

**INTRO:** There is a two-letter word in English that perhaps has more meanings than any other two-letter word, and that word is **'UP.'** It is listed in the dictionary as being used as an [adv], [prep], [adj], [n] or [v].

It's easy to understand **UP**, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake **UP**?

At a meeting, why do topics come **UP**? Why do we speak **UP**, and why are the officers **UP** for election and why is it **UP** to the secretary to write **UP** a report? We call **UP** our friends and we brighten **UP** a room, polish **UP** the silver, we warm **UP** the leftovers and clean **UP** the kitchen. We lock **UP** the house and some guys fix **UP** old cars.

At other times the little word has a real special meaning. People stir **UP** trouble, line **UP** for tickets, work **UP** an appetite, and think **UP** excuses.

To be dressed is one thing but to be dressed **UP** is special.

A drain must be opened **UP** because it is stopped **UP**.

When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding **UP**. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing **UP**. When it does not rain for awhile, things dry **UP**.

We open **UP** a store in the morning but we close it **UP** at night. We seem to be pretty mixed **UP** about **UP**!

To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of **UP**, look the word **UP** in the dictionary. In a desk-sized dictionary, it takes **UP** almost 1/4 of the page and can add **UP** to about thirty definitions. If you are **UP** to it, you might try making **UP** a list of the many ways **UP** is used. It will take **UP** a lot of your time, but if you don't give **UP**, you may wind **UP** with a hundred or more.

One could go on & on, but I guess I better wrap it **UP** or someone may soon tell me to shut **UP**!

**THAT'S MESSED UP!** Come on, give it **up** for **up**!

In Isaiah 52, the prophet Isaiah gives an instruction that is full of hope. He tells Jerusalem, "I know you've been through some stuff, I know that you've lost a lot, but now is the time to shake off the failure and rise **up** and sit enthroned".

We as Christians believe that Jesus came to lift people **up**, that He came to raise the dead back to life. And as Christians, our entire belief is based on the claim that HE got **UP**! The worst thing that could happen to a person, happened to God, and HE got **UP**! And so now, He has a right to look into your situation and say, "get **up**!", "**YOU GET UP!**".

One of the best uses of the word **UP** in all of scripture, is by Paul, writing to the Ephesians. He's pretty much quoting what Isaiah said in **Chapter 52:2** when Isaiah said, "rise **UP** and sit enthroned Jerusalem". But Isaiah was looking forward to Christ, some 700 years before He was born. The Apostle Paul, who lived after the death and resurrection of Christ wrote in **Ephesians 2:6** "And God has raised us **UP** with Christ, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" It's a beautiful picture because it shows me, no matter how low I go, there's always the opportunity to rise **UP**, if I am in Christ.

I love that because the resurrection of Jesus is not just history. The resurrection of Jesus is a present reality. And Paul said we're seated with Christ in Heavenly realms...**meaning we're not confined to our condition when we realize our position in Christ.** So then what happened historically, with the resurrection of Christ, is still happening today, in the life of every believer who appropriates the resurrection power of Jesus in their own lives. Jesus has **RAISED US UP**, and is still raising us up everyday! We've got to get UP!

The biggest problem with most believers is, we assess our lives from the wrong **altitude!** We tend to look at things from ground level. And God wants us to learn to see things from where He sees them. And to do that, we have to **RISE UP.**

**ILLUS:** I remember the first time I went up Lookout Mountain and walked over to the point where you look off. They say you can see like 23 states or something crazy. I don't know. I did see Chattanooga though, in a different perspective. I remember it seemed so small, looking out over the river bend and up I-24. All of downtown looked like a postage stamp. You can see Hwy 153 and St. Elmo and the same time! The whole of Chattanooga in one glance. **CRAZY!** But what's really crazy is, you ride the Incline back down to the bottom of the mountain, and get off, you can't even see Broad street, and it's only 300 yards away.

Now, God views our life from a higher perspective. He is able to see it from beginning to end, start to finish, birth to death, He sees it all with just a single glance. Ohhh, if we could see things from where God sees things. If we could see all He has in store for us, for all eternity, and not just the present moment of our discontent, how much difference would it make in our attitude, in our gratitude?

**God can cause you to rise up in your mind, even when it's not possible to rise up in your situation.**

We often think that in order to rise up above something, that our circumstance has to change. But God wants you to learn to see your situation, (that same situation you left when you came to church today), from a different perspective because you've been in His presence, and you got UP ABOVE IT. Because, when you get above it, it just looks different. When you fly above it, it doesn't intimidate you as it did when you were in the middle of it.

What I want you to see is, spiritually speaking, in reality, not only did Jesus get up out of the grave, but because He lives in us, and us in Him, then we are seated with Him in Heavenly places, We have been raised UP by Christ above our circumstances.

