

HOPE, INHERITANCE AND POWER IN CHRIST

(Ephesians 1:18-20)

The focus and emphasis of Paul's prayer is for God to give believers in Christ the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that they may know God better (Eph. 1:17). Paul prays that the Ephesian Christians would have a deeper, stronger and more intimate knowledge of God and growing relationship with Him. In Ephesians 1:18-23, Paul elaborates on this prayer by asking that God would grant these believers spiritual understanding and enlightenment to know, appreciate and appropriate the immense and glorious blessings that they already have in Christ. Let's consider what these blessings are and how they should impact our own lives.

1. *God wants us to know the _____ of His _____.*

Paul prays that believers in Christ would truly know and understand the hope of God's calling. The hope that we have in God has its origin in God's calling (Eph. 1:18). The calling that Paul refers to is the believer's call to salvation (Rom. 8:30). Our saving call is initiated by God's sovereign choice of us in eternity past and is made effectual when we heard and responded to the gospel by believing and trusting in Christ. God's saving call then, is His sovereign and gracious act of choosing to love us, to summon and draw us to Himself through the gospel proclamation which leads to repentance and faith in Christ (Eph. 1:4-5, 13; 2 Tim. 1:9). This saving call produces divine hope which is the absolute certainty and confident assurance of the fulfillment of all of God's promises to His redeemed people (Eph. 1:18; Rom. 5:2; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:17; 1 Cor. 15:52-55; 1 John 3:2-3; Eph. 5:27).

2. *God wants us to know how much He values us as His _____.*

Paul further prays that believers in Christ would grasp and embrace the great value that God places upon them. The riches and the glory of God's inheritance are located in the saints which are the believers set apart by God (Eph. 1:18). In other words, we, as God's chosen people, are God's glorious inheritance and treasured possession in Christ (Deut. 32:9; 7:6-8; Psalm 33:12; 1 Pet. 2:9). This truth must make us appreciate the privileged position and infinite worth we have in Christ. God cherishes and treasures us so much that He even gave His Son Jesus to redeem us and adopt us that we may forever belong to Him (Rom. 8:32).

3. *God wants us to know the _____ working in us.*

Paul also prays that believers in Christ would know and appropriate the surpassing greatness of God's power toward us who believe (Eph. 1:19). Paul assures the Ephesian Christians that God's superior and unrivaled power is the same power which is at work in their own lives. In order to illustrate the magnitude of this divine power, Paul reminds them that God's mighty power is gloriously demonstrated through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus (Eph. 1:20; Luke 24:1-7; Acts 2:24). This resurrection power which defeats and breaks the power of sin, Satan and death is the power that is available to every believer. In Christ, we have the divine power to overcome temptation and sin, to fight Satan's evil schemes, to endure difficult trials, to fulfill our mission and to live for God's glory. Therefore, we must be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might (Eph. 6:10).
