

Harris Creek Baptist Church

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Series: Ephesians

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Ask God

Ephesians 1: 15-23

**15 For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. 17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit[f] of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.**

Well, there was a family in New York a few years ago, and they were having a lazy Saturday, and they decided, hey, let's go to the local garage sale. They saw signs up for it. So they went over and perused the garage sale, looked at everything set out on the driveway, and decided that they were going to purchase a bowl.

It was a three-dollar bowl, which I'm not even sure is all that good of a deal. Like, I think you'd go to Target, get a bowl for three dollars, and it won't even be used, but they bought this bowl and brought it home. And then, for six years, they kept it on the mantle, right above their fireplace. And here's what the bowl looked like. Again, it's nice, but it's not like anything that impressive. They set it out for six years at their house and had it displayed in their living room, and eventually, they thought, you know, I wonder if we could sell this for more than what we paid for it. Like, I wonder if we could sell it for more than three dollars.

So, they had a connection to an antique dealer. So, they brought it to this antique dealer, and they said, hey, can we sell this for more than three dollars? And he said I think you can sell it for more than three dollars. So, he took this and put it up for auction, and then when the auction was finalized, this bowl sold for 2.2 million dollars.

Yeah, and I, I don't entirely know why I'm going to tell you my best to tell you why. The bowl is a thousand years old. And as you can tell from, from the condition of it, it was kept in immaculate condition. It was originally made in a certain area in China. And what is likely

appended with this bowl is that it was just passed down from generation to generation within one family.

And this bowl just eventually became, you know, that's grandma's bowl, and that's mom's bowl. And then, eventually, it's my bowl. And then someone was clearing out their house, and they're like, we just got to get rid of this thing. Like we don't use it. Let's get rid of it with our old clothes. And they sold something that was worth 2.2 million dollars for three dollars.

Why? Why did they sell something that was worth so much for so little? They didn't know what they had. They didn't know what they had. Instead, rather than selling this bowl for 2.2 million dollars and buying a home in the Hamptons. Since they didn't know what they had, they sold it for three dollars and bought a cheeseburger at McDonalds.

Simply because they didn't know what they had, and I can just picture them a few years later after selling it, seeing that it sold for 2.2 million going, if we only know what we had! Today we're continuing in our study of the book of Ephesians. We're going to read a prayer from Paul, and he's going to write to the church in Ephesus.

And he's going to say, if only you know what you have if only you knew what's available to you right now because you have much in Christ Jesus. The question is, do you know it? Do you know what you have? I bet for many of us, the answer is probably not. Cause for some of us, maybe your faith has grown stale.

Maybe it's because you're a Christian because you're, you became a Christian because your family's a Christian. Like, your grandmother was a Christian, just like this bowl. It got passed down. Your grandmother's a Christian. Your mom's a Christian. And so now you are a Christian. Your faith just kind of sits on the shelf as a display.

You're not really benefiting from it. And Paul's going to write, oh, you have so much more available to you. I just wish you knew what you had. And in this prayer for the church in Ephesus, he's going to write and say, I hope you know these four unique things. So that's what we're going to look at today.

These are four things that we need to know as followers of Jesus. We're going to be in Ephesians 1, verses 15 through 23, but before I read that text, I want to give you some background because I think that's helpful. This is week three. In week one, we looked at the birth of the church in Acts and the church in Ephesus.

We read in Acts 19 that the church there used to be or the city there used to be all about the worship of the goddess Artemis. It was the Greek goddess of fertility. And then they also practiced dark magic and, sorcery. And then Paul came onto the scene and did ministry there. God used Paul's ministry to transform that city from a place that worships a Greek goddess and worships magic to now becoming the largest, most influential church in the early church period.

Then last week, we got to dive into some theology in this letter, where JP explained that Paul wrote to the people to remind them that they are chosen by God, redeemed by the Son, and sealed by the Spirit. And this morning, we're going to dive into some more theology, and this is

going to be a theme over the next few weeks in the book of Ephesians because you're going to see that Ephesians is in six chapters and it's really two parts.

The first three chapters are all about theology, and the next three are all about the practical. The first three are all about who God is and, therefore, who we are. And then the next three are about, okay, how do you actually live it out? So, we're going to look at some theology today as Paul writes down this prayer for the church in Ephesus, praying that they would know four different things.

Well, what are those four things? Let's start reading in verse 15. Paul writes this **“For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.”**

But before we keep reading, I want to tell you something that happened this week. This week, uh, JP and John Durham, who's the lead pastor at Highland, and Carl Gulley, who's one of the lead pastors at Antioch, were here on Tuesday, and they were teaching to our residents, teaching our residents. We've got eight residents here who are, uh, people in their early twenties and we're training them up to send them out to go and do ministry.

