

A Prayer for Enlightenment

Ephesians 1:15-23

Introduction:

This first chapter of Ephesians is divided into two parts: 1:3-14 is benediction and 15-23 is intercession –praise and prayer if you please. Paul blesses God for having blessed us in Christ; then he prays that God will open our eyes to grasp the fullness of this blessing. What is it that prompts the apostle to prayer for the Ephesians and the brethren in Asia who he addresses? *It is their faith in the Lord Jesus and their love towards all the saints.* He continuously thanks God thanks for them acknowledging him as the author of both their faith in Jesus and their love for the saints. Paul, despite his unceasing gratitude to God he is not satisfied, so he his request is that they would have a fuller understanding of the blessing they have already received. His prayer for enlightenment encompasses at least three truths which I would like to share with you tonight.

1. The hope of God's call v.18 (A look back at the beginning)

What did God call us for? God called us to something and for something. What do we expect as a result of being called? The New Testament is not silent on the expectations of our calling.

- a. We are called to belong into the fellowship of Jesus Christ. (Romans 1:6)
- b. He has called us to be saints, or called us with a holy calling. I Peter 1:15
- c. We are called to freedom Gal. 5:1

- d. We are called in the one body to enjoy the peace of Christ and must live a life that is worthy of the calling to which we have been called... forbearing one another in love. (Eph. 4:1-2).
- e. We are called to suffering ... following in the steps of Jesus. (I Peter 2:21)
- f. We are called to glory, because beyond suffering lies glory. Phil. 3:14 ... Paul says I press on to the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Yes my friends, God calls us to Christ and holiness, to freedom and peace, to suffering and glory. It is a call to an all together new life in which we know, love, obey and serve Christ, enjoy fellowship with him and with each other, and look beyond our present suffering to the glory which will one day be revealed. This is the hope to which he has called us. The apostle prays that our eyes may be opened to know just that.

He further prays that . . .

2. We will know the Glory of God's inheritance v. 18 (A look to the future)

I Peter 1:4

- a. Imperishable
- b. undefiled
- c. Unfading

Rev. 22:3-4

Paul prays that we would know it, the riches of it, the glory of it.

3. Thirdly, He prays that we would know the greatness of God's power v. 19.

(God's power spans the interim period between our calling and the receiving of our glorious inheritance.)

- a. Jesus Christ resurrection from the dead v. 20
- b. Jesus Christ's enthronement over evil v. 20
- c. Jesus Christ's headship of the church v. 22

Conclusion:

God's power is available to us today; it is this power that will help us walk worthy of our calling. That will transform us more and more into the likeness of his son. The same resurrection power is at work in your life and mine. The enthronement of Jesus is also our enthronement for we are seated with him in heavenly places. Whatever happens to Jesus happens to us. He is still the head of the church with all the fullness of God at the disposal of the church.