

In the book of Ephesians, the term “Heavenly Places” is found 5 times. Let’s look at those references and see if we can determine what Paul meant by this expression.

Eph 1:3 “Spiritual blessings” are found in the heavenly places. Does this give us a clue?

Eph 1:20 Christ is seated at God’s right hand in the heavenly places. Could it be heaven?

Eph 2:6 We are also seated with Christ in the heavenly places. Can you begin to see a connection here? Spiritual gifts. Spiritual beings. Spiritual people. Paul wants us to know that there is a “Spiritual Realm” – just as surely as there is a physical realm. In the physical realm there are physical bodies; trees and rocks; cars and money. In the spiritual realm there are things that are every bit as “real” as the things in the physical realm.

Eph 3:10 There are “rulers’ and “authorities” in the spiritual realm.

Eph 6:12 Some of the forces in the spiritual realm are wicked. There are forces of darkness and there are forces of light that are struggling against each other.

Eph 2:1-6 The saints of God were once enslaved in darkness, spiritually dead in our sins. We walked in darkness and obeyed the will of the devil. We were numbered with the “sons of disobedience”. We, too, were children destined for the wrath of the Father. But, because He loved us, he saved us, and raised us out of darkness.

II Cor 11:13-15 In the spiritual realms, there are human beings who serve the opposing forces. There are servants of Satan and there are servants of God.

Eph 1:15-20 Paul prayed that the saints might be given spiritual vision. That “the eyes of your heart may be enlightened”, he said. We have no trouble seeing with the eyes of our head. We see many physical things that we desire and covet. Paul prayed they we might open the eyes of our heart – that we might see the reality of the spiritual warfare that surrounds us – that we might desire the spiritual blessings that God would give us. *He wants us to plainly see:*

The Hope of His Calling (and there is only one hope - Eph 4:4)

The Riches of His Inheritance (and that inheritance is reserved in heaven
I Pet 1:3-4; Mt 6:19-21; II Cor 4:16 – 5:10)

The Greatness of His Power (through which we can do all things - Phil 4:13)

I Cor 15:42-44 When Paul explained the mechanics of the resurrection, he inadvertently gave us a model of exactly how Satan strives to keep us in the realm of darkness. If Satan can keep us focused on the physical realm, then he will win. If our greatest goals are for things that are “perishable”, we will stay in darkness. If we can only see the “dishonor” of our mistakes, then we will be held in darkness. If we can only see our own “weakness” and pursue only things that are “natural”, then we cannot rise from the darkness.

But Paul prayed that God would help us open the eyes of our heart; that we might know that our spirits are “imperishable”, and that God has given us a position of “glory”, and that all the forces of His “power” are at our disposal, and that there is a spiritual realm – then we will be able to rise to the realms of light.

Col 3:1-3 From being “dead” in our trespasses and sins, God has raised us out of darkness and “hidden us with Christ in God”. Thus, we must be always “seeking the things above”. We must be always setting our minds on spiritual things and pursuing them.

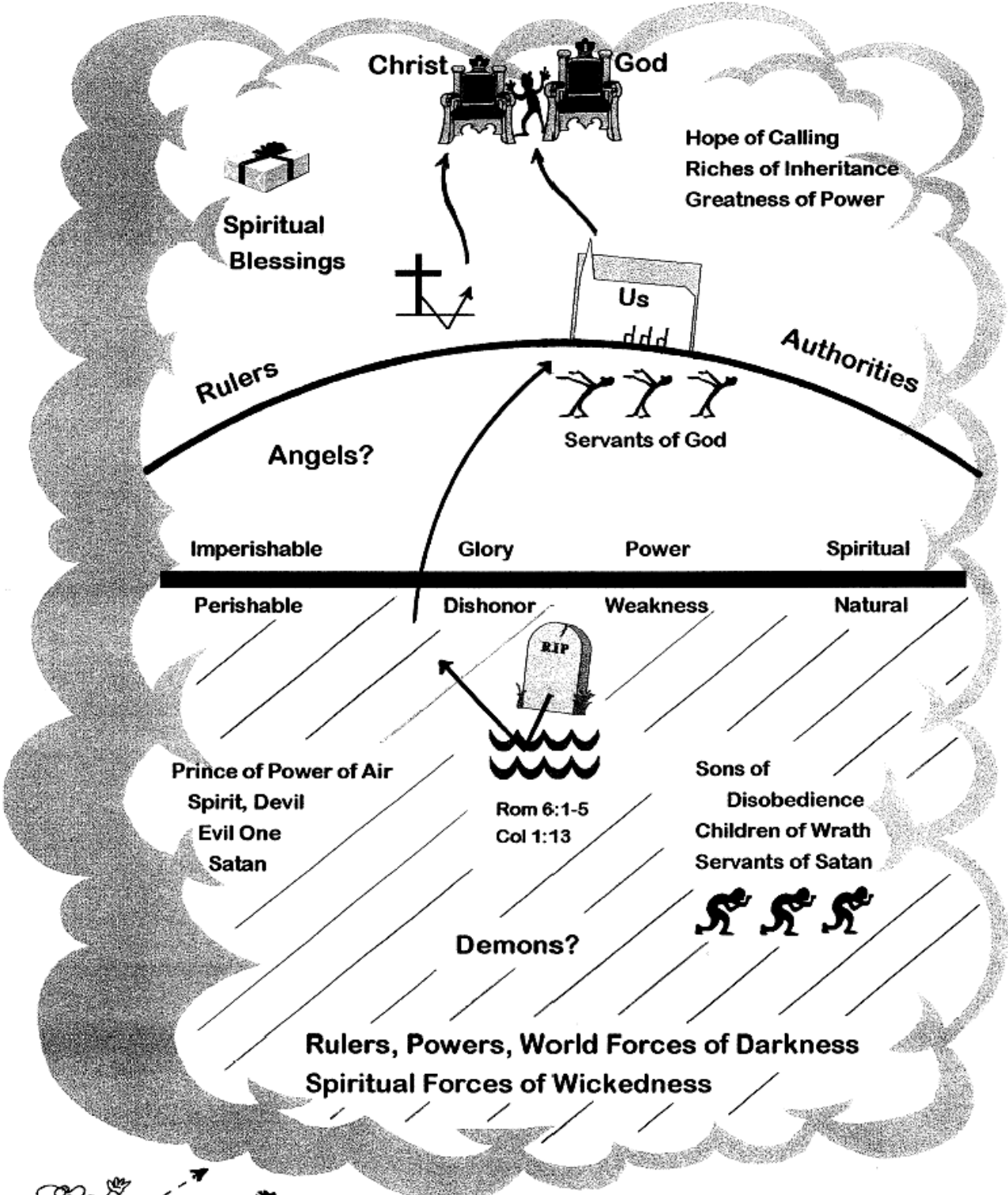
Eph 3:14-19 Paul prayed that the Holy Spirit would strengthen our inner man with power. This can only happen when the eyes of our heart are enlightened, so that we can plainly comprehend the immeasurable “love of Christ”. When our hearts are attuned to the spiritual realms, our faith in spiritual things is heightened, and God can do amazing things through us.

Rom 8:31-39 Look at the spiritual warfare. Look at the spiritual victory. There is no force, in heaven or on earth, that can deny us the victory that Christ has secured for His saints.

SPIRITUAL REALM

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