

EPHESIANS 1:15-18---A PRAYER FOR THE SAINTS

INTRODUCTION TO A NEW SECTION

William Randolph Hearst read of an extremely valuable piece of art and he wanted it for his collection. He sent out an agent to find it and then buy it. He went to all the great art galleries of the world and could not find it. After months of looking for it, he found out where it was at. He reported to Hearst that the piece of art belonged to Hearst and had been stored in a warehouse of his for years. He had owned it all that time without knowing what he had. How sad that is.

Believers sometimes have the same problem. They pursue after more blessings, more of the Holy Spirit, more of Christ, more power, a higher life etc... The truth is, that Christians get all they need at the time they are saved.

We sometimes pray for more strength but He has already given strength(Phil 4:13) They pray for more love, but He has already poured that out in our hearts(Rom 5:5) Peace(Phil 4:7)

Every Christian has needs and should ask the Lord's help. But no Christian needs more of what he already has. We don't have to seek those but we are to understand and use what we have already been given.

Paul prays for the Ephesian believers that they will come to understand more, the blessings that were mentioned in vv1-14. That was one of the greatest statements of the Christian faith.

It is a pastoral kind of letter in that Paul had pastured them and he wants to strengthen them in giving them great doctrines and to apply them. Paul thanks God for them and then prays for their understanding of these precious truths he had just written about.

2 Peter 1:3, Eccl 3:14,

The Colossians thought they were missing something, so Paul had to warn them about philosophy, legalism, mysticism, and asceticism. He told them all of God's fullness is in Christ, and in Him we have been made complete. They didn't have to look for anything else.

Col 2:8, 2:16-17, 2:18-19, 2:21-23, Col 1:12, 2:9-10

1 Cor 2:9-12

1: THANKS FOR THE BELIEVERS 1:15-16

How does Paul know they are Christians? How do we know anybody is a Christian? There are certain test we can use to help tell us. In the book of 1 John, there are three test, doctrinal, moral, and social, or truth, obedience, and love. Paul knew they were Christians because of their faith and love. These 2 things assured him.

1 John 5:1-5, James 2:20

A. FAITH

Jesus Christ has to be at the center of all of one's life. Faith means to have not faith in self anymore, and to see all our righteousness as filthy rags and useless, to have no confidence in self. It is to trust Christ utterly. It calls attention to the very person of Christ.

1. Lord

He is Lord and sovereign over all. You can't separate Lord and Savior.

Rom 10:9, Rom 14:9, Acts 16:31

2. Jesus

Matthew 1:21, Gal 4:4-5

Jesus is the eternal Son of God, born in Bethlehem, from Nazareth. He is the God-man, the Son of God.

3. What it means to belong to Christ

It means to submit to Him as Lord in obedience.

Matt 8:19-22, 9:9, 10:37-39, Luke 9:57-62. Mt 13:44-46

Matt 18:3-4, 19:16-27

B. LOVE

Love for other Christians is a good test to see if one is a Christian. We belong together and there is this community of interest. When we love others we prove we love God. We are marching together to Zion.

1 John 3:14-18, Phil 2:2, 1 Cor 13:1

2. TO THE FATHER OF GLORY 1:17

It is more difficult to pray than to read and study God's word.

A. WHO PRAYER IS TO

Paul prays to God the Father.

We need to be reminded of the one of whom we are going to speak. Everything must be laid aside when we turn to Him. Realize what you are going to do. You are going to speak to the Father of Glory with confidence because He is the God of our Lord through Him to the Father.

B. GOD IS GOD OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

In the OT He was known as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was to the God they knew.

We come to God because we have a new covenant in the person of Christ.

John 20:17, John 14:10, Heb 10:19

C. FATHER OF GLORY

Remember the burning bush—Ex 3:5

Heb 12:9, James 1:17

He is the fount of all glory. Glory is the sum of all the excellencies, perfections, and attributes of God Himself. The ultimate characteristic of God is glory. His very nature is glory.

Acts 7:2, Eph 1:14, Rom 6:4, 1 Tim 1:11, John 17:24, 2 Cor 3:18—When we go in prayer, expect revelation of His glory.

3. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD 1:18

A. WISDOM

Knowing God

John 17:3, 2 Cor 4:6, Job 42:5, Ps 42:1-2

Spirit of wisdom---Jn 4:24 All truth is spiritual, 2 Cor 2:7

B. REVELATION

God's imparting knowledge