

Title: *Prayer For Spiritual Eyesight*
 Text: Ephesians 1:15-18b

Let's turn in our Bibles to Ephesians chapter 1. We have been discussing God's Great Plan for the Believers in Ephesians chapter 1 verses 1 through 14. And we have looked at some wonderful things here in these verses. We have noticed that we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings. And these blessings included the fact that before the foundation of the world we were chosen by God to be holy and blameless before him. We were predestined to be adopted as his children. We were redeemed through the blood of Jesus Christ. And because of that we have complete forgiveness of all our trespasses and sins. And finally we have the Holy Spirit as a pledge and a seal of our inheritance. Tremendous spiritual blessings.

(2B) Now, beginning with Vs 15 we come to Paul's Prayer for revelation.

(Read 1:15-23)

Prayer

We thank you, Father, for the joy of fellowship of Christians who know and love you. We thank you for Jesus our saviour. We thank you for your Word. We praise you for the truth found in your Word which will set us free. Father, I pray, that you would open up the eyes of our understanding. That we would begin to see things that we didn't see before. That you have changed the course of our life. Father, I know that there are some who have come to this service unsure of their relationship to you through Jesus Christ. And so I pray, that during this message your Spirit might work in their lives, and draw them to see Jesus as ~~our saviour from sin~~ *our saviour and Lord*. And Father, I pray for those of us who have known you. Open our hearts, also, so that we may know that this is written to us for our lives. And we thank you for this time together. In Jesus name....Amen.

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Well, this is a wonderful prayer. (1C) And I would like to begin by looking at the reasons behind this prayer. Why was Paul praying in this way for those Christians at Ephesus. There are really two reasons mentioned in Vs 15. He says...."Having heard of their faith"...And secondly, "and having heard of their love that they had for all the saints."

Those are the two reasons. ⁽¹⁰⁾ One, he knows that they know the Lord. They have faith in Christ. *So Jesus praying for them*

(2) And secondly, they have love for all the saints. I like that little word "all". Sometimes we are pretty self-centered in our love. We like those who like us. Those who are socially acceptable. But, Paul is saying that they had a love for all the saints.

Do you like those who disagree with you? Do you like those who rub you the wrong way? Do you like those that you know you cannot get along with? Paul says that they had a love towards all the saints. And that is why he is praying for them.

OH, dear friends, there is great potential here. When you believe in the Lord. And you have that love going toward all the saints, you have great potential.

() Now, in verses 16 and 17 Paul gives to us some principles about prayer.

HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

(1) I notice that when Paul prayed he was very faithful to God in prayer.

Vs 16 says that he did not cease giving thanks.

You know it is so easy to "cease." You are praying for somebody and your relationship changes and you "cease" praying for them. Paul says, "Keep on..Be faithful...Do not cease." *Good principle of prayer*

(2) Secondly, the verse says that "he made mention of them." In other words, be specific in your prayers. In fact, you will find lists of names of people in several of Paul's letters. People that he prayed for.

I Think it is important to keep lists....You know, make a list of people and things. And keep that list before you. It will help you to pray for specific needs...specific....things....specific people....

Also, a prayer list will help you see answers. You can write down how God worked in a certain situation or need or life. Oh, dear friends, make mention of people by name in prayer.....

~~OR... "Lord, heal all the sick and save all the lost."... Wait a minute! What are you talking about? Who are you talking about?.... Be specific in your prayer life.~~

That is why I believe a prayer list is very important. Put down the name of people that you want to pray for on a prayer list. Then, you can mark the ~~dates of answers. Write down how God worked in that situation.~~ Make a prayer list. Be specific. Make mention of people by name in prayer.

(3D) A third thing. He is very thankful. He says, Vs 16, "Do not cease giving thanks for you." Paul was always giving thanks for those around him.

Do you ~~grate~~ thank God for people?.... You know, it will change your relationship to them. Let's say you have a grievance with someone. Listen, start thanking God for them. And you will notice that things will change.