Here's a picture of them together. This picture is like not a big deal here. That's a huge deal in most cities. Most cities, pastors do not get along, which makes no sense to me. And I just, I love that our lead pastors at some of most influential churches here are unified and they're here talking to our residents.

And there was a time of, Q and A, and one of the residents said, uh, what do you guys wish you knew at the early part of your ministry that you do not know now? Or excuse me, what, what did you not know then, uh, that you do know now? And, uh, Pastor Durham said, you know, early on in my ministry, I thought I needed to pray to prepare myself to do the work of the ministry.

Now I've learned that prayer is the work of ministry, which I just thought was so good. We like to think, okay, I need to pray in order to prepare myself to do things for God, when really, it's way more effective just to ask God to do things. And that's what Paul is doing here. He's doing ministry by praying for the church.

He's praying for them, and he says this in verse 17. **“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may”** now what's, what's he going to ask for? What's the very first thing he's going to ask for? Is he going to say, I keep asking God that he would give you more influence in this city?

Or is the very first thing he's going to pray for them is I so hope your career advances and grows in such a way that eventually you'll be able to retire and buy a home on the beach in Ephesus. Or is he going to pray I so keep asking God that he would keep you safe. What's he going to pay for the church?

He prays to the **“God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit[f] of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.”** The very first thing that Paul prays for them is oh, would you know God more? And the word here for know is the Greek word epignosis, which means precise and correct knowledge.

That's what he's praying for them. So epignosis is not, you know I have a general idea that the sun is up in the sky. Epignosis is the sun is 93 million miles away from Earth and at its diameter it's, it's 865,000 miles wide and at the core of the sun, it burns 27 million degrees Fahrenheit, and the sun is so large that 1.3 million Earths could fit inside the sun.

That is epignosis. It's an accurate and precise knowledge. So, so Paul's not saying hey, I hope you have a general idea of who God is. He is saying, I hope you know God for who he is and for all that he is. I hope you know his character. I hope you know what he loves and doesn't love.

I hope you know his beauty. I hope you really like, get to know who your God is. This is what he's paying for the church in Ephesus to know. And this is what we should pray, for us to know as well, which is point number one.

### *1. Ask God that you may know him better*

Maybe you've heard this phrase before never meet your heroes. This idea is, uh, whoever you've built up in your head to be like awesome and amazing. Whenever you meet them, they're probably not going to be as awesome or as amazing as you thought they were. So never meet your heroes, like keep them at a distance. But Paul is saying here, that's not my experience with God. The better I've gotten to know God, the better he's become.

The more I've seen of God, the more beautiful he is. So, he's saying, I so desperately pray that you would get to know God better. The amazing thing about following God is that there is so much depth to who he is. We don't even know the number of days to get to the bottom of the depth of all that God is.

You could learn something new about God every single day of your life and not get to the edges of all that he is. So, how do you get to know him more? How do you get to know God more? I think at least for me, maybe for you as well, we think, okay, I got to get in a Bible study, or I got to listen to a bunch of sermons or I need to start reading some Christian books.

And those are certainly ways that you can do that, that, that you can, things that you can do to get to know God more. That's just not what Paul is praying for here. He's not saying, God, I pray that you would allow them to take a Hebrew class so they can read the Old Testament in its original language.

What's he praying for them? He says this in verse **“17, I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit[f] of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.”** How does he say they'll know God more through the Holy Spirit? You see, the only way to know the person of God is through the spirit of God.

I think some of us don't really know what to do with the Holy Spirit. We don't know what he does. One of his primary characteristics is to tell us who our God is. Paul writes this in

Ephesians, in First Corinthians 2:12: **“12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.”**

The only way to understand the things of God is through the spirit of God. So, this week, as I've been studying this text, I've just started praying a really simple prayer that's helped me, and maybe it'll help you. I've just started praying, God, if there's more of you to know, would your Holy Spirit allow me to know it?

God, if there's more of you to know, would your Holy Spirit allow me to know it? And that prayer's done two things for me. It's one that reminded me there is more of God to know. I have not arrived. Second, it's a reminder of how I have come to know God more. It's through the Holy Spirit. So, God, if there's more of you to know, would your Holy Spirit allow me to know it?

He's how we come to know God more. Now, before we move on to the next point, I just want to really nail something down that I think is really, really important here. Paul's the spiritual father of the church in Ephesus. These are like his spiritual kids. He came onto the scene and discipled them, and became their spiritual father.

He's there, his spiritual kids, and he's writing them a letter. And in this letter to his spiritual family, he says, my number one prayer request is this. My number one goal for your life as your spiritual father is this. My number one desire for you, the church in Ephesus, is that you would know God. Parents speaking, speaking, especially to you parents.

