

Ephesians 1:15-23

Lesson 7 – Spiritual Growth

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February 16, 2020

1

A Review of the Last 5 Weeks

Eph 1:3-10 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth — in Him.

2

A Review of the Last 5 Weeks

Eph 1:11-14 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. NKJV

3

Review of What God has Done for Us

- **God has given us incredible heavenly spiritual blessings as follows:**
- **God the Father**
 - **Has chosen us**
 - **Has adopted us**
 - **Has accepted us**
 - **Has made us holy and blameless**

4

Review of What God has Done for Us

- **Jesus the Son**
 - **Has redeemed us**
 - **Has forgiven us**
 - **Has made His Grace abound toward us**
 - **Has revealed God's will to us**
 - **Has made us God's inheritance**

5

Review of What God has Done for Us

- **The Holy Spirit**
 - **Has conveyed the Gospel to us**
 - **Has allowed us to be saved through trusting in Jesus**
 - **Has sealed us as His possession**
 - **Has given us Himself as an earnest payment on our salvation**

6

Harold Hoehner says:

“Because of (For this reason) the believers' acquisition of every spiritual blessing - including election, predestination, adoption, grace, redemption, forgiveness, wisdom, understanding, knowledge of the mystery of His will, the sealing of the Holy Spirit, and inheritance Paul now prayed that his readers might know God personally and intimately.”

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7

Eph 1:15-16 Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: NKJV

8

Notice the two things stated by Paul

- **Their faith = Pistis**
 - **Vertical Relationship Towards God**
- **Their love = Agape**
 - **Horizontal Relationship Towards Others**

9

Results Produced in Paul

- **Gratitude to God for them**
- **Prayer for them**

10

Paul is praying for their spiritual growth

Eph 1:17-23 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, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; 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 exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 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 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. NKJV

11

Praying that God the Father of Glory

- **May give to them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him**
- **The eyes of their understanding being enlightened**
- **That they may know the hope of their calling**
- **That they may know the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints**
- **That they may know the exceeding greatness of His power for them as believers**

12

The Spirit of Wisdom

- **Isa 11:1-2** Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. NASU
- **Ex 28:3-4** “You shall speak to all the skillful persons whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister as priest to Me. NASU

13

Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him

“The ‘spirit’ in view probably refers to an attitude, rather than to the Holy Spirit, wisdom and revelation being the description of that attitude. They had already received the Holy Spirit. These attitudes become ours through the ministry of the Holy Spirit to us, however. ‘Wisdom’ (Gr. sophia, v. 8; 3:10) enables one to perceive reality accurately. ‘Revelation’ is the unveiling of the subject contemplated, in this case God Himself (‘in the knowledge of Him’). ‘Wisdom by revelation’ is the idea (a hendiadys). Paul was evidently praying for a specific enablement by the Spirit so his readers would understand God’s mysteries.

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Failure to Know the Book

“They are like the late newspaper publisher, William Randolph Hearst, who invested a fortune collecting art treasures from around the world. One day Mr. Hearst found a description of some valuable items that he felt he must own, so he sent his agent abroad to find them. After months of searching, the agent reported that he had finally found the treasures. They were in Mr. Hearst's warehouse. Hearst had been searching frantically for treasures he already owned! Had he read the catalog of his treasures, he would have saved himself a great deal of money and trouble.”

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15

Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him

- **"Growth in knowledge is indispensable to growth in holiness."**
- **"The Christian life could be described as getting to know God better every day. A friendship which does not grow closer with the years tends to vanish with the years. And it is so with us and God."**
- **"To know God personally is salvation (John 17:3). To know Him increasingly is sanctification (Phil 3:10). To know Him perfectly is glorification (1 Cor 13:9-12)."**
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16

Harry Ironsides says:

“He does not mean that you must receive the Holy Spirit in some new and second way. If you are a Christian, you have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, but He who indwells you delights in His special work of revealing the things of Christ to His saints. How does He do that? By giving insight into the truth found in the Word of God. All Scripture is divinely inspired. ‘Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,’ but the merely natural man reads the Word and sees nothing in it, because he is not acquainted with its Author. The believer who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit reads, and in reading hears the voice of God.”