Now, listen to what Isaiah said to God's chosen people, (52:2) **"...rise UP, and sit down..."** (Do me a favor, stand up. Come on, everyone stand up. Now, sit down) That's crazy, right? But let's look again (on screen) at what Paul said in **Ephesians 2:6** **"And God has RAISED US UP WITH CHRIST, AND SEATED US WITH HIM in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"**. You see, Christ, through His victorious resurrection, has conquered all of life and the stuff that comes along with it. And because we are risen with Him, it's possible for us to have the same victory. **HE HAS RAISED US UP, SO WE CAN SIT WITH HIM FAR ABOVE OUR CIRCUMSTANCES!** He wants us to see from His vantage point.

**(Climb Prop Ladder)**

"Okay", you may say, but how does that help me? Well, when we rise up, we discover that **ALTITUDE determines ATMOSPHERE... and ATMOSPHERE determines ATTITUDE.** And when our attitude gets right, all of a sudden what seemed larger than life looks small. As we rise up, as we draw near to God, He becomes bigger. And the bigger He becomes in our life, the smaller our problems appear. **CAN YOU SAY AMEN?!**

Now, let me give you some meat. You'll probably have turkey and ham this week, but this is a different type of meat. This is the meat of the Word. Notice with me... To be thankful as we ought, there must be...

**I) A HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE:** **vr 14** “Therefore”, “for this reason” In context, Paul is alluding to the truth of the previous verses in which he has just explained that light exposes darkness. Now he's about to tell us where our light comes from. (Jesus)

**V 14** “Therefore He says: ‘Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.’”

**V 14a** “Awake, you who sleep...” Although I believe this verse suitable for both Believers and Non-believers, it's most certainly addressed to the Ephesian church of Paul's day.

Paul is saying, “we as Christians need to wake up, leaving our dream world behind and live in the light of the reality of Christ”. We need a **HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE!**

**V 14b** “Arise from the dead...” Get out of the graveyard!

“Arise” (Gr Anis'- tay-mee) To stand up; To rise from a lying or reclined position. Paul is literally saying, “we've laid down on the job, and people are dying all around us. Get UP, let Christ lift you up and show you (Illuminate for you) His perspective on things.

**V 14c** “Christ will give you light.” Our revelation of things God, comes through Christ! Without Christ, we'd know nothing of God, have no right to God, and no blessings from God! It's Christ, It's Christ, It's Christ that gives us “LIGHT”. ( Gr. Ep-ee-fow'-o) To shine upon; to illuminate. **Epiphauo** is used here, in its only NT use, in a figurative sense referring to spiritual enlightenment. (**CHRIST SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE**)

**II) A HIGHER PURPOSE:** **v 15-19** **v 15** “See then...” (In light of the fact that Christ has made available to us a Heavenly Perspective,) “That you walk circumspectly” look around and walk in the wisdom of what you've come to know through Christ!

**MacDonald** - “To walk circumspectly is to live in the light of our position as God's children. To walk as fools means to descend from this high plane to the conduct of worldly men.”

We have to maintain a right **ALTITUDE!** God always has a higher purpose for us than our human nature will call for. Our human nature is ground level. Jesus has called us up!

**Vv 15-17** “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

“...but understand (be enlightened) what the will of the Lord is. (to God's purpose)”

**Vv 18-19** These verses give us a “how to” guide to live in the wisdom of God's calling and enlightenment. These are practical.

18 “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

**I) A HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE:** v 14

**II) A HIGHER PURPOSE:** v 15-19

**III) A HOLY PROVISION:** v 20 *"Giving thanks always for all things..."* There's no way to miss understand that! But it will only be done when we're living at the right ALTITUDE. If we're living at ground level, we'll constantly be asking those empty questions, "why me Lord?", "Lord, don't you even care?" But ALTITUDE changes ATMOSPHERE, and ATMOSPHERE changes ATTITUDE!

God has provided you with EVERY NECESSITY to live life to the fullest! The proof being that we are to be thanking Him for "all things, always". We would never be expected to thank someone for something who had done nothing for us.

*"...giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,"*

**James 1:17** *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."*

### APPLICATION:

**1) To see what Jesus sees, you must sit where Jesus sits:** Don't come down to the world's level and expect to have spiritual clarity.

**Ephesians 2:6** *"And God has RAISED US UP WITH CHRIST, AND SEATED US WITH HIM in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus".*

**Ezekiel 3:12-14** *"Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a great thunderous voice: "Blessed is the glory of the Lord from His place!" 13 I also heard the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels beside them, and a great thunderous noise. 14 So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away..."*

God had caused Ezekiel to see what he saw. He lifted Ezekiel up and took him away in His Spirit to the place where He chose for him to sit and watch.

**2) Jesus has given you light for the journey, but you still choose to open or close your eyes:** How sad that Christ has illuminated our life by His wisdom and Word, yet many Christians choose to try and navigate life with their eyes closed. We should no more do that than we should try to walk a treacherous mountainside trail at night with a flashlight in hand but never turning it on.

**John 8:12** *"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

**3) Let Jesus lift you up to a place of thankfulness:** Don't stay where you are. Don't stay at ground level expecting Heavenly results. Let Jesus have control of your life and ALTITUDE and you'll soon notice a difference in your ATTITUDE!