Right now, think of someone who rubs you the wrong way!!!! Maybe one.... Some one come to your mind?..... Now, right at this moment, thank God for them. Right now, just say, "Lord, I just want to thank you for that very terrible person in my life."....

No, (ha) say something positive..... "Lord, I know they know you. Yet, we don't get along. And I know you know that. And Lord, I just want to thank you for them."

And if you do that constantly, do you know what will happen? The next time you met them you will have a different attitude towards them.

Learn to thank God for people in prayer. Even if you disagree with them.. Thank God for them.

(4D) And a fourth thing. Notice, he had purpose to his prayer? Vs 17.. "in order that God may give to you a spirit of wisdom and so forth."

It was a specific thing that he was asking. Don't just say, "Lord, I pray for John today."

Well, what are you going to pray for John?..... Be purposeful in your prayer life.....

Read over some of the prayer in the Bible and ask yourself, "What does God say we should pray for?"....

Sometimes we are praying on the wrong track. We are praying for something that maybe is good, but it is not really the best thing that we could pray for them. Be purposefull.

Also, be sure and be worshipfull. Because Paul said, Vs 17, "I am praying to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of glory."

The attitude of one who knew where the source of the answer was...God, alone can do this. Worship the Lord, ... Seek his presenee. And know that only God can meet that need.

Well, that is all free. It didn't cost you a ~~thing~~ thing on prayer....

(BC) After-lookng at the reasons for ~~the~~ prayer, I want you to examine the actual request. ~~WHAT WAS PAUL ASKING GOD TO GIVE TO THOSE EPHESTIAN BELIEVERS?~~ *ad these principles things*

Vs 17..."that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him." "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe." *Paul's request*

There it is... *(1D)* Now, let's start by looking at the person who can make this all possible... Paul says, "the Father of glory."

The glory" referring not only to the attributes of God, but his ~~work~~ *work* worth. The work of God as it is manifested throughout the believers. And he is saying "God you are the only one who can make that happen. You are the one who is the source of all the glory that is going to be displayed in these believers lives. God you have to do it."

Dear Friends ~~People~~, I believe, as I know that many of you do, that one of the problems in our prayer life, as to whether it is effective or not, deals with the matter of dependence. You can ask God for something. Then you go and roll up your sheeves and act like it depends on you.

And some people even have little sayings like: "Well, depend on God in Prayer, but roll up your sheeves and go to work."

I don't like that! I think it is God from beginning to end...

I think if anything is really going to happen for the glory of God, it is because God is doing it. Prayer isn't a last resort. It isn't saying, "Well, nothing else has worked, I guess we ought to pray"....NO WAY!! Prayer is the most important thing you could do for anyone. It is the most powerful ministry you could have.....PRAYER.....

But, we need to remember that God makes it all happen. Because of who God is, that is why things can happen in your life through prayer.

(2D) Now, ^{1st} secondly, in Paul's request ^{2nd} He ask God to give to the Ephesians a "spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him."

Three Things. Three things that He really wants us to know. The Content
Let's look at the first two: It is so true to all of us
vs 17-18

And how ~~is~~ true that is of all believers. We certainly need an understanding spirit so that we might know Christ.

The spirit of WISDOM and REVELATION. WISDOM....How to apply the knowledge that I have to daily life...AND REVELATION is referring to the actual content of the knowledge that I have.

Now, is the word "SPIRIT" referring to the Holy Spirit or to our human Spirit? WELL, I don't think it makes any difference. Because Paul has already said in this passage that we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit. Verses 13 and 14 tell us that truth.

So, Paul is not asking God to give the Spirit to us, but to give us spiritual understanding which obviously comes from the Holy Spirit.

So, where am I going to get this wisdom and revelation? ^{Concerning the} Where am I going to get this knowledge?....ANSWER: IN THE SOURCE....THE WORD OF GOD.

The Spirit of Truth guided the Apostles into writing all the truth that is here, now, before us in what we call THE BIBLE. The Bible contains the wisdom and revelation we need *in our knowledge of God*

- (1E) (a) ^{one} a spirit of wisdom in the knowledge of him
- (2E) b) ^{spirit} two: a revelation in the knowledge of him
- (3E) c) Three: The eyes of your heart may be enlightened

But there is something here that I really would like you to ^{me} know. It has been speaking to my heart and I hope it will speak to your heart.