If I were to ask you, what's your number one desire for your child? What would you say? If I were to tell you, hey, what's like the number one goal you have for your kids, what would you say? And while you're thinking in your head, I, I wonder what your kids would say to that question if I were to say, Hey, what, what's dad's number one desire for you?

Hey, what's, what's mom's number one goal for your life? I wonder what they would say, and I bet what they would say would be more accurate than what you would say. And, I wonder if they'd say something like, you know, my parents, they just want me to get good grades. Or mom, yeah, she wants me to get married.

She keeps talking about that wedding. She just wants me to get married, or Dad. You know, he just always wants to make sure I'm making the team, or my mom. You know, she just always wants me to look a certain way. Oh, no. Parents lock in, lock in, listen. If they would answer that question in any other way, other than, oh, my parents, they want me to know God, they would answer in any other way than, oh, my parents, they want me to know God, they would answer in any other way than that.

I think that's like level 10, code red, emergency, drop everything, repent, and change the schedule. Change the discussion at the dinner table, change the shows you watch, change anything and everything so that whenever anyone asks your child what does your parent want most from you. Whether they are following God or not, they would say, Oh, it's easy.

My parents just want me to know God because parents, if your kids have the grades, but don't know God, what do they have? If they have the beautiful wedding, but don't know God, what do

they have? If they have the team, but don't know God, what do they have? If they have the looks, but don't know God, what do they have?

So, what are you leading them to? What are they hearing from you? What do they think you want from their life? And if it's anything other than knowing God, you're missing it. Now, I want to say you are not. You are not failing. If your kids don't know God, if right now your kids don't know God, you're not failing.

You cannot make them know God. That's not ultimately up to you. And I know this language feels strong and potentially harsh, but I think it's true. I do think you are failing as a parent. If your child doesn't know above all else that you want them to know God, failing right now is not final just because you're failing right now.

It doesn't mean you'll always feel this is just an opportunity right now in this moment. What are you going to change? What are you going to change to make sure your kids know that you want them to love God above all else? That's what Paul's Writing here in Ephesians. He's saying, I pray for you. And the very first thing I pray for you is that you would know your maker.

Now, this isn't just for parents, everyone in this room, like maybe parents, you need to ask your kids. If you're feeling gutsy, ask your kids, Hey, what, what do you think I want most for your life? But if you're not a parent, I asked your life group. Hey, what do you guys think I value most in life? And if it's anything other than knowing God.

That's an awesome opportunity to repent and change the things that you value. Because the most important thing in this life is knowing who your God is, which is why Paul starts this prayer by saying, I pray that they would know God. And this is point number one, what we should ask God for as well. Ask God that you may know him better.

So, he prays that they might know God. And now he's about to pray that they would know three specific benefits of knowing God. And he says this verse 18. **“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you.”** I'm going to stop right there. So, he wants them to know God, and as a result of knowing God, he's praying that they would know the hope that they have in God, which is point number two.

## *2. Ask God to know the hope you have in him*

You know, we live in America, which means we get to participate in the American dream, which is an amazing thing. Like, the American dream is founded on the basis of hope. We get to hope for better things in our lives, which is a really new idea in the grand scheme of human history.

Like this did not exist because all throughout human history, your life was almost pre-decided by the time you were born because the family that you were born into determined what you did, and who you married and where you lived, it was really all decided for you in advance. But since we live in America right now, in a free country, we have the opportunity to hope for more.

The American dream is you can hope to have a better career than your parents have. You can hope to get married and have 2. 5 kids. Move into a relatively large house with a white picket fence and have a dog. You can hope to somehow have enough money to pay for Baylor for your kid's school. You can hope for those things.

They're available to you here. Now, those hopes are not the hope that Paul's talking about here. Those hopes, the hope in the American dream, are not this type of hope because those hopes are like little itty-bitty teeny-weeny hopes. In comparison to the hope of which you've been called, what's the hope of which you've been called?

Let me give you a thing that you've been called to, a thing that you get to hope for. John 14 verses 1-3, **“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God[a]; also believe in me. 2 My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”**

So, we don't have to go. Oh, I just hope I could someday move into a bigger house because we're moving into one day, a big, big house with lots and lots of room, a big, big table with lots and lots of food and a big, big yard where we can play football. It's a big, big house. It's my father's house. It is your father's house.

And that's where we're going. And it's not just a corny, goofy song. It's our reality. That's where we're headed. And yet we're so consumed with all these teeny tiny hopes. Now, I also know that in a church this size, and people watching online, that people aren't just having small hopes. There are some people who have some really big hopes here.

Hopes like this. I just hope that the cancer would disappear. I just hope that the pain from the divorce would someday go away. Or I just hope that one day, the tears from losing a loved one would stop. Those are heavy hopes, those are real hopes. And if I may, may I remind you of the hope to which you've been called.

