

Jason Huffman
Purposeful Prayer
Ephesians 1:17-23
2/25/24

Discussion Questions:

1. What normally influences your focus of prayer? Where is there room for growth?
 2. What are signs of a “baby” Christian compared to an “adult” Christian?
 3. If knowing God is the most important goal of our life, what influence should that have on our choices?
 4. Some people focus on their relationship with God, others may focus on the knowledge of God. Why are both important?
 5. Which of the 3 areas in v18-19 connected for you? Why? (hope of your calling, riches of your inheritance, and power toward us.)
-

Teaching Notes:

Paul uses the truth he heard about them...
...to launch into an effective prayer for them.

This first chapter divides in two parts: praise & prayer...
...Paul looks up to God and praises Him...
...and he looks out at God’s people and prays for them.

Title: Purposeful Prayer.

- The Ephesians are not sick or struggling or in sin.
- They are not persecuted, or in pain.
- They are not carnal or weak minded.
...AND...Paul still prays for them.

Big Idea: Prayer is communication with God.

Here is what Paul prays...(ESV)

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that 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 rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave

him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

1. Pray for spiritual needs.

We need to know Christ more than we need healing.

We need to grow in Christ more than we need to have a job.

We need to obey Christ more than we need to be w/o problems.

What is our deepest spiritual need and should be our greatest priority? To know God in Christ.

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Jeremiah 9

23 This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches 24 but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD

This is what Paul prays in v17

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

Prayer reveals priorities and maturity.

Infants or babies have accepted Christ. They are new believers, or stagnant, long-time Christians. Their prayers and life are generally all about them and their needs. They are the lord of their life. They seek to avoid pain or problems. They are beginning to understand the Biblical truth of who God is.

A Child is growing in their relationship with God. They are starting to apply God's Word in their lives. Their life and prayer life is still mostly about them -- their needs, comfort, etc. They are starting habits of Bible study and prayer. They are learning to pray for others when prompted as well as give of their time and money.

Young Adults are making the shift from self-centered to others-centered. They're beginning to understand their role as a giver, rather than a taker. They are serving and putting others first. They pray for others and have begun to see the importance of spiritual things. They give of their time and money from a place of thankfulness and love.

Christian Adults have a solid understanding of God's Word and a deep, abiding relationship with the Father. They are living out God's Word. Their prayers and lives are others-centered and God-dependent. They understand and embrace their role of

making disciples of Christ, serving and praying for others, and seeking God's kingdom first.

Notice what Paul asks for in their knowledge of God...

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

2. Pray for knowledge to be applied.

Many people seem to know a lot about God...

...but that knowledge is not used w/wisdom in their lives.

3. Pray for fresh revelation.

God doesn't change, His word will not be added to...

...but He is immeasurable and boundless to know.

...and as we grow, our knowledge of Him should grow too.

...this keeps our relationship living and relevant for today.

We need both relational connection and accurate knowledge.

How do we learn and know more?

ESV 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened,

NKJV 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;

4. Pray for open eyes

2 Corinthians 4:4 "...the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

And what is it that Paul prays for them to see?

18 ...that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

There are 3 areas Paul prays that they would know...

The Hope of His calling,

the Riches of His inheritance,

the Power toward us who believe

5. Pray with hope.

There is great hope in knowing my life has a purpose.

6. Pray with your inheritance in view.

7. Pray with power

19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that 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 rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

His great power towards us is above and beyond everything.

Christ is our head.

And He is above all & fills all & His power is over all.