In 2 Peter 3:18 the Bible says, "that we are to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

That means that we are to get better acquainted with Jesus and to know him more today than we did yesterday.

Now, Paul is praying for the believeers that God would give them a spirit of weisdom. That is how to apply knowledge. And a spirit of revelation, the content of knowledge. ~~But~~ it will come in the full knowledge of Christ.

Do you understand that an understaining spirit is related to what I know about Jesus Christ? If I am going to have spiritual understanding to know why God is doing what he is doing in my life, then I must know Jesus more. If I want to know what is really happeneing to people and to me and everything in life, if I am going to have that kind of understanding, I must know Jesus more. Because ^{then} I grow in knowledge of J.C. I begin to understand with spiritual understanding. To know him is the highest good. To know more about Jesus this week, *ought to be the desire of every believer*

And if you didn't learn anymore about Jesus this week, or this month, then last week or month, then your ability to understanding has been greatly hindered. ~~Regardless of the fact~~ To know Jesus is to grow in full or mataure knowledge. *That is what is verse is saying*

Because the Bible says in Colassians 3:3 "in Him are hide all the ~~the~~ treasurers of wisdom and knowlledge." If you don't see Jesus, if you don't ~~know~~ learn more about him, you will never have an understanding spirit.

Paul, Paul prays that they may have knowledge
(3E) There ~~is a second~~ thing that is a pre requisite. ~~And that is an~~
enlightened heart.

Paul says in Vs 18 "I pray that the eyes of your heart my be enlightened." He is assuming that something is true of you that will result in an ~~understan~~ understanding spirit. He prays that God will give us this spiritual understanding because we already have the eyes of our heart enlightened.

Now, what is he talking bout?...He is talking about the spiritual eyesight of someone who has been born again.

You see, a lot of people who call themselves christians don't really understand things spiritual because they have never been born again. Let me show you ~~how~~ what I mean.

Turn over to the Gospel John chapter 3. What Paul is saying here is that we need spiritual eyesight before we can have spritual understanding. You need to see correctly. { Jesus said in Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." When your heart is pure and it has been cleansed by faith in J.C. you are going to see things that you never saw before. In John 3 a very smart man, Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, came to Jesus one night. They had a discussion. Nicodemus commended Jesus because it seemed to him that he was coming from God because of what he taught and the miracles he was doing.

But here is what Jesus told Nicodemus. John chapter 3:3.."Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, (unless one is born again, he cannot see (notice that) he cannot see the kingdom of God."

In order to see, you must be born again.

Now, notice Vs 5...Jesus answered, "truely, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot WHAT?....."ENTER"...(The King)

So, seeing is the same as entering the kingdom of God. We are talking ^{about} slavation, being born again. When the eyes of your heart has been enlightened, It means, spiritually the lights have come on. You are a christian, you know the Lord. Because you know the Lord, you can now have spiritual understanding.

But you will not have it, unless you grow in the knowledge of Jesus. Because Paul is asking God to give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge ~~about~~ Jesus. And I will not grow. I will not have ~~grace~~ great understanding of what is happending in my life, or the lives of others untill I know Jesus Christ.

And that process never ends. We keep learning more and more about Him. That is why we sing that little song(PAGE ⁴²⁷~~422~~..MORE ABOUT JESUST)

(Turn and Read and Sing Hymn)

John 3:1-11

OK, Come back to Eph

spiritual understanding

Why

WHY DO WE NEED TO BE ENLIGHTENED? WHY? WHAT IS THE REASON? Well,

^{gives us the reason} Vs 18 and 19 gives us three reasons. ONE, "THE HOPE OF HIS CALLING".,

TWO: THE REICHES OF THE GLORY OF HIS INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS." And three: "the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe."

