

I) **V15-23 Therefore I also *after I heard of your faith* in the Lord Jesus and your love for all**

**Paul has been outlining the blessings that believers have in the Lord Jesus**

**He now prays that believers will come to understand and appreciate those blessings**

II) **What is it that has moved the Apostle to prayer? Visitors gave him a good report**

**People had taken the time to come to see him in jail and informed him of their condition**

III) **Why was he under arrest? I will give a brief summary**

**Paul had been in Jerusalem and had entered the temple grounds**

IV) **An unbelieving Jew stirred the people against Paul, claiming Paul was anti Jewish**

**He said Paul taught against the people, the law, and the temple**

V) **He also claimed Paul brought Gentiles into the temple, defiling it (Ac 21:28)**

**They had seen Trophimus (an Ephesian) with Paul and assumed he was in the temple**

VI) **Paul was allowed to speak to the angry mob, so he gave his testimony**

**As he spoke, he told them that God had sent him to reach the Gentiles**

**Ac 22:22 The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, “Rid the earth of him! He’s not fit to live!”**

VII) **When the mob got out of control the commander removed Paul for his own safety**

**He wanted to know why he was accused by the Jews, so he assembled the chief priests**

VIII) **Paul saw some were Sadducees and some Pharisees, so he spoke of the resurrection**

**This was a point of contention between the two, and they began to argue**

IX) **Because the argument got so violent, the commander ordered Paul back to the barracks**

**He was then jailed for two years and finally stood before the**

**governor, Festus**

**X) Paul saw that Festus was partial to the Jews, and appealed to Caesar (Ac 25:11)**

**Before going to Rome, he stood before King Agrippa II and then went to Rome**

**XI) While awaiting trial in Rome, Paul was under house arrest**

**During this time, he wrote the prison epistles: Philemon, Col, Phil, and Ephesians**

**XII) While he was in prison, Paul was able to receive visitors**

**Ac 28:30-31 Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.**

**I) From those who visited him, Paul was able to receive information about the churches**

**He was blessed to hear that the Ephesian church was doing well**

**II) V15 I also heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for the saints**

**III) Paul was blessed by how the Lord was moving in the congregation**

**This knowledge blesses mature believers, especially the pastor of the fellowship**

**3 Jn 3-4 It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.**

**IV) Every congregation has a reputation that may be better known than we think**

**The reputation is produced by people who attend the church (both pastor and sheep)**

**2 Co 3:2 You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody.**

**V) All churches have reputations in the community, some good and some that are bad**

**The church at Rome was known for its faith in Christ**

**Ro 1:8 Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.**

**VI) Thessalonians: Works, love, endurance, evangelism, perseverance through**

trials

1 Th 1:3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by *love*, and your *endurance* inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Th 1:8 From you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place *your faith toward God is spread abroad*; so that we need not to speak any thing.

2 Th 1:3-4 We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more; and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing. Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your *perseverance* and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring

VII) Tragically, Corinth was known for its carnality and divisiveness

1 Co 1:10-11 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers some from Chloe's house have informed me that there are quarrels among you

VIII) V15 The Ephesians were known for their faith towards God and their love for the saints

Genuine faith is manifested in love towards others, especially the family of God

This is why he speaks of their faith in Jesus and their love for the saints (Jn 13:34-35)

I) Christian love does not pick and choose amongst the beautiful people

It is often revealed by compassion and concern for others

1 Jn 4:19-20 We love him, because he first loved us. If a man says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

II) We see this in Jesus' ministry

He cared for lepers, cripples, possessed, promiscuous, tax gatherers, grieving families

Christian love is demonstrated by service and sacrifice, and this church exhibited it

III) Their faith and love prompted Paul to pray for them with a thankful heart

IV) V16 I do not cease to give thanks for you making mention of you in my prayers

I think of you, and when I do I lift you up to the Lord in my prayers

Phil 1:3-4 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy

V) V17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of glory *may give to you the spirit*

As a teacher Paul could instruct them about what they possess in Jesus

VI) The fact is, it is God who gives them spiritual understanding by the Spirit  
Jn 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

1 Co 2:14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned

VII) This is what I pray for: that God will give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation

(wisdom) May you come to understand how precious fellowship with God truly is

May you come to realize what you *already have* in Jesus (revelation)

VIII) It isn't that we are lacking something, because in Jesus *we already have* what we need

Sometimes we simply don't know it, make use of it, or believe it

IX) As believers, we seek to understand that in Jesus *we already have what we need*

2 Pe 1:3 His divine power has granted to us *everything* pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence

X) This doesn't mean that we shouldn't seek the Lord for a deeper relationship with Him

Seeking to have a deeper relationship with Jesus should be our top priority

A.W. TOZER: I want deliberately to encourage this mighty longing after God. The lack of it has brought us to our present low estate

I) The desire for God and hunger for fellowship with Him should be our driving force

Jer 29:13 You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart

Ps 84:2 I long, yes, I faint with longing to enter the courts of the LORD. With my whole being, body and soul, I will shout joyfully to the living God.

