

Ephesians 3:12

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And consider your free and open access your open invitation into the presence of God, the one who was closed to you, you now have confident and bold access to him. So that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, verse 11, this was according to the eternal purpose, the eternal purpose.

So from the foundation of the world, this was the purpose of God. And eternal means that it will always be the purpose of God, we will be the display of the wisdom of God for eternity. In the next new heavens and the new earth and the eternity, we will look to the church still, to see the wisdom of God because this is the eternal plan. This was according to the eternal purpose that He has realized or caused or determined in Christ Jesus, our Lord, verse 12, In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in Him. So wonder why Paul just threw that in In whom we have boldness and confidence with our access to him. First of all, what a thing for a Jew to hear. Paul is a believing Jew. And the church in Ephesus is mostly believing Gentiles, but there are some believing Jews. What a thing for a Jew to hear, bold, confident access to God, because the Jew is the one who knew one day a year, one man got access to God for a short time, and that was it. But the temple veil has been torn. And that limited access to God has been flung open wide, so that all who are in Christ now have full access to God the Father. Look at Hebrews chapter nine, or sorry, chapter 10, verse 19, through 24. So the author to the Hebrews is going to make the same argument that Paul makes, he's just going to kind of do it in reverse. Paul has been arguing, know who you are in Christ, think about your privileges and blessings in Christ. And then allow that to inform how you know that you have this confident access to God, the right to the Hebrews is going to do that and reverse therefore brothers since we have confidence to enter the holy places through the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us to the curtain that is through his flesh. And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. So because you have this free confident access to God, therefore, bolster your assurance and faith, bolster your your knowledge of your blessings and privileges in Christ. Let us verse 23, hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering for He who promised is faithful. And then finally, let us consider how to stir one another up to love and to good works. That's chapter four, five and six. So the same type of argumentation, consider your privileges and for Christ, consider the blessings in Christ, consider the unsearchable riches of Christ. And consider your free and open access your open invitation into the presence of God, the one who was closed to you, the one who was separated from you, because of your iniquities, consider the blessings that are yours, one of which is that you now have confident and bold access to him. So think of what this would have meant to Paul. He's speaking about access to the Father. Where's Paul right now, you might know, he's in prison. He has access to nothing. And he's writing about access to the Maker of all things while he himself doesn't have access to go to the bathroom. And he's writing to people who themselves aren't prisoners right now. But these are not the shakers and movers of society. These are not the socially mobile people of society. These are the people whom their whole life they've been told, You're not allowed there. You're not allowed there. You're not allowed in there. And he's saying, we are allowed somewhere else. We are allowed into the presence of the living God. That is the access that we have. Listen, as I read a few words from a Christian who writes to those who also

have no access in this earthly life. This Christian rights to these who are prisoners, and he writes to them about something that we would call the priesthood unbelievers, the priesthood of believers is just a way that we put this truth, this reality that all of us in Christ, we don't need a certain person to give us access to God, we don't need a priest or a holy man to give us access to God, the Holy Spirit of God comes into all of us, giving us his ear, giving us his attention at all times.

We call that sometimes the priesthood of believers. Now, Paul probably doesn't feel very free right now, probably the Ephesian believers probably don't feel very free either. But the way that they feel, doesn't matter. What matters is how Paul has told him, We have bold and confident access to the Father. So listen to this brothers words, you may not feel as favored by God. You, however, are in reality favored, because feelings are simply reflections of your thinking, with ideas that may or may not be accurate. The Word of God is true and objective. And the Word of God teaches the priesthood of believers. Imprisonment denies one access to the outside. However, your priesthood gives you the privilege of accessing the heavenlies, sweeping across the universe to access the very throne of God. Those are wise words, written by somebody you all know, brother James in the back row as he was writing to Christian detainees, who, because of their faith, had no more access to their family, or no more access to their home, but instead, would spend years and years as detainees because of their conversion from a Muslim context, into faith in Christ. And his words to them are so true and helpful to say, this world may deny you access to anywhere at once.

But you have access to the maker. You have access to the one who made this world.

And not only do you have reluctant access, you don't have begrudging access. You have confident, bold access. Because your maker not only says you may come to me, your maker says to you cast your cares upon me. I command you to cast your burdens upon me. I want them. Give them to me