

Ephesians 1:15-23 A Prayer for Revelation

Intro: Dear God Did you mean for the elephant to look like that or was it an accident? -Norma

Dear God,
Thank you for the baby brother, but what I prayed for was a puppy. -Joyce

Dear God,
I want to be just like my Daddy when I get big but not with so much hair all over. -Sam

Dear God,
I didn't think orange went with purple until I saw the sunset you made on Tuesday. That was cool.
-Brandy

Dear God,
I went to this wedding and they kissed right in church. Is that okay? -Neil

**Child like prayers – so honest / so innocent!
Prayer is important – we know – God desires us to be people of prayer { Pray not lose heart**

A)Power in Prayer / Prayer is a mark of a persons dependency on the Lord

B) But Prayer can be tough – hard to discipline / hard to concentrate / easily distracted – {SM/TV/ Life}

C)Satan knows the power of Prayer/ For that reason He like to distract us from praying

D)That is why I love the prayers that are listed for us in the Bible – ones like here in Ephesians 1 & 3

Nothing matches the prayers that we find in the scriptures – because they are divinely inspired

A)They are a Blessing Because they Reveal God's heart toward us { **This is what God wants for our lives** }

B)This is what is first & foremost on his heart for us: **This is what is most important**

C)But I believe they are also special because they give us insight in how to pray for ourselves/ others

Now it's interesting when we look at Paul's prayers.

A)He rarely prayed for the things that loom so large in our prayers—

B)Things like better health, or more money, or a job situation, or family problems, or the world crisis,

C)Whatever it might be at the particular time—he rarely prayed for those kinds of things.

D)Now that doesn't mean that those things are wrong or that we shouldn't be praying for those things – 1 Peter 5:7 *Cast your cares Cares for you*

E)It is not wrong to pray for those things at all

1)but what is revealed in so many of Paul's prayers is the eternal perspective

In Our Study of Ephesians we have spent some significant time in going through V.1-14 – Paul rolls out – Blessings of being in Christ

A)**I AM A SAINT** (set apart to God and for God / From the world and / For an eternal purpose)

B)**I AM BLESSED** (the object of God's active love)

1) I AM CHOSEN..... I AM HOLY —
I AM WITHOUT BLAME

C)**I AM LOVED — I AM ADOPTED — Adult I AM ACCEPTED.....**

1)I AM REDEEMED — I AM FORGIVEN

D)**I AM IN THE KNOW AND I AM IN THE PLAN OF GOD —**

1) I AM SEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

Now Paul isn't close to being finished with unpacking our new and true identity.

A)But in verses 15-23 Paul slams on the breaks. He can't go on.

B)He is compelled to tell the believers in Ephesus how he PRAYS for them —

C)His Prayer is primarily a prayer of Revelation – having laid out their new identity –

1)Now he prays they would full grasp the significance of it –

D)His prayer for them – REVEALS – God’s heart for us!

15 Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16 do **not cease** to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: CEASE – tickle in the throat – anytime they come to mind – praying - what if we did that – thought – IG FB - 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of **wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him**, {Wisdom is the application of knowledge –

Paul has spent 14 verses talking about who they are in Christ – **and so now He is praying that they would know how to apply that information.**

18 the eyes of your understanding being **enlightened**; ¹⁸**having the eyes of your hearts enlightened**, **ESV**

I love the way the NLT reads this —

Ephesians 1:18 NLT I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand

We tend to think of the heart as the emotional part of man

A)My heart is happy – My heart is sad – my heart is aching

B)But Biblically the heart does speak of that – but it means so much more

C)When the Bible speaks of the heart it is speaking of the center of man – NASA – Mission Control

1)How he thinks – feels – behaves – priorities - what comes out of his mouth all connected to his heart!

D)Paul says I pray that *that your heart will be flooded with light so that you can understand*

E) Paul asks that we would have our vision bettered regarding 4 things:

There are 4 important things that God wants us to understand that is at the very core of our spiritual being!

A)#1 that you may know what is the hope of His calling,

ESV -that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you,

B)Know = to know by experience – not just intellectually – but experientially – affects the way you live!

1)Paul wants us to have a better vision of “the hope to which he has called you.”

C)You know when the Bible talks about our Hope it is not a wish- Where there is no certainty

1)Hope my team wins/ I get the raise/ Job / she says Yes

The Biblical Definition of Hope = An absolute expectation of coming good! – BANK ON IT – COUNT ON IT

A)Peter tells us that the basis of our Hope is the Resurrection

Born again to a living hope through the Rez of Jesus

B)Our hope is centered in Jesus – what He did – what he promises

1)Christ in you – is the hope of glory – Spirit bearing witness

C)Going to heaven when we die – 2 Corinthians 5:8

2)**See him we are going to be like him** – 1 John 3:2 transformation will be complete

D)Rewarded for how we lived for God here- Matthew 24:14-30

1)**Part of His millennial reign - “When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory”** (Colossians 3:4).

Paul prays that we will take hold of this gigantic hope.

A)Hope is the opposite of despair — it breathes a massive optimism!

B)Because of this - Christians should be the most optimistic people in the world

C)Our hope should really define us – rather than our circumstances!

