

Ephesians 1:15-23 Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom!

12/31/16 Sat Morn Prayer – Phil Twente

SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD

*Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me, Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.*

Context/Biblical Background – Paul’s letter to the Ephesians is as carefully structured as that great temple of Diana, and it contains greater beauty and wealth! We inherit the wealth by faith and invest the wealth by works. Without this balance, our spiritual riches do us no good. In the prison prayers of Paul (*Eph_1:15-23; Eph_3:14-21; Phi_1:9-11; Col_1:9-12*), we discover the blessings he wanted his converts to enjoy. In none of these prayers does Paul request material things. His emphasis is on spiritual perception and real Christian character. He does not ask God to give them what they do not have, but rather **prays that God will reveal to them what they already have.**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING; PRAYING FOR SPIRITUAL WISDOM – Eph. 1:15-23

(Ephesians 1:15-16) Paul’s statement of prayer and declaration of thanksgiving. - *“Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, [16] do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:*

- *After I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints:* When Paul heard of the *faith* and *love* of the Ephesians, he could do nothing else but *give thanks* for them. This was because their *faith* and *love* were evidence of their participation in this great work of God. Faith and love do not *earn* us participation in this great work of God. They are *evidence* of our participation in God’s plan.
- *Love for all the saints:* Paul gave thanks not for their love for God, but for their *love for all the saints*. The real evidence of God’s work in us is not the love we claim to have for Him, but our love for His people that others can see.
- *(Making mention of you in my prayers:* Paul not only gave thanks for God’s work among the Ephesians; he also prayed that it would continue with greater strength. Preachers must do more than preach - they must also *pray* for them.

(Ephesians 1:17) Paul prays that they would know God. - *[17] 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,*

- Paul prayed that the Father would grant the Ephesians *the spirit of wisdom* and that He would give them *revelation*. But these are not so they may see into the lives of others or have the ability to predict events. + He wanted them to have *the spirit of wisdom* and *revelation* simply so that they would have a better *knowledge of Him* (God).
- The believer must grow in his knowledge of God. To know God personally is salvation (Joh_17:3). To know Him increasingly is sanctification (Phi_3:10). To know Him perfectly is glorification (1Co_13:9-12).

(Ephesians 1:18-19a) Paul prays that they would understand everything God gave them in Jesus Christ. - *[18] the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling,*

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened: If the Ephesians will know all God has given them in Jesus, it will take a supernatural work. It will require that *the eyes of your understanding* be *enlightened* by God. Paul uses a great expression when he speaks of *the eyes of your heart* (*heart* is more literal than *understanding*).

- *What is the hope of His calling:* Paul wanted them to know this. Few things give us a more secure and enduring *hope* in life than simply knowing that God has called us and has a specific *calling* for us to fulfill.
- We have been “called out of darkness into His marvelous light” (*1Pe 2:9*), and have even been “called to glory” (*1Pe 5:10*). God calls us by His grace and not because of any merit that we may possess.
- The hope that belongs to our calling should be a dynamic force in our lives, encouraging us to be pure (*1 John 2:28-3:3*), obedient (*Heb 13:17*), and faithful (*Luk 12:42-48*). The fact that we shall one day see Christ and be like Him should motivate us to live like Christ today.
- The *hope of His calling* has its perspective on the *future*. The believer has a glorious future of resurrection, eternal life, freedom from sin, perfected justification, glorious elevation above the angels themselves.

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- Paul wanted them to know the greatness of God’s inheritance in His people. We usually think only of *our* inheritance in God, but Paul wanted the Ephesians to understand that they are so precious to God that He considered them His own inheritance. Knowing our spiritual poverty, we wonder how can God find *any* inheritance in the saints. Yet God can make riches out of poor men and women because He invests so much in them. He invests riches of love, riches of wisdom, riches of suffering, riches of glory. These things accrue to a rich inheritance in the saints.

(Ephesians 1:19-21) A description of the great power of God that Paul wants the Ephesians to know. - [19] and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power [20] which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, [21] 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. –

- **The exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe:** Paul wanted them to know how great the **power** of God is **towards us who believe**. Christians should know they serve and love a God of living power who shows His strength on behalf of His people. Many Christians do not know this power - or they only know it from a distance. God wants resurrection life to be **real** in the life of the believer. What is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength.
- **According to the working of His mighty power:** The power that works in us is the **mighty power** that raised Jesus **from the dead**. With this **mighty power** available to us, there never needs to be a “power shortage” in the Christian life.
- **And seated Him at His right hand:** It is the **mighty power** that raised Jesus to heaven after His resurrection, raising Him above all demonic foes and every potential enemy of all time - this **same** power is at work in Christians.
- **Far above all principality and power and might and dominion:** From other passages in Ephesians (Ephesians 3:10 and Ephesians 6:12) we know that this refers to angelic beings, both loyal and lethal. We don’t completely understand the ranks of the angelic realm, but we do know that Jesus is raised above them.

(Ephesians 1:22-23) Where this great power has placed Jesus. - [22] **And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, [23] which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.**”

- **He put all things under His feet:** This great resurrection power placed Jesus above all things. Now all things are **under His feet**. It set Jesus as the **head over all things**, including the church.
- **The church, which is His body:** If Jesus is the head, then the community of Christians make up **His body**. The idea of **the fullness of Him** here is probably connected to the manner in which Jesus fills His church with His presence and blessings.

SUMMARY:

- ❖ Here we are being taught to pray for believers! He gives thanks to God for them! For us!
- ❖ Not to receive something new or that we don’t have, but to reveal to us what He has already given us!
- ❖ Prays to the Father that: He may give...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,
- ❖ What is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power

PRAY TODAY FOR:

Our Church, Nationally and locally; Our Nation: Our leaders; Police officers/military. Supreme Ct. Justices: John Roberts, Jr., Anthony Kennedy, Clarence Thomas, Ruth Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Samuel Alito, Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and the one VACANCY Our President Elect & V.P.: Donald & Melania Trump; Mike & Karen Pence. Proposed Cabinet Members: Sec. of State – Rex Tillerson; Energy – Rick Perry; Interior Sec. – Ryan Zinke; Sec of Defense – James Mattis; Treasury Sec. – Steven Mnuchin; Attorney General – Jeff Sessions; HUD Sec. – Ben Carson; Commerce Sec. – Wilbur Ross; Health & Human Services Sec. – Tom Price; Education Sec. – Betsy DeVos; Trans. Sec. – Elaine Chou; U.N Ambassador – Nikki Haley; Labor – Andrew Puzder; Homeland Security – Gen. John Kelly; EPA – Scott Pruitt; Budget – Mick Mulvaney; SBA – Linda McMahon; Cabinet Level Officials: – Reince Priebus; Nat’l Security Advisor – Michael Flynn; Chief Strategist – Stephen Bannon; White House Council – Donald McGahn; Counselor to President – Kellyanne Conway; Press Sec. Sean Spicer; Agriculture – still open; Vet. Affairs – still open; Trade – still open; Economy – still open; C.I.A. Director – Mike Pompeo ; Ambassador to Israel – David Friedman; Supreme Ct candidate: Raymond Gruender

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Thanksgiving and Prayer

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