



Unshakeable

EPHESIANS 1:15-23

MESSAGE GUIDE | DECEMBER 27, 2020

LIVESTREAM & ON-DEMAND

 Greenhills Christian Fellowship  GCF Main

Unshakeable

EPHESIANS 1:15-23

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INTRODUCTION

How are we to look back at this unprecedented, “out of this world”, extremely difficult and even painful 2020? How are we to welcome this coming New Year which is filled with much uncertainty?

The dangers and distress of 2020 are undeniable realities. There is much uncertainty in 2021. But there is a greater and more significant spiritual reality that is certain for believers. That is why Paul always remains thankful, prayerful, and hopeful. His letter and example encourage the church in Ephesus to do the same. You and I, those who are in Christ and trust in his word, can do the same.

MAIN TRUTH

With God’s spiritual blessings and Christ’s power, believers can always be grateful, prayerful, and hopeful.

1. PAUL’S CEASELESS THANKSGIVING (vv.1:15-16a)

Paul’s ceaseless thanksgiving flows from the reality that believers have received spiritual blessings from God (Ephesians 1:3-14). Paul is thankful that these spiritual blessings are evidenced in the lives of the believers in Ephesus.

The spiritual blessings that come with faith and salvation are real. These blessings cannot be hidden. It will be seen and heard. Expressed faith in Christ and demonstrated love for God’s people prove that the believers possess God’s spiritual blessings.

Faith lived out in love generates heartfelt gratitude. We thank God for the faith in Christ he has given us. We express this faith in our love for God and our love for others. God enables us to do everything in love because he has given us his spiritual blessings.

TRUTH

Gratitude is the attitude of those who have received God’s spiritual blessings.

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Seeing how great the spiritual blessings we have been given, our hearts will be filled with thanksgiving no matter our circumstances. We will be unshakeable in our gratitude. We will appreciate God's spiritual blessings being worked out in our lives.

Some of us may have been blinded by tears of sorrows or by the darkness of fear this year. We cannot see God's spiritual blessings. God knows your grief. You can cry to him your lament. The pain of loss is real. Yet the spiritual treasures that God has given can more than make up for and restore what the locusts have eaten this year (Joel 2:25). We can be thankful still.

2. PAUL'S CONSTANT PRAYER (vv.16b-20)

In his ceaseless thanksgiving, Paul constantly remembers to pray for the believers in Ephesus. The assurance of possession of spiritual blessings did not make Paul complacent in praying.

Paul prays that they will be given spiritual wisdom to know God better. He prays for growing intimacy with God. To know God is not just to possess information about him. We can only experience intimacy with God if, like a friend as Jesus calls us, we walk closely with him. We want to know Christ.

Paul asks God to open their spiritual eyes to be assured of their heavenly hope of eternal life. Not only are we secure in our hope. Even more glorious is that that we, the saints God loves, are part of his glorious inheritance!! (Eph. 1:18). Christ has redeemed us. We belong to him.

Paul desires for believers to know and experience God's power. This power is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at the right hand of God in heaven. It is great, strong, mighty, and working power. No power is greater than this. This power is available to believers.

TRUTH

Increasing intimacy with God secures us in our hope and sustains us in his power.

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In this passage, Paul did not pray that believers be exempted from danger or distress. He did not pray for physical protection or provision. He did not pray for material blessings. The Father knows we need these. We can ask him in prayer. But God wants us to ask for something greater. God wants us to desire him, to know more of him, to be sure in our hope, and to know his power.

Ask for spiritual wisdom to know God better so that we can be secure in our hope and strong in his power. We can face anything 2021 brings — be these good or seemingly bad things — if we walk intimately with our God. We will be unshakeable.

3. CHRIST'S COMPLETE RULE (vv. 21-23)

Having risen from the dead — victorious over sin — Christ ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God. Jesus has been crowned King of kings and Lord of lords.

The God-man, the Jesus Christ, now sits in heaven. He has been given the name Lord, the name that is above all names. Our Lord sovereignly rules above all and for all time. He will accomplish everything that he has planned. He will achieve his purposes. Presently, this reality is hard to see. It is a reality we can believe and stand on. We trust him. We trust his word.

There will come a time when we will fully see this reality. Jesus will reign in the new heaven and earth in the age to come. Believers will reign gloriously with him. On that day, even the wicked will have to unite with believers in one thing. They will also acknowledge that Jesus is Lord — grudgingly, belatedly, and hopelessly.

Jesus rules over everything for the church. He is building his church — his spiritual body, his fullness — which he fills with all spiritual blessings. No power can stop him in this greatest enterprise the world has ever seen.

TRUTH

Christ sovereignly and powerfully rules over all things and for all time.

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Acknowledge Christ always wins and rules over everything. Because he so powerfully rules, he can make everything work for good of those who loved him, who have been called to his purpose. His good and ultimate plan and purpose is to transform us into the likeness of Christ and to join him in glory (Rom. 8: 28-30). Whatever our circumstances in 2020 and 2021 God's plan for us — individually and as a church — is unshakeable because Christ rules completely.

FINAL THOUGHTS

However hard this year has been, we can be grateful for our spiritual blessings. We can look back with much thanksgiving for 2020. However uncertain 2021 looks, we can grow more intimate with God and be secure in our eternal and glorious hope. In Christ, who rules with immeasurable power that is accessible to us who believe, we are unshakeable. We can, individually and as a church, face forward in faith and lead out in love as we welcome 2021.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are you most grateful for to God in 2020? How did you see God's spiritual blessings working in your life and the life of other believers you know?
2. What will be your most important and constant prayers for 2021? How will these prayers help you to know God better and be assured of your hope and his power in your life?
3. How does the assurance of Christ complete rule comfort you in the troubles of 2020 and encourage you as you face 2021?

Worship Through Giving



Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **2 Corinthians 9:7**

If you are led to give, you may do so through the following means:

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PAYPAL

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PAYMAYA



Send a copy of your transaction document to **finance@gcf.org.ph** so your giving can be properly recorded and an official receipt can be sent to you.

COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE EFFORTS

You may also give to support the church family's COVID relief efforts.

Just indicate "**For COVID-19 Fund**" when you email your transaction document.

Church Updates

NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE

December 31 | Thursday
5PM - Online Livestream only

ONLINE VISITOR'S CENTER

Are you joining us for the first time?
We would love to get to know you more!
Visit **bit.ly/GCFwelcome**

JOIN OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY!

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