Paul is a good example of that – He is writing from Prison

A)Prison is not synonymous with hope!

B)When you're feeling hopeless you don't stop and say, "If I could just get into prison I think I might get a totally renewed sense of hope!"

C)Paul was in chains. But Paul's chains did not interpret God — or interrupt his hope.

1)Paul's circumstances didn't change what Paul believed about God.

Even in prison Paul's heart was filled with hope – that absolute expectation of coming good – because He knew who he was in JC

A)The things that he had written the Ephesians about in V.1-14 were a reality in his own life

B)He was praying that they would become a reality in their lives as well!

C)#1 That you might know the Hope of your calling!

#2 That you would know how precious you are to Jesus V.18 what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

A)Don't miss this – Paul is talking about Christ inheritance in the saints

B)We usually think only of *our* inheritance in God, 1)but Paul wanted the Ephesians to understand that they are so precious to JESUS that He considered them *His own inheritance*.

C)Jesus Parable in Matthew 13 – man walking through a field – the field Jesus says represented the world!

1)As he was walking he comes upon a treasure in the field – he bought the whole field in order to get the treasure.

D)That is what Jesus did with us – He saw you and I as a treasure – He purchased the world to get us 1)A Bride

E)I'm the treasure and the Father would say "*in all the universe the thing I really want is Rob Salvato* He is a gem to me!

Jesus said in the next verse Matthew 13:45-46

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, "who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

A)What is a pearl made of – It comes about when a tiny grain of sand somehow gets into an Oyster

B) Becomes an irritant - to deal with the irritation the oyster secretes a fluid / liquid to cover the sand

1) Bigger irritation - more liquid - hardens and becomes a pearl

C.)A pearl is an irritating speck of sand - guys that is what we are

1) But God says *let me robe you in my righteousness* - cover you in my Son! Make you a precious pearl

D)Paul Prays that we would Know:

#1 The Hope that we are called to:

#2 How precious we are to Jesus – we are called his inheritance

#3 The Power that is available to us 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power

A)The exceeding greatness of His Power – ESV the immeasurable greatness

B) Literally, "a throwing beyond." It was used to describe something that was beyond measure

1)So great you couldn't count it

C)The word power – is *Dunamis* –we get our words *Dynamite* and *dynamic* from this word.

1)Dynamic power – explosive power

It is working power – it is active power, not dormant or stagnate

A)Working is *energia* – think of energy – that is in a light socket – it is there not stagnate – just flip the switch

B)Think of a river – moving - Jesus said that those who came to Him – out of their lives would flow torrents of living water – spoke of spirit

C)Power that transforms/ gives victory / active power we just need to tap into

Kenneth Wuest "And what is the super abounding greatness of His inherent power to us who are believing ones as measured by the operative energy of the manifested strength of His might."

Warren Wiersbe — *Ephesians 1:19* can be translated: “What is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength.”

Talking - Divine dynamic, eternal energy available to us so we can live in our new and true identity —

A)live out our new and true identity !

Aa)Power to evangelize. Power to endure hardship.

B)Power to overcome sin. Power to overcome temptation. - Power to do God’s will.

1)Power to serve. Power to speak.

Lloyd Jones - "God's power not only surpasses our power of expression, it surpasses our power of comprehension! Take all the dictionaries of the world, exhaust all the vocabularies and when you have added them all together you have still not begun to describe the greatness of God's power"

C)Check out the **benchmark** — the **reference point** for His power according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

D)Now this is interesting to me – that the illustration that Paul uses to describe the Power of God

1) What was God’s greatest display of Power ?
CREATION ? FLOOD ? SODOM ?

E)THE REZ & ACSESION – Resurrection Power!!!!

1)Don’t miss this – the power available to you and me is the same Power that raised Jesus from the grave.... Seated ...

Paul not only wants us to understand the greatness of the power of God that is exercised towards us and that is available to us —

A)#4 He wants to understand the greatness of Jesus.

21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²² And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

A)He is above the angelic world – all principalities and power / Angels and Demons – all subject to him

B)He is above the governments of men – all might and dominion

King of kings and Lord of lords

C)He is the famous one – He is above every name

1)**No other name in heaven or earth whereby men can be saved** – Acts 4:12

2)**At his name – nations will bow every tongue will confess that Jesus is the King of kings Lord or Lords**
Philippians 2:9-11

D)Power in his name to do miracles – Mark 16:17

1)**Justified in the name of Jesus** – 1 Corinthians 16:11

He is above all things – all put under his feet

A)Storm – Jesus walks on the water – the storms that was over their head was under his feet.

B) “A great King over all the earth. He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet.”
(Psalm 47:2-3)

C)Matthew 22:42 – His enemies will be put under his feet – they become his footstool

He is the head of the church

A)We are the body of Christ – Jesus is the head!

B)Our need is twofold – to Focus on the head

1)**Carnal people focus on the body**

C)Grow into the head!

1)**Maturity**

D)Our life fits – it weighs as much as the gospel

Paul Prays that we would Know:

#1 The Hope that we are called to:

#2 How precious we are to Jesus – we are called his inheritance

#3 The Power that is available to us

#4 The greatness of Jesus