(1F) You see, dear friends, when we have spiritual eyes sight, we will have hope of ^{His} calling. God calls you to himself. And that brings us hope. Not the hope of the world. LIKE: "I hope that will happen tomorrow." No! No!...The hope of God is more secure than that.

Turn in your Bibles to the book of Hebrews...Hebrews chapter 6....

Why do people have questions about their relationship to Jesus? Why are people confused about what God is doing in their life? Why do people get very insecure when things change or things do not go the way they want them to go? Why do christians get so discouraged?

Now, look at this. That you may know the hope of your caling.

Hebrews chapter 6 verse 18..."In order that by two unchangeable things." Boy! in this world of change, isn't it nice to know that there is something that doesn't change?

Vs 18..."In which it is impossible for God to lie"....That is the first thing that is unchangeable. God will never lie.

Reading on:..."We may have strong encouragement"... Boy! Do we need that! "We who have fled for refuge in laying hold of HOPE"(there is our word)

You see, when you became a charistian you "layed hold of the hope set before us." Now, that hope isn't realized yet, It is something that is coming in the future.

But, ^{Notice} ~~what~~ this....Vs 19...."This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within hhe vail, where Jesus has entered."

You see, ^{Jesus} He is our hope.....He is our anchor. *Jesus never changes*

"We may have strong encouragement". Boy, we need that!!! "we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the what?..... HOPE!!! There is that word again....."~~Laying hold of the hope set before us/~~

out

When you became a christian you "laved hold of the hope set before us." It isn't realized now. It is something that is coming in the future.

Now, watch this. Vs 19...."This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both ~~sure and steadfast~~ and one which enters within the veil, where Jesu has entered." He is our hope. He is the anchor.

Have you ever noticed the sieze of the anchor on ~~some of~~ ^{one of our} these large aircraft carriers. They are huge. And they drop those anchors and they are suppose to hold those ships.

But I want to tell you that inspite of how big those anchors are, those ships still move. They still move.

Suppl-

Maybe this doesn't bless you. But boy it blesses me. The anchor of my soul doesn't move....No movement at all.....You know why? Because it is Jesus not me....

You see, a lot of us have questions because we think our performance is essential to our hope....I think we get a lot of preaching that way...

"Boy, if you don't live right, you will never make it to heaven!"....

Are you kidding? If that were true I would never get there!...I am going to be in heaven someday because of what Jesus has done...

This is an anchor to the soul. It is based upon on Jesus. Not on me. Not on my performance. Not on what I do or don't do. It is based upon what Christ has done. And my faith is in him. And that is why I have an anchor.

Do you know ^{Jesus?} the hope of your calling? The more you know about Jesus, the steadfast you are....Do you want to get rid of the doubts, get rid of the confusion?....

The problems that are going on in souciety, Hay, they are nothing. All that has happened this week, it is nothing....

Listen, ~~our~~ ^{Be} anchor of the soul is our hope. Do you know what is the hope of His calling? The calling of yourself to him. You talk about securiaty. There is no reason to be down.....PRAISE GOD!!!!!!...

I pray that God would give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge about Jesus because your eyes are enlightened ~~As~~ ^{so} that you ~~will~~ ^{may} know what is the hope of your calling.

The point is that if you don't know more about Jesus, you can get very insecure.....Confussion and doubts can come into your life.

More about Jesus would I know, more of his grace to ~~others~~ ^{others} show;
More of His saving fullness see, more of His love who died for me.

More about Jesus let me learn, more of his holy will discern;
Spirit of God, my teacher be, showing the things of Christ to me,

More about Jesus; in his word, holding communion with my Lord,
Hearing his voice in every line, making each faithful saying mine.

More about Jesus on His throne, Riches in glory all his own;
More of his kingdom's sure increase; more of his coming, Prince
of Peace.

More, more about Jesus..More, more about Jesus;
More of his saving fulness see, more of his love who died for me.

Take your hymn book and turn with me to Page 477. ^{I want you to} ~~Let us~~ stand and
^{and I want you to make} sing....And ~~say~~ this song ~~be~~ your prayer.....A PRAYER TO KNOW MORE ABOUT
JESUS.....

Sing
Prayer