

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

EPHESIANS 01:15–18

Introduction

Paul had just declared the eternal plan of God for the world (v. 3-14). It is crucial that believers come to know the God of this plan in the most personal and intimate sense. This is the great subject of this passage: the knowledge of God — it is absolutely essential that believers grow more and more in the knowledge of God and that the world come to know God as their personal Saviour.

- I. The basis: faith and love (vv. 15-16).
- II. The need: a growing knowledge of God — the God of Christ and the Father of glory (vv. 17-18).
- III. The results of knowing God (v. 18).

I. *Ephesians 01:15–16 Testimony of the Ephesian Church*

The basis of knowing God is faith and love. The Ephesian church had a strong testimony, a testimony so strong that it was being buzzed about all over the world. Their testimony and its strength had reached the ears of Paul. And note what it was that he had heard: the church had a strong faith in the Lord Jesus and had a strong love for all the saints (believers) of God.

=> He had heard about their faith in God's love (that God had sent His Son to save the world) and about their loyalty to the Lord Jesus in carrying the message of God's love throughout the world.

=> He had heard that they were ministering to the saints of God — demonstrating a great love for God's people.

It was this fact — their strong testimony of faith and love — that had stirred Paul to write the Ephesians. He knew that the Christian life never sat still. A person has to grow or else he slips backward. Therefore, Paul wanted the Ephesian believers to grow in their knowledge and power of God. He had just shared the great blessings of God which was theirs when they first came to know God (see Eph. 1:3-14). Now he wanted them to grow in these blessings, the blessings of knowing God and experiencing the power of God. Therefore, he told them that he prayed for them. In fact, he never ceased to ask God that they might grow in the knowledge and power of God.

II. *Ephesians 01:17–18 Growing in the Knowledge of God*

The great need of believers is to grow in the knowledge of God. Note that the God we are to know is clearly identified. He is not the god of our own minds and thoughts — the god we conceive when we picture what God is like — the god made by men's minds and hands — the god of religion.

- => The God we are to know is the God of Jesus Christ: that is, the God whom Jesus Christ worshipped when He was on earth as a Man; the God whom Jesus Christ came to reveal to men. There is no other God — not a true and living God. If we are to really know God, we must come to know the God whom Christ worshipped and revealed.
- => The God we are to know is the Father of glory, that is, the only true and living God, the Supreme Majesty and Sovereign Lord of the Universe — the One who is the Supreme intelligence and power of the universe and who has created all and rules over all — the One who is omnipotent (all powerful), omnipresent (present everywhere), and so expansive that His very being and presence reaches out beyond the stars and embraces all that is or ever will be — the One who declares that He has “set His glory *above* the heavens” (Psa. 8:1).

This is the God we are to know. As stated, He is the only living and true God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the God of glory. Believers must grow more and more in the knowledge of Him; they must gain an ever-increasing knowledge of Him.

Three things are essential if believers are to grow in the knowledge of God. And remember these things are so important that Paul prayed unceasingly for God to give them to the believer.

1. First, to grow in the knowledge of God a believer must have the *Spirit of wisdom* (sophia). (See *Wisdom*, Eph. 1:8.)
 - a. Note the phrase “the Spirit of wisdom.” What the believer needs from God is *a spirit...*
 - a spirit that reaches out and grasps after wisdom
 - a spirit that hungers and thirsts after wisdom
 - a spirit that seeks and seeks after wisdom
 - b. Wisdom can best be understood by the single words *what* and *how*. Wisdom means knowing what something is, what is behind something, and what can be done. It is knowing how to use or relate to something. Therefore, spiritual wisdom means...
 - knowing who God is and how to relate to Him
 - knowing the truth and how to use it
 - knowing what to do and how to do it
 - knowing how to live more and more fruitful lives — for the glory of God and for the welfare of men
 - c. Wisdom differs from knowledge. Knowledge is the grasping of facts, but grasping facts is not enough. Much more is needed: a person must know how to use the facts. That is where wisdom comes in. Wisdom knows how to use the facts. The point is this: it is not enough to know the facts about God; a person must know God personally. He must know how to experience the facts about God. He must use the facts to develop a personal relationship with God — a growing relationship — a relationship that is

intimate, and grows deeper and deeper. This is the meaning of the word *knowledge* (*epignosei*): a personal and intimate relationship with God; a personal experience with God. It is not an intellectual knowledge of God, but an experiential knowledge of God.

