

Ephesians

Lesson #5, Chapter 1:15-23

Have you asked God for a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him as you study this lesson?

Fun Fact: Ephesians 1:3-14 is one sentence in the Greek and so is Ephesians 1:15-23!

1. In verse 15 Paul says, *For this reason I too* (NKJV *Therefore I also*). What thoughts from the previous verses is he now connecting in verse 15?

2. What has Paul heard about the Ephesian believers (verse 15)?

3. What kind of faith did these believers have? See verse 15. How was that faith lived out (verse 15)?
 - a. For a more detailed example of what Paul means read 1 Thess. 1:3, 6-10; 2:13. What do you learn about a faith and love that is so distinct that other people talk about it?

4. All true believers have faith in Christ and love for others. What do you think makes the Ephesian and Thessalonian believers stand out among all the rest? What makes the difference? Is that difference discernible in your life?

“Think oft of heaven, and what a thing a saint will be in glory, when he shall shine as the stars, and be equal to the angels, and then you will quickly see cause to love them.” ~Richard Baxter¹

5. What did Paul do when he heard about their faith and love (verse 16)? Is that your first response when you hear about other believer’s exemplary walks? Why do you think it is so easy to forget to do this? Take some time right now and follow Paul’s example of thinking well of someone whose faith and love you have heard about.

6. How does Paul pray for the Ephesian believers in verse 17?

Note: “Though the NIV translators interpret “Spirit” (pneuma) as referring to the Holy Spirit, it is better to see it as disposition or attitude because of the two genitives following it (“of wisdom and [of] revelation”; cf. “a gentle spirit” in 1 Cor. 4:21).”²

7. In verses 3-14 Paul reveals God’s attributes and acts in regard to His children. With that as the backdrop to verse 17, why would Paul pray that the believers have wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God? Prov. 2:5; Jer. 9:24; Matt. 11:27; Col. 1:9-10; and 2:2-3 help explain this idea.

8. Next Paul prays that *the eyes of your heart may be enlightened* (KJV *the eyes of your understanding*). Define *enlightened* [Strong’s #5461]. Why would having a heart that sees be so important?

9. Paul prays that the eyes of your heart would be enlightened, so that you will know three things. What are they (verses 18-19)?

¹Richard Baxter, *A Puritan Golden Treasury*, Ed. I. D. E. Thomas, (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1989), 177.

²John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985).

10. Paul wants us to know the hope that comes with God's calling us to be His own. Define *hope* [Strong's #1680]. Now list what you learn from the following verses about our hope: Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:18; 2:12; Col. 1:5; 1 Thess. 5:8; 1 Jn. 3:1-3.

11. Verse 18 reveals an amazing fact: God has an inheritance and guess what? It is you! Read Titus 2:11-14 and 1 Pet. 2:9-10 to see how you are a glorious inheritance to God. Record what you find.
 - a. This idea of being God's inheritance is not new. Read Deut. 32:9; Ps. 33:12; and 94:14. What did you learn?

12. What observations can you make about God's power from verse 19 when it says *and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe?*

13. Define *surpassing* (KJV *exceeding*; NIV *incomparably* [Strong's #5235]) and *power* [Strong's #1411].

14. God's power is *toward you*, it is directed at you. Record what you learn from the following verses about just a few of the ways that God directs His power toward you: Job 42:2; Ps. 28:7-8; Is. 40:28-31; Rom. 8:38-39; 1 Cor. 1:18; 6:14; 2 Cor. 9:8; 13:4; Col. 1:11; and 2 Pet. 1:2-3.

20. What is the significance of Christ being seated in the heavens far above all things and to have all things put into subjection under Him as stated in verses 21-23?

21. What do you learn about the Church in verses 22-23? See also Eph. 5:23-32 and Col. 1:18.

22. It's difficult to comprehend or fully appreciate the exaltation of Christ, yet Phil. 2:5-11 makes Christ's exaltation personal. Why is He to be lifted up?

23. Summarize what *you* learned from this week's lesson and how you intend to apply it to your life this week.

“Our love to Him should begin on earth, as it shall be in heaven; for the bride doesn't take as much delight in her wedding dress as she does in her bridegroom; so we, in the life to come, although clothed with glory as with a robe, shall not be so much affected with the glory that goes about us, as with the Bridegroom's joyful face and presence.”

~Samuel Rutherford³

³Samuel Rutherford, *The Loveliness of Christ*. Ed. Ellen S. Lister (Moscow, Idaho: Reprinted by Community Christian Ministries).