

A group of people are silhouetted against a bright, hazy sky at sunset or sunrise. They are holding hands in a circle, suggesting a prayer meeting or a community gathering. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up at the participants.

Grace Prayers

Part 3

Eph 1:16-19a (Topical Message)

What is the definition of Prayer?

Prayer (Websters Definition) - A solemn request for help or expression of thanks addressed to God or an object of worship.

Websters narrows prayer down to (1) requesting help, or (2) expressing thanks to God (Obviously if you are a Christian you have no other object of Worship).

Prayer is so much more than (1) requesting help, or (2) expressing thanks. Prayer is also worship, praise, and listening to God. God communicates back to your spirit (Listening Pray) for example.

Prayer is simply communicating with God – It's not only a one-way communication, but a two-way communication (Back and Forth). God hears our prayers, and answers our prayers. There are only 3 answers to our prayers (Yes, No, Wait).

Listening Prayer – Listen for God voice (thought in your mind) – Experience Internal Peace, God Gives External Confirmations. God never condemns but lifts up, guides and reveals truth. Condemnation is from the Evil One. This week I spoke to a Chaplain from an addiction recovery ministry and talked about listening prayer. He was very interested about it, because he is dealing with addictive behaviors in (Men/Women) that only God can overcome. Praying in this way is life changing. ***This is a powerful way God uncovers past wounds, hurts, wrong thinking and gives one direction & guidance.*** Amen! Praying this way is available to all believers.

1 Corinthians 6:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

Romans 8:1 (NASB)

¹ Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Are you Praying & Listening?

Today, I want to look at Paul's prayer for the Ephesian believers in **Eph 1:16-19a**. Paul prays that the **Ephesians know** who they have become and what they possess after placing their faith in Jesus Christ.

This is a **Grace "Knowing" Prayer** asking God to reveal to the Ephesians their new Identity in Christ! This is a great prayer one could pray individually to God, or a pray for other believers like Paul did for the Ephesians:

Life Long Prayer

Brothers & Sisters – No one has ever arrived as a Christian and knows all there is to **KNOW** about God and ones New Identity in Christ. This is a prayer that should be prayed often. Paul even says he prayed this without ceasing. Amen! What a good model for us in consistency and praying **to know** in our prayer lives:

In Paul's prayer in Eph 1:16-19a, Paul prays that the Ephesian believers come to **know** in 4 specific areas. **This is a deeper knowing and a continually knowing**. **Today** we will look at these areas of knowing:

Knowing

- 1. Him**
- 2. One's Calling**
- 3. One's Inheritance**
- 4. One's Available Power**

Ephesians 1:16-19a (NASB)

¹⁶ do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers; ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. ¹⁸ *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

Background:

Paul identifies himself as the author of the letter and who it is address to in Eph 1:1.

Ephesians 1:1 (NASB)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are at Ephesus and *who are* faithful in Christ Jesus:

I mention this last week in the in beginning verses in Romans. Paul calls the Ephesian believers saints (Same as Roman believers). All saints are believers, and all believers are saints. There is no specific category in the scriptures for a saint. Amen! Paul ministered in Ephesus for 3 years (Acts 20:31), preaching, baptizing, teaching, with many conversions to Christ. This letter was written from Prison and considered a “Prison Epistle” ~ 60 AD several years later after Paul’s visit.

The purpose of the letter (Circulated to Churches) was to explain to the Ephesian believers their new identity “In Christ” from Chapters 1-3, and how to live out of that new identity from Chapters 4-6.

This makes sense doesn't it?

The Christian lives from God as one’s source by understanding his new identity in Christ 1st. If this is reversed, one tries to live the Christian life, from self and their crucified old identity (Flesh, Sin patterns in Members) which will always fail. Paul lays this out perfectly!

Don’t read Chapters 4-6 looking for to dos and calls to action, without 1st reading chapters 1-3. Amen!

Many Christians and Churches want to go directly to what do I have to do. Instead of who have I become and what do I posses to live the Christian Life!