II) We Christians can have a deep and personal relationship with God

Ex 33:11 The LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his

friend

III) This relationship with the Lord is to be our deepest longing

Ps 27:4 One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

IV) This all begins when you come to faith in Jesus and are born again

Jn 17:3 This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

V) V18 (Paul prays) that the eyes of their *understanding* may be *enlightened*

Paul uses the word *kardias* (heart) to speak of understanding

This symbolizes the inner man in its entirety

VI) May you be made completely and entirely aware of heavenly things

May you be aware you are adopted as God's children through Jesus

May you know for certain that this has been God's pleasure to do so

May you cherish and live in the freedom from bondage God gave you in

redemption

May you come to know deeply of the costly grace of God that made this

possible

May you eagerly await the obtaining of you inheritance in heaven

May this understanding provoke you to live to the praise of His glory

VII) The more you drench yourself in God's word, the deeper your understanding grows

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

VIII) Notice how Paul says You *once* were in spiritual darkness

Later Paul will give greater understanding of what they *at one time* were

Eph 4:17-19 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are *darkened* in their *understanding* and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

I) Darkened: Blinded, obscured

Understanding: Inability to discern deep things

Separated: Alienated; estranged; unable to participate

Ignorance: Often the result of willful blindness and rejection

Hardness: Callousness; stupidity

- II) You need to realize that *you are no longer* in spiritual darkness
- III) When you were regenerated by Jesus, your darkened minds were enlightened  
Enlightened: To shine; to shed light; to brighten  
Is 9:2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.  
Ps 18:28 For you will light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness  
2 Co 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
- IV) V18 That you may *know* what is the hope of His calling what are the riches of the glory of  
He prays that they might understand three things  
The hope of His calling, the riches of the glory, and the greatness of His power
- V) FIRST: That you may *know* (perceive) what is the hope of His calling  
Know: Seeing, that becomes *knowing*  
This is similar to the saying "I see what you are saying"
- VI) May God move before you so much that it becomes a natural pattern  
This will serve for you to trust that God will perform, faithfully, His promises
- VII) V18 May you know what is the hope of His calling  
This hope ultimately is to be conformed to the image of Jesus
- VIII) God's plan for our lives is that we *all* will have resurrection glory and be like Jesus  
Gal 5:5 For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith *the righteousness* for which we hope  
1 Jn 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is
- IX) SECOND: What are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints  
Riches: Wealth; abundance; valuable gift  
His prayer is that believers would come to understand our salvation

- I) This hope of being with Jesus and enjoying His blessings motivates our lives  
Ro 8:16-17 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and *joint heirs with Christ*, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together
- II) V19 THIRD: And what is the *exceeding greatness* of His power toward us who believe
- III) V19 Exceeding greatness of His power is an incredible statement  
This speaks of the immeasurable might of God Himself
- IV) The infinite power of God was displayed when He resurrected Jesus  
This same power dwells in those of us who believe in Him  
Ro 8:11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.
- V) What we need is to understand is in fact very simple: We have power through Christ  
This is the same power that resides in those who believe  
This is the power of the Spirit who has been given to us (Ac 1:8)
- VI) V20 Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His
- VII) PAUL POINTS OUT TWO THINGS:  
FIRST: That God raised Jesus from the dead  
Ac 13:30 God raised Him from the dead.
- VIII) SECOND: God seated Jesus at His *right hand* (the place of power and authority)  
Exodus 15:6 Your right hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power;  
Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces.  
1 Pe 3:22 (He) has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.
- IX) This *same divine power* also works in us who believe  
Ro 6:4 We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may walk in newness of life.
- X) He prays that believers may understand this Spiritual blessing God has given us  
POSITIONALLY: In Jesus we have received spiritual power and

spiritual life

NOTICE: V3, 20 and 2:6

I) **APPLICATION: His power resides in us and will bring us to glory in Christ**  
**We have not been left fatherless: We are not spiritual orphans, left to care for ourselves**

II) **V21 *Far above* all principality and power and might and dominion and every name**  
**Jesus is exalted to the highest dignity and honor that exists or can be imagined**

III) **God raised Jesus from the dead, and Jesus gives life to those who believe**  
**He raises the sinner from the death of sin and gives them to power of everlasting life**  
**Jn 5:24 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.**

IV) **V21 *Far above* all principality and power and might and dominion and every name**  
**Jesus is exalted above all principality, power, might and dominion and name**  
**These words are intended to speak of all possible forms of power**

V) **Principality and power speak of rulership, or governmental power**  
**They can speak of human government, and can also speak of all created powers**  
**In this context, Paul is speaking of angelic power, both of good and of the evil**

VI) **Might: Speaks of power, including the physical and the spiritual**  
**Dominion: Lowest level of authority, or lordship**

VII) **All of these words can apply to angelic beings of great rank and authority**

VIII) **V22-23 He put all things under His feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the**

**God has given Jesus all power both in heaven and in earth, and He owns the church**

**1 Pe 3:22 (Jesus) has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.**

**Col 1:15-18 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all**



creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

**IX) Ultimately all will bow before Jesus Christ**

**Phil 2:9-10 Therefore, God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

**I) V23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all**

**Fullness: the completion or filling up**

**II) The church He bought with His own blood is what makes His *total dominion* complete**

**The church He saved is the crowning evidence of His complete Lordship**

**III) As the church is His body, He loves and takes care of it**

**Eph 5:29-30 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.**