

EPHESIANS

1 : 19 - 23

GOD'S POWER AND PRAISE

(Ephesians 1:19-23)

The Bible says ... *If God is for us, then no one can stand against us* (Romans 8:3). That is quite a promise! As Christians, we love hearing this kind of stuff. But if we're being honest, this statement about God's commitment to us does raise a question. One that almost all believers have asked, and that many of us ask often. Is God really *for us*? I mean, *really*? Sometimes it is hard to feel that such is the case. This is especially true after those times when we have sinned and feel that we've disappointed God. How could He be *for us* then? Or when we can't seem to hear His voice and don't understand what He is doing? Is He *for us* then? And what about those times when horrible evil strikes and causes us intense grief. Is He *for us* when that happens? Truth be told, followers of Jesus constantly need help becoming fully convinced, and then staying absolutely convinced, that God is *for us* ... that Almighty God can genuinely be counted upon to stand up *for us*. Today, as we study **Ephesians 1:19-23**, we're going to learn from the Apostle Paul that focusing on the *power of God* and the *praise of God* is the key to encountering the "there *for us*" *presence of God*.

SALVATION'S STORY

(vv. 1-14)

(vv. 1-6) God the Father ...

(vv. 7-12) God the Son ...

(vv. 13-14) God the Holy Spirit ...

SECRET OF LIFE

(vv. 6-14)

Your life is a _____ of God ... to be lived by the _____ of God ...
all for the ultimate _____ of God!

PRAYING FOR WHAT MATTERS MOST

(vv. 15-19)

POWER TO GOD'S PEOPLE

(vv. 19-23)

1. ____ Definitive Terms for God's Power:

2. ____ Descriptive Illustrations of God's Power:

PRAISE TO HIS NAME

1. (v.3) "*Blessed be*" My God is so ...
2. (vv.5 & 9) "*Kind intention*" My God is so ...
3. (vv. 6,7,12 & 14) "*Glorious Grace*" My God is so ...
4. (v.13) "*Promise*" My God is so ...
5. (v.19) "*Greatness of power*" My God is so ...
6. (vv.20-21) "*Seated far above*" My God is so ...
7. (v.23) "*Fills all*" My God is so ...

FOR THOUGHT & TALK

In your small group take 5-10 minutes to review the main points of this week's message. Discuss the following questions, taking your time as the Spirit leads, realizing you don't have to cover them all.

1. Read aloud **Ephesians 1:19-23** from two different versions like the NASB and the NLT. After your brief message review, take time to reflect together on the sheer volume of material God packed into just this first chapter of Ephesians (i.e. salvation's story; the secret of life; praying for what matters most; the power of God; praise to God). Imagine being the Ephesian Church, sitting together in a group, hungering and thirsting for God's Truth, and then hearing these words and thoughts for the very first time. What must they have felt? How do you suppose they would have reacted and responded?
2. Paul tells us four times in Ephesians 1 that the secret of a Christian's life is bound up in *the praise of the glory of His grace*. PJ summarized the Apostle's teaching in this way for us: *Your life is a gift of God, to be lived by the grace of God, all for the ultimate glory of God!* Restate that sentence in your own words. How does this truth relate to your life and how should it guide you in terms of choosing your priorities, decision making, dealing with current difficulties, and your time management?
3. It is very obvious from Ephesians 1:19-23 that the power of God was a huge deal to Paul, and that it needs to be to us as well. Why? How does a thorough understanding of God's power make a significant difference to our appreciation of God and our perspective on our life's situations? Why is it important for us to have our eyes looking for displays of God's power, both subtle displays and big demonstrations of it? How have you recently seen God's power displayed and what reaction did it cause your heart to have?
4. It is very obvious from Ephesians 1:19-23 that the power of God was a huge deal to Paul, and that it needs to be to us as well. Why? How does a thorough understanding of God's power make a significant difference to our appreciation of God and our perspective on our life's situations? Why is it important for us to have our eyes looking for displays of God's power, both subtle displays and big demonstrations of it? How have you recently seen God's power displayed and what reaction did it cause your heart to have?