Thought 1. If the believer is to grow in the knowledge of God, he must seek the wisdom of God more than anything else on this earth. It is the person who hungers and thirsts after God and His righteousness that is filled.

Mat 7:24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”

Col 2:3 *In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

2 Tim 3:15 *And how from infancy you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

James 1:5 *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*

James 3:17 *But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.*

2. Second, to grow in the knowledge of God a believer must have the *Spirit of revelation*.
 - a. Again, note the phrase “the Spirit of revelation.” It is the Holy Spirit who reveals God to the believer. This is made abundantly clear by Scripture.

1 Cor 2:9-12 *However, as it is written: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” – but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.*

The believer is indwelt by the Spirit of God (Jn. 14:16-17; 14:26; 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:16). The Spirit of God dwells in him to teach him the deep things of God. But note what the believer must have in order to grow in the knowledge of God: “the Spirit of revelation”...

- is a spirit that drives after God
 - is a spirit that seeks to know God
 - is a spirit that hungers and thirsts after God above all else
- b. The word *revelation* (*apokalypseos*) means to manifest; to reveal; to unveil; to uncover; to open. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal the knowledge of God to Christians. In fact it is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal the meaning of all truth

to the Christian (Jn. 14:26; 16:12-15). This is clearly seen in 1 Cor. 1:9-16 where the wisdom of the world is contrasted with the wisdom of God. A spiritual Christian sees (through the Spirit revealing to him) the meaning behind world events as well as day-to-day experiences. He understands who and what is behind the events of history and human experience. Therefore, he gains a growing knowledge of God day by day.

Thought 1. If the believer is to grow in his knowledge of God, the richness and deep things of God must be opened up to the believer. But the things of God are like everything else that is worthwhile: they are not just handed over to men. A man must seek to learn more and more about God. He must seek to have the truth of God revealed to him.

Thought 2. Lehman Strauss points out that human philosophy says, “know thyself” (*Devotional Studies in Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 132). However, Jesus said, “Now this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (Jn. 17:3).

To know oneself is important — very, very important. But the greatest thing in all the world is to know God personally and to know that one shall live with God forever. God and eternal life are the summits of knowledge. It is better to know that one shall never die, than to know all there is about oneself and lose that knowledge at death.

3. Third, to grow in the knowledge of God a believer must have the *eyes of his heart enlightened*. This is a beautiful description of the heart: “the eyes of your heart.” The heart must be opened so that the light of God can be seen and grasped. An open heart is the responsibility of both the believer and the Holy Spirit.

=> The believer must open his heart and focus its affection, intelligence and will upon knowing God.

=> The believer must seek the Holy Spirit to enlighten and flood his heart with the things of God.

2 Cor 4:6 For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Eph 1:18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.

1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Psa 18:28 You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light.

Psa 119:130 The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

III. Ephesians 01:18 Results of Knowing God

The results of knowing God are threefold.

1. A believer comes to know the hope of God's calling. What is the hope of the believer's call? It is what has already been covered in the great spiritual blessings of God (Eph. 1:13-14):

=> that we should be holy and blameless, living in His sight forever and ever (v. 4).

=> that we should experience what it means to be adopted as sons of God — forever and ever (vv. 5-6).

=> that we should experience eternal redemption and forgiveness of sin (v. 7).

=> that we should possess the wisdom and understanding of God (v. 8).

=> that we should live in the perfect heaven and earth where there will be no more division but only peace and unity in Christ Jesus (vv. 9-10).

Very simply stated, God has called us to stand before Him in the name and righteousness of Jesus Christ — to stand before Him just as Jesus Christ stands before Him: perfect. It is evident that we are not perfect — not now, not yet. But the day is coming when we shall be. Right now we experience the blessings of God only in part, only imperfectly. But when the glorious *Day of Redemption* comes, we shall be made just like our Lord Jesus Christ, righteous and perfect, enabled to live in God's presence, worshipping and serving Him forever and ever. This is the believer's hope; this is the believer's calling.

