

## Ephesians 1 v15-23: Paul's Prayer For Spiritual Enlightenment

### v15-16: Paul's feelings for the Ephesian saints

v15: Paul closely links their *"faith in the Lord Jesus"* with *"love unto all the saints"* (as also in Col 1v4).

Love to all the saints is an expected consequence of faith in Christ, consistent with the truth of the Church as the Body of Christ, with appropriate feelings for fellow members of the Body.

v16 *"Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers"*.

He so valued the saints of God, and prayed for them (as also in Col 1v3; Rom 1v9; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tim 1v3).

This is an evidence of the anxious care and love of Paul for the all the members of the Body.

### v17-19: Paul's desires for the Ephesian saints

Paul addresses this prayer to the *"God of our Lord Jesus Christ"*, in keeping with the content of the prayer.

Such a God who in power, might and majesty moved toward our Lord Jesus Christ as a Man in relation to His bodily resurrection, ascension and exaltation, is also now similarly moving in all His exceeding great & mighty power *"to usward who believe"* (v19), in order to bring us into spiritual blessing.

As *"the Father of glory"*, the source of all eternal & heavenly glory, He has brought our Lord Jesus Christ to such an exalted & glorified position, *"set Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, Far above all"* (v20-21).

This same One, the fountainhead of all heavenly blessedness, is now similarly moving toward the saints, to bless us, and give glory to us.

1<sup>st</sup> specific prayer request, that God will *"give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the (full) knowledge of Him"* (v17); a prayer for comprehensive knowledge of divine Persons & their eternal purpose. Paul is praying here that we all might come into the full benefit of having *"the Spirit of wisdom and revelation"*, who will reveal deity to us, making possible a comprehensive knowledge of God for all saints. This *"knowledge"* is to have practical effects in our lives, based on increased intimacy with divine Persons.

Further in v18, *"The eyes of your understanding (heart, JND) being enlightened; that ye may know ..."*.

The tense is *'having been and being enlightened'*; at conversion, that moment of revelation of Christ, when the light of divine truth shone into our hearts, with intended ongoing and permanent results.

That there might be produced in our hearts sensitive feelings and affections for all that God has purposed for us, and in us.

The potential, through *"the Spirit of wisdom and revelation"*, for heartfelt knowledge of divine things.

1<sup>st</sup> Cor 2v9-10, *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him (i.e. Judaism). But (in Christianity) God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God"*.

v12 *"Now we have received ... the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God"*.

Paul then prays for their understanding of 3 specific truths: *"what is the hope of His calling"* (v18); *"what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints"* (v18); *"what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe"* (v19).

1. ***“what is the hope of His calling”*** (v18) – see ch1v3-6

In ch4v4, ***“one hope of your calling”***, i.e. the truth of being called of God from our own perspective.

This is the divine perspective, ***“the hope of His calling”***, i.e. God’s hope linked with His calling of the saints.

The purpose of God connected with the truths of our election (v4) and predestination to sonship (v5) is that He might have the saints before Him as those who would be suited to His own holy character, ***“holy and without blame before Him in love”*** (v4), and that we will be eternally sons ***“to Himself”*** (v5), with complete conformity to His own beloved Son, this being ***“according to the good pleasure of His will”***.

God will not rest until ***“the hope of His calling”*** is fully realised.

2. ***“what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints”*** (v18) – see ch1v10-14

The Church is going to share with Christ in the glory of His coming millennial kingdom reign.

We have presently the Holy Spirit as ***“the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession”***, i.e. until we enter with Christ into full possession of what He has already purchased at Calvary.

This divine purpose with respect to Christ and the Church is with a view to the displayed glory of God, i.e. ***“That we should be to the praise of His glory”*** (v12), ***“unto the praise of His glory”***, (v14).

This divine perspective is ***“the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints”***; all the great riches of glory that God is going to secure in the saints in that coming millennial kingdom.

***“His inheritance”*** is ***“in the saints”***, for God’s people are His heritage; the saints of God are going to be channels for the full display of divine glory in all its abundant riches (see also Rom 8v18, Rom 9v23, Col 3v4). 2<sup>nd</sup> Thess 1v10 ***“When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe ... in that day”***. God Himself will be vindicated & glorified, along with Christ and the saints of God.

3. ***“what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe”*** (v19) - see ch1v19 – ch2v6

Paul speaks of ***“the working of His (God’s) mighty power”*** wrought in Christ, which took our Saviour from the tomb to the throne of heaven, the place of highest honour. The death of Christ displays the surpassing love of God; the resurrection, exaltation & enthronement of Christ displays the surpassing power of God.

Such ***“exceeding*** (surpassing) ***greatness”*** of divine power is ***“to usward who believe”***, ***“the power that worketh in us”*** (ch3v20), in taking us from spiritual death (ch2v1) to being quickened, raised and sat together with Christ in the heavenlies (ch2v5-6). This is true of every believer positionally & doctrinally; we need to live practically in the good of such close proximity to heaven & divine Persons.

## **v20-23: The enthronement of Christ**

He is ***“Far above all principality, and power*** (angelic powers), ***and might, and dominion*** (all earthly powers), ***and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come”*** (v21).

The Father has so honoured His Son, by not only raising Him from the dead, but receiving Him back to this place of supreme exaltation, ***“Far above all”*** (see also Acts 2v36, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3v22).

God has ***“put all things under His feet”*** (v22), a preeminent place of supreme sovereignty, authority & honour. Christ is the second Man, the last Adam, who fulfils Psalm 8v6.

God has given Him, in that exalted position, as ***“Head over all things to the Church, Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all”*** (v22-23); the Church will be His fullness, His complement (see ch5v27).