his body is his fullness so what?

and then he goes on and says the fullness of him who fills all in all what? can anybody help me out? because it's kind of getting into that language of over my head I know you're saying well if it's over your head what are we going to do?

I have to dig a little bit and I got to read a little bit so two ways to understand this the body which is his fullness the fullness of him so it's either so I'm letting you in on how to interpret some things two ways to interpret what this phrase means it's either active which means the church fills and completes Christ right?

so the fullness of him so filling him is the church actively filling Jesus fulfilling Jesus are we completing Christ which would imply that Christ is incomplete so does that make sense are we filling up what Jesus didn't finish no not in this sense so it's passive then so it's not the church filling but it's Christ filling so fullness of him meaning not the fullness toward him but the fullness from him so his fullness that fills us yeah that sounds a little better doesn't it the church is filled by him the church as his body is filled by him we see it in the end of chapter 2 where he talks about we that he dwells in us he fills us and then we see it again in chapter 3:14 where Paul is praying that the church would be filled up to all the fullness of God yeah that's the way it's not we fill him but he fills us that's how he directs us by filling us and he fills us with his spirit to move right both individually and corporately as a church he fills us to move and to minister so how does this apply practically in our lives how do we see this fullness of God what does that look like both individually and corporately well let's let's sneak a peek over at 2 Peter 1 this is probably one we haven't read for a while anybody doing their devotions of late in 2 Peter chapter 1 is a doozy there's some powerful words here

Peter writes this remember this was a fisherman who writes all this he's a little past fishing at this point he says God's divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence so how does he grant all these things to us through our walk with him through knowing him through the knowledge of him right by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises okay so he's granted us all things now he's granted us his promises why so that here it is so that through them through the promises you may become partakers of the divine nature believe that are we partakers of the divine nature does god's own nature reside in us once we're born again yeah because he gives us his spirit his divine nature and that's through the promise the promise of the spirit that comes so we we become partakers right we're not god but we've become partakers of we begin to get parts pieces of that nature having escaped from the corruption that is now in the world because of sinful desire so talking about our conversion there for this very reason so what should we do if we're partakers of the divine nature if god has given his fullness to us what do we do well he says here's your part make every effort to supplement your faith now he's going to go through a list okay start with faith that's where we start right first thing we have is faith saved by faith what do i add to faith supplement your faith with virtue and virtue with knowledge and knowledge with self-control and self-control with steadfastness and steadfastness with godliness and godliness with brotherly affection meaning philadelphia brother love and brotherly affection with love agape there's kind of a progression here add to your faith so in other words keep growing in your faith keep growing don't just stop with faith james tells us about that if you got if you only got faith and you got no works you got nothing added in your

[37:49] Christian growth than faith maybe that faith's not real it's quite a calling it is so it's like don't get over oh man this is a big list I gotta check all these things off no he's just encouraging here are the virtues to pursue here are the qualities to pursue I don't think it has to go in this order but these are good qualities these are fruits of the spirit aren't they in part here right so grow in these things!

for if increasing so which means that you get a little you don't get all of it you don't get all self control at once but you get a little bit of self control right if it's so it's increasing it means you get a little more self control maybe by the next year hopefully maybe I hope right a little more godly a little more steadfast a little more love right so if these qualities are yours and are increasing so it's progressive they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ if you if they're increasing then you become in other words you become more effective and more fruitful in the knowledge of Christ for the negative side is for whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he's blind in other words you don't have an excuse if you're lacking these qualities if you are a believer you're lacking these qualities that they're at least in part starting in you right that you are so nearsighted that you're blind having what having forgotten having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins in

Christianity there there is this expectation as we walk with the Lord that we grow it's not a demand it's not a legalism it is just a regular relationship he's just talking about it's increasing it's not that you arrive not that you measure up but are you growing right and why he started with because we're partakers we're partakers of the divine nature and if you have the divine nature in you there is no reason that we shouldn't grow I mean the only reason that we hold back the divine nature is we've forgotten and our faith is passive and we've shoved the gear into neutral and we're just coasting and God owes me all this right that's not how Jesus talked and that's not how Jesus lived and that's not how Jesus expected his disciples to live he was not legalistic but he was come on guys are you getting it yet are you growing are you starting to put it together he's always asking how you doing are you getting there yet he had to have a lot of patience with those guys didn't he!

they said! they weren't getting it bless their hearts I mean it in a good way I'm not southern so I mean it in a good way therefore brothers be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election for if you practice these things if you practice these qualities you will never fall wow that's pretty good you will never fall if you fall a lot here's a way to start overcoming that trusting in Christ who has given us power to walk this way so God has given us power he's given us promise he's given us a new nature what difference does all that make well are you making progress are you seeking virtue and godliness and self control and steadfastness and brotherly love and agape love are you pursuing those things or have you forgotten maybe today's just a time to say hey you forgot he

doesn't say you miserable person he says you forgotten we all forget we have times like that maybe I'm going through a really hard time and I've just been so focused on other things I've kind of let go of what really matters and it's a time to renew okay no I remember now I remember yeah he set me free he set me free I'm trying to encourage you from a pastoral perspective so if you lack these things it's not about works it's about perspective forgotten so Christ is building his church what difference does it make for us well is being the body of Christ important to you does that matter to you are you engaged with members of the body of Christ if you are a follower of Christ and a believer in Christ are you engaged in his church there's a sense today that I've picked up that is you know it's just me and

[43:35] Jesus I'm good I don't like the church anymore the church has disappointed me the church has hurt me the church full of hypocrites and all the list you know you've all heard it and we've all seen it we've all got the t-shirt yeah been there yeah we're flawed Jesus doesn't really give us an option an opt out of his body you're part of his body so embrace it engage will you will you get hurt yeah probably will I get betrayed yeah you might been there got that t-shirt is it worth it yeah it's it's really worth it stick it out I mean gee what could be worse being treated like Jesus so so right so that kind of puts it in when I was depressed when I was earlier depressed

I then God kind of showed me yeah have you gone through what my son went through okay that kind of shut me up no no not that much okay yeah that's good that's good we're good we're done no fancy ending sorry he is risen okay we got closure okay let's pray father we thank you for your good your good word to us we thank you that you show us Lord our Lord Jesus encourage our faith strengthen our faith because he is on his throne as we look around the world and we see all the stuff going on and we we see the tragedy and the heartbreaks and all these things all part of the broken world Lord we help us to look to you and know that you're in control to trust that you're in control that you will bring good out of it and father we thank you that that you gave Jesus to us as the church as the body to direct us personally to lead us to show us how he wants his body to function so this we thank you in Christ's name amen thank you thank you Thank you.