

A Model Prayer
Ephesians 1:15-23

Introduction: We look this morning at the second of three prayers recorded for us in the book of Ephesians. The first was a prayer of praise as found in 1:3-14, the second is a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession here in 1:15-23 and the third is found in chapter 3:14-21. In light of this second prayer let me ask you; what are you thankful for? What do you ask God for in your prayers? How do your answers line up with Paul's example?

I. What are you thankful for?

A. Faith

1. Faith in whom?
2. What does faith look like?
 - a) Fully assured in the promises of God- Romans 4:20-21
 - b) Obedience- Romans 16:26
 - c) Stand firm- I Corinthians 16:13
 - d) Waiting patiently- Galatians 5:5
 - e) Unity- Ephesians 4:13
 - f) Stand against Satan- Ephesians 6:16
 - g) Perseverance in persecution- I Peter 1:7

B. Love

1. Love for whom?
2. What does love look like? I Cor. 13
 - a) Patience
 - b) Kindness
 - c) Not jealous
 - d) Not bragging
 - e) Not arrogant
 - f) Does not act unbecomingly
 - g) Does not seek its own
 - h) Is not easily provoked
 - i) Does not hold a grudge
 - j) Does not rejoice in unrighteousness
 - k) Rejoices in the truth
 - l) Bears all things
 - m) Believes all things
 - n) Endures all things

II. What are you asking for?

A. The request

- a) A spirit of wisdom and understanding
- b) The enlightening of the eyes of the heart

B. The purpose of the request

1. Experiential knowledge- epiginōskō
2. Objective knowledge- oida
 - a) The hope of His calling
 - b) The riches of the glory of His inheritance
 - c) The surpassing greatness of His power
 - (1) Power defined
 - (2) Power demonstrated

Conclusion: When was the last time that we thanked God for what He is doing in our brothers and sisters lives? When was the last time we asked Him that our brothers and sisters would be given a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of their heart enlightened? When was the last time we prayed these things for ourselves?

Questions for discussion/application

- In what ways is this prayer drastically different from our usual prayers of thanksgiving and intercession?
- What does our tendency to pray for physical, financial, political, and social needs more than we do for spiritual needs tell us about our thinking?
- What is the hope of our calling?
- How do we find encouragement through the description given in verses 19-23 of God's great power?
- As you look at your own life, could your brothers and sisters give thanks to God for faith in Christ and love for the saints being demonstrated in your life?
- What is the significance of Paul being specifically thankful for the Ephesians love for the **saints**?