Mat 13:43 *“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”*

Rom 8:16-17 *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

Rom 8:29-30 *For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.*

Phil 3:20-21 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

1 John 3:2 *Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

Col 3:4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

2. A believer comes to know God's inheritance — His inheritance in the saints. Believers are themselves the inheritance, that is, the heritage and possession of God. When we come to know God, we learn who we are — the glorious position God has given us: He has made us His very own possession and heritage. (See *Inheritance*, Eph. 1:11-13.)
3. A believer comes to know and to experience the enormous power of God. In discussing this glorious result, Paul explodes into a discussion of God's power which was clearly shown in what He did for Christ. Because of its length, it is discussed in a separate subject in the next outline.

Eph 3:20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us. ■

THE POWER OF GOD: DEMONSTRATED IN CHRIST'S EXALTATION EPHESIANS 01:19–23

Introduction

This is a great passage covering a much needed subject — the power of God. If men ever needed anything, they need the power of God in their lives. If men have ever been gripped by evil and shame, bitterness and hate, lust and immorality, cursing and anger, robbery and assault, murder and war, selfishness and greed, division and strife, disappointment and emptiness, boredom and purposelessness, it is today. Men desperately need the power of God to help them in their daily lives and to right the wrongs of society.

The glorious news is that God offers His power to men — if they will only turn to His Son Jesus Christ. He promises His power to all believers. Note that this passage is a continuation of the prayer of Paul. He is praying that the Ephesian believers might know God personally and intimately, for God gives His power to those who truly come to know Him. Coming to know God is the key to receiving the power of God.

- I. God's power: A great power (v. 19).
- II. The power that raised Him from the dead (v. 20).
- III. The power that took Him to heaven and seated Him at God's right hand (v. 20).
- IV. The power that exalted Christ above all creatures: in this age and in the next age (v. 21).
- V. The power that exalted Him as the Supreme Head of the church (vv. 22-23).

I. *Ephesians 01:19 The Power of God*

When a believer really knows God, he experiences power — the power of God Himself. Note how God's power is described:

=> It is *incomparable* (huperballon): surpassing, unlimited, immeasurable, beyond imagination.

=> It is *great* (megathos): mighty, explosive, beyond measure. This is the word from which we get the English word *megathon* which measures atomic explosives. Imagine the great explosive power of God!

The thing to note is that God's power is *for us*; that is, God takes His power and extends it, presents it, makes it available to the believer. How do we know this? Because of what God did for Christ. What God did for Christ He will do for us. God's power is demonstrated by what He did for Christ.

II. *Ephesians 01:20 Power of God Demonstrated in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*

Believers are to experience the power of God — the same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Imagine the enormous power needed to raise a person from the dead. God displayed such power when He raised Jesus Christ.

Acts 2:23-24 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Acts 3:14-15 You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Acts 10:39-41 "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen — by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead."

Rom 1:4 And who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

The point is this: when God raised Jesus Christ, He demonstrated three things for men. He showed men that He had the power to do three things.

1. The power to raise Christ shows that God has the power to conquer all the trials and temptations of life. When God exercised the power to raise Christ, He conquered the most powerful trial that faces man — death. And in conquering death, God demonstrated that He has the power to conquer any trial or temptation of man, no matter what it is.

1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

2 Cor 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

2. The resurrection of Jesus Christ shows that God has the power to give man a new life and the power to live a new life before Him. After Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead. He was not living His old life, the life He had before His death. He was a *new Man*; He had a new life. He had been raised from the dead to live a new life before God forever. He walked before God in newness of life.

Rom 6:4 *We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

Eph 4:24 *And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Col 3:10 *And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.*

1 John 2:6 *Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.*

3. The power to raise Christ from the dead shows that God has the power to raise men from the dead. The believer shall experience the great resurrection power of God and be resurrected from the dead.

John 5:28-29 *“Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out — those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.”*

John 6:40 *“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

Acts 24:15 *And I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.*

2 Cor 4:14 *Because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.*

1 Th 4:16-18 *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.*

III. Ephesians 01:20 The Exaltation of Jesus Christ

Believers are to experience the power of God — the same power that took Jesus Christ to heaven and seated Him at God’s right hand. God did not just have the power to resurrect Jesus Christ, He had the power to take Jesus Christ into another dimension of being — into the spiritual world, that is, the world of the Spirit. God brought Jesus Christ to Himself and seated Him at His own right hand. He is literally there; His body is in heaven — the spiritual world and dimension of being.