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17

Paul’s eyes were opened, literally and figuratively

Acts 26:16-18 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’ NKJV

18

Their understanding being enlightened

- **Not everyone can see spiritual things**
- **Rom 11:9-10 And David says: " Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them. Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, And bow down their back always." NKJV**
- **We want our eyes open to spiritual truth**
- **Ps 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law. NASU**

19

Comprehension of Spiritual Things

- **Only a believer in Christ is equipped to understand spiritual things:**
- **1 Cor 2:10-12 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. NKJV**

20

Only a believer understands spiritual things

1 Cor 2:13-16 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ. NKJV

21

God has called us into the Light!

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. NKJV

22

Warren Wiersbe says:

“Second, this enlightenment comes to the heart of the believer (Eph 1:18). Literally this verse reads, “The eyes of your heart being enlightened.” We think of the heart as the emotional part of man, but in the Bible, the heart means the inner man, and includes the emotions, the mind, and the will. The inner man, the heart, has spiritual faculties that parallel the physical senses. The inner man can see (Ps 119:18; John 3:3) hear (Matt 13:9; Heb 5:11), taste (Ps 34:8; 1 Peter 2:3), smell (Phil 4:18; 2 Cor 2:14), and touch (Acts 17:27).”

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23

That they may know the hope of their calling

“The first fact to be ascertained pertains to the past. A believer's present hope has its source in the past when he was called (cf. Rom 1:6; 8:30; Eph 4:1,4; 2 Tim 1:9) to salvation. ‘Hope’ in Scripture is the absolute certainty of a believer's victory in God (cf. Rom 8:23-24; Eph 4:4; Col 1:5; 1 Thess 1:3; 1 Peter 3:15).”

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24

Wiersbe says:

“Paul wants us to understand the hope that is ours because of this calling (Eph 4:4). Some callings offer no hope, but the calling we have in Christ assures us of a delightful future. Keep in mind that the word hope in the Bible does not mean ‘hope so,’ like a child hoping for a doll or a bike at Christmas. The word carries with it ‘assurance for the future.’”

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That they may know the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints

“Second, the readers needed to realize that they themselves would be an ‘inheritance’ that God would receive when they went to be with Him. Paul spoke before of the believer’s inheritance in verse 14. Here he spoke of God’s inheritance (‘in the saints’). This inheritance will be valuable (‘what are the riches’), because believers are people for whom God paid dearly with the blood (death) of His own Son. It will be glorious (‘of the glory’), because when we see the Lord we will experience glorification, cleansing, and removal from sin (cf. vv. 6,17 for other glorious things).”

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Wiersbe says:

“This phrase does not refer to our inheritance in Christ (Eph 1:11), but His inheritance in us. This is an amazing truth - that God should look on us as a part of His great wealth! Just as a man's wealth brings glory to his name, so God will get glory from the church because of what He has invested in us. When Jesus Christ returns, we shall be ‘to the praise of the glory of His grace’ (Eph 1:6).”

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That they may know the exceeding greatness of His power for them as believers

“So tremendous is this truth that Paul enlisted many different words from the Greek vocabulary to get his point across: dunamis – ‘power’ as in dynamo and dynamite; energiea – ‘working’ as in energy, kratos – ‘mighty’; ischus – ‘power.’

Eph 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.”

He is talking about divine dynamic, eternal energy, available to us!”

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Hoehner says:

“This magnificent accumulation of words for power underscores the magnitude of God's ‘great power’ available to Christians.

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How that power was demonstrated

Eph 1:19-23 according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 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. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. NKJV

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Three manifestations of God's power

- **Christ's resurrection from the dead**
- **Putting Christ over all things, including all principalities and powers**
- **Putting Christ over the Church**

31

How that power was demonstrated

Eph 1:19-23 according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 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. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. NKJV

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A Summary of the Verses

“Paul's prayer began with thanksgiving for their faith and love (1:15-16). In 1:17-23 he made four requests for them: (1) to know and experience God; (2) to know the hope of His calling; (3) to know of His glorious inheritance; and (4) to know of His great power. Paul expounded on this great power available to believers exhibited in Christ's resurrection, ascension, rule, and headship.”

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Harold Hoehner concludes the 1st chapter of Ephesians

“This ends Paul's prayer. After demonstrating that believers have all spiritual blessings (1:3-14), Paul prayed that believers would come to know God intimately (v. 17) in order that they might know three facts: (1) the past call of salvation that produced hope (v. 18), (2) the future inheritance that God has in His saints (v. 18), and (3) the present power of God that is available to believers, which (a) was manifested in the past in Christ's resurrection and Ascension, (b) will be manifested in the future in Christ's headship over Creation, and (c) is presently manifested in Christ's headship over the church.”

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