

Paul's Prayer for the Ephesians Ephesians 1:15-23

Bette Nordberg

May 10-11, 2014

In Ephesians 1:15-23, Paul prays for the Ephesians.

Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for God's people everywhere, ¹⁶I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, ¹⁷asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. ¹⁸I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. ¹⁹I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power ²⁰that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. ²¹Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²²God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself. Ephesians 1:15-23 (New Living Translation)

Paul's prayer focuses on three spiritual issues. Paul wants Ephesian believers to:

1. **KNOW GOD MORE.**
2. **KNOW THEIR PLACE.**
3. **KNOW GOD'S POWER.**

A. **KNOW GOD.** (See Ephesians 1:17)

We can grow in our intimacy with God through:

1. **PRAYER.**

"Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come fearlessly into God's presence, assured of his glad welcome." Ephesians 3:12 (NLT)

2. **OBEDIENCE.**

*“Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and **show myself to him.**”* John 14:21 (New International Version)

*“We ask God to give you a complete understanding of what he wants to do in your lives, and we ask him to make you wise with spiritual wisdom. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord . . . **All the while you will learn to know God better and better.**”* Colossians 1:9b-10 (NLT)

B. **KNOW OUR PLACE IN GOD.** (See Ephesians 1:18)

1. **EMPOWERS US TO SERVE OTHERS.**

“Jesus knew that the father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. ⁴So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, ⁵and poured water into a basin.” John 13:3-5a (NLT)

2. **PROTECTS US FROM PRIDE AND GIVES US VALUE.**

(See Romans 12:3-8)

*For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think **more highly** of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.* Romans 12:3 (New American Standard Bible)

C. **KNOW HIS POWER IN US.** (See Ephesians 1:19)

1. **ENABLES US TO MEET PHYSICAL NEEDS.**

God gave Paul the power to perform unusual miracles. ¹²When handkerchiefs or aprons that had merely touched his skin were placed on sick people, they were healed of their diseases, and evil spirits were expelled. Acts 19:11-12 (NLT)

2. **ENABLES US TO DO SPIRITUAL BATTLE.**

A group of Jews was traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits. They tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus in their incantation, saying, "I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!"¹⁴ Seven sons of Sceva, a leading priest, were doing this. ¹⁵But one time when they tried it, the evil spirit replied, "I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?"¹⁶ Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them, and attacked them with such violence that they fled from the house, naked and battered. Acts 19:13-16 (NLT)

3. **TRANSFORMS HIS PEOPLE.**

*Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature . . .
¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.
¹³Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:5, 12-14 (NIV)*

4. **ENABLES US TO GIVE HIM GLORY.**

This is the same mighty power²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. ²¹Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²²God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself. Ephesians 1:19b-23 (NLT)