Mark 16:19 *After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.*

Luke 22:69 *“But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.”*

Acts 5:30-31 *The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead — whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.*

Eph 1:20 *Which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.*

The point of God's power is clear: He took Christ into heaven and exalted Him in order to demonstrate that He has the power to take men to heaven and to exalt them.

John 14:2-3 *“In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”*

Acts 7:55-56 *But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”*

Phil 3:20-21 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

Col 3:4 *When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

Rev 22:14 *“Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.”*

IV. Ephesians 01: 21 Power that Exalted Jesus Christ Above All Creatures

Believers are to experience the power of God — the same power that exalted Jesus Christ above all creatures, both in this age and in the next age. Being seated at the right hand of God simply means having the highest seat of honour and authority in the universe. What God did was exalt Jesus Christ to rule and reign over all authority, no matter how great or powerful. Christ has been exalted “far above all rule and authority, power and dominion.” And to make sure nothing is excluded — Jesus Christ has been exalted above “every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come” (v. 21). All things are placed in subjection under Him.

Phil 2:9-10 *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus even knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.*

Heb 1:9 *“You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”*

1 Pet 3:22 *Who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand — with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.*

The point is this: God gave Jesus Christ the authority to rule and reign over all; He demonstrated that He has the power to exalt us to rule and reign with Christ. This God promises to do.

Mat 25:23 *“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’”*

Mat 25:34 *“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’”*

Luke 19:17 *“‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’”*

1 Cor 6:2-3 *Do you not know that the saints will judge [rule, hold authority] the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!*

Heb 6:5 *Who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age.*

James 2:5 *Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?*

Rev 5:10 *“You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”*

Rev 20:4 *I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge.*

Rev 22:5 *There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.*

V. Ephesians 01:22–23 Jesus Christ, Head of Church

Believers are to experience the power of God — the same power that made Jesus Christ the head of the church. Jesus Christ paid the supreme price to start and build the church: He died for it. Therefore, God has given Him the supreme position over the church. Note two points.

1. The church is called the *body of Christ*. This is one of the Bible's most descriptive pictures of Jesus Christ and the church: the picture of the *human body* with Christ being the Head and the church being His body (see 1 Cor. 12:12-31). William Barclay points out that this picture says something of enormous value. Christ needs the church and church needs Christ (Jn. 20:21) (*The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 108.) The head cannot function without the body, nor can the body function without the head. The head dreams and plans. But a head, a mind by itself, is of no use. A head

must have a body to carry out the plans so that the dream can be realized. Christ came to bring the dream and plan of peace and reconciliation to a world of lost men, men who were alienated from God and from one another. Now the body, the church, must carry out the dream and plan. The message of peace, in the power of Christ, must be taken to men by the church.

The point is this: if God had the power to create the church and to make Christ the head of the church, then He has the power to make the body *function and work* for Christ. God has the power to *get us busy* for the Lord — the power to help us in our witnessing — the power to stir us to proclaim the message of reconciliation and to minister to the desperate needs of a world lost and reeling under the weight of sin, darkness, starvation, disease and suffering.

Acts 1:8 *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Rom 12:5 *So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

1 Cor 12:27-28 *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.*

Eph 1:23 *Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills every thing in every way.*

Eph 4:11-12 *It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.*

Col 1:24 *Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.*

Col 2:19 *He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.*

2 Tim 1:7 *For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.*

2. The church completes all for Christ. William Barclay again points out that the church is the instrument through which the fullness of Christ fills all in all — everything. Jesus Christ is working throughout the world and in human history to bring about God's eternal plan for the world. He is working and fitting everything into its proper place bit by bit, and He is doing it *through the church*. The church is the instrument of God for bringing His will about on earth. (*The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 109.)

Again, the point is that God has the power to use the church and its believers to work out His eternal plan for the world. Just think — the church is the body upon the earth that God is using to work out human history!

Mat 28:19-20 *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Col 1:16-20 *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*

Col 2:8-10 *See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.*

2 Pet 3:9-13 *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. ■*