Know -

1. Him

Ephesians 1:17b (NASB)

^{17b} may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him

God the Father may give

a. Spirit of Wisdom (Greek Root – Skill, Wisdom)

b. Revelation of (Greek Root – An Uncovering)

The Knowledge of Him – ***Amplified [Deep & Intimate Knowledge of Him]***

Paul's request is for the Ephesians believers would be given Godly Wisdom, and given a Revelation in the Knowledge of God [Him].

A deep and intimate knowledge of God!

How does God do this? *My answer – Anyway He wants. Amen!*

Yes, wisdom and an uncovering on who God is is clearly written in the Bible. That is one way, but not the only way. It is important to read your bible. But God gives his children wisdom by our failures, through other believers, through a preacher or ministry, etc. And God can reveal Himself to us in many different ways.

I still like [Listening Prayer] – That is a direct communication link to God. Amen.

Let's not put God in a box and say He only gives wisdom & revelation from reading our bibles. Yes, He does, but He can do the same in anyway He see fit for us as individuals. Amen!

The question is are you praying to God for wisdom & revelation, and are you listening to Him after he speaks to your heart?

What Does God Want His Children to Know? Many things about Him (God is infinite), but above all that no matter what you do or don't do, is that He loves YOU unconditionally, and He has given you a new identity in Christ, and Christ's life is in you!

John 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Forgiveness of Sins = Eternal Life=Spiritual Life=Christ's Life

Paul prayed this for the Ephesian believers. *This creates a firm foundation to live from ones Identity "In Christ" is to Knowing GOD.*

Know -

2. One's Calling

Ephesians 1:18a (NASB)

¹⁸ *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling,*

Paul goes on to pray for a 2nd request. That the eyes of the Ephesians heart may be enlightened so that they will KNOW the hope of God's calling:

Eyes of your Heart – One's inner most being (Heart – Soul)

Enlightened (Greek) – to shine, give light to, illuminate

To Know – The hope of His calling? What does Paul mean here?

Calling – Salvation [The Hope that one has in being Saved, being In Christ, and having a new Identity in Christ].

Paul is praying that the Ephesians hearts will be enlightened to KNOWING their new “Identity in Christ” and to live out of that new Identity! Amen!

Know -

3. One's Inheritance

Ephesians 1:18b (NASB)

^{18b} what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Paul goes on to pray that the Ephesians saints (believers) know what they have inherited. Typically, an inheritance is given to family members when a loved one dies. Recently, myself and Laura updated our wills. When we both physically die and go to be with the Lord, our Children will inherit our possessions. We have 3 children, so our possessions will be divided into thirds. This inheritance is in the future. What are the riches of the glory of our inheritance as a believer?

Christ died and rose again (Releasing the Inheritance) – Our inheritance is His Life in us and all that we possess in Him which is in the present. In the future our inheritance is to be with Him. Amen!

There are so many aspects to this, and so many ways to describe these riches. This could be a sermon in itself.

We could summarize this and say, Paul is praying that the Ephesian believers would know that they have inherited Christ's Life in them. Amen! They have inherited a new source in which to live from.

Christ in them is their inheritance!

This is their new identity, and their new source of dependence – Amen!

Know –

4. One's Available Power

Ephesians 1:16-19a (NASB)

^{19a} and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

Paul wants the Ephesian believers to know the surpassing greatness of God's power towards them because they believe.

Power (Greek) - *dunamis* – English word (Dynamite).

All believers have God's power in them Amen, because Christ is in them. It's the same power that raised Christ from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of God (Read the end of verse 19, and verse 20).

God's power is in you, because Christ is in You – Amen!

All believers have a power source, and that source is Christ in you!

A dramatic landscape of reddish-brown rock formations under a dark, stormy sky. The rocks are layered and jagged, with some sparse vegetation. The sky is filled with heavy, dark clouds, creating a moody and intense atmosphere.

***In order to Do for God, we first must KNOW
what we have become and what we possess***

In Christ

Be in order to Do, not Do in order to Be!

Eph 1:16-19

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Him

One's Calling

One's Inheritance

One's Available Power

Eph 1:16-19

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