Revelation 21. **“3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’[b] or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” 5 He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” 6 He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.”**

Guys, what if it's true? What if it's all true? Like, what if there's a day when every tear will be wiped away? What if there's a day when death will no longer exist? What if there's a day when your physical body and your emotions will feel no more pain?

What if there's a day where you will never thirst again? Can you imagine? What if it's all true? Well, it is, Jesus said in Revelation 21, it is done, which is why Paul prays in Ephesians one, that we would know it, that we would know the hope to which we've been called, that it doesn't

matter what's happening here because we know what's going to happen there, which is why he prays that the eyes of our heart would be opened.

He's not saying, I hope that you'd open your eyes to see the physical realm. He's saying, I pray that your heart would be open to see the spiritual realm, the even more real realm that you'd see through the things, seeing to the things that are unseen. And you would know the hope to which you've been called because where you're going is so much better than what you've got going on here.

And now, a couple of days ago, I was talking to someone who had made a decision. In his life that he thought would make his life better. He, this person did not know God, and he said, you know, I'm not getting any younger. I got to enjoy that life now while I can. And it's just made me think, you know, for the person who does not follow God, they have to enjoy everything they can in this life because this life is all there is.

For the follower of Jesus, this life is not all there is. In fact, this is the worst there is for the follower of Jesus. This is the closest to hell we're ever going to be. We have been called to something far better. You know, the hope to which you've been called. You want to know what it is? Streets of gold with the king of kings.

It's going to be amazing. So, we don't have to focus on everything here because we know what's happening there. That's the hope to which you've been called. My question is, do you know it? Do you know it? Paul's praying that the church in Ephesus would know it. And we should pray that as well, which is point number two, ask God to know the hope you have in him.

Well, let's keep reading. He continues in verse 18 by saying this, **“18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,”**

Now we've got to be really careful with how we read that part of this sentence, because if you're like me, the first time I read it, I thought that he's talking about our inheritance. Typically, in scripture, it's talking about our inheritance, like in, in, in heaven, we're going to get an awesome inheritance.

But what inheritance is he talking about here? He says I pray that you would know the riches of His glorious inheritance. Whose, whose inheritance? God's inheritance. And His inheritance is glorious. And what is His inheritance? His holy people. We are the inheritance of God. And He says it's glorious. When Jesus died, he unlocked an inheritance for God.

And that inheritance was us. You see when God looks at us, he just goes, I can't wait to be with them. You see, that's how much he values you. The question is, do you know it? Do you know it? Point number three, I pray that you would know this. Ask God to know that you know the value you have in him. Ask God to know the value you have in him.

3. Ask God to know that you know the value you have in him.

You know, I've been in ministry long enough to know what is really a common ditch for people in their relationship with God. Many, many times people fall into a ditch thinking, you know, God is disappointed in me, or God just puts up with me. Like I'm broken. Like, how could God possibly want me?

God's the sheriff in the sky. And whenever I break one of his rules, he's just mad at me. And I don't really enjoy spending time with God because I don't think he enjoys spending time with me. That's just not what's described of our relationship with God in scripture. It says here, Paul says that we are his glorious inheritance.

That's how much he wants us. And not just here in Ephesians, but in Deuteronomy 32: 9, it says this **“For the Lord's portion is his people. Jacob is his allotted inheritance.”** In other words, we are what he wants. We are what he's looking forward to. Another verse in scripture that talks about the way God views you and me is Zephaniah 3:17.

It says, **“the Lord, your God is with you. The mighty warrior who saves, he will take great delight in you in his love. He will no longer rebuke you, but it will rejoice over you with singing.”** So, listen, it is an affront to his character to say, God doesn't really delight in me. You know, he just kind of puts up with me.

And we've even learned to think that that's kind of the right thing to say. Like we think that that's humble. But whenever we say, you know, God, he puts up with me. God's not going. I'm so proud of you for being humble because if my daughter were to talk to you, and if you were to ask about our relationship, if she were to say, you know, my dad, he just puts up with me.

I'd say, Jayce, girl, what in the world? I tell you every single day. I love you. I love you. I love you. I enjoy spending time with you. If she were to tell you my dad, you know, he puts up with me. I would say, Jayce, at best, you're not listening to me at worst. You're calling me a liar. So, when you mope and pout and put your tail in between your legs, even after seeing and go, no one wants me, you're like, Eeyore, God doesn't want me.

I'm too broken. He just puts up with me. He's probably just disappointed in me. God's going what in the world, I've written to you and said, I love you. I rejoice over you. I delight in you. You're either not listening to me, or you think I'm a liar. I want you to know, God only says what he means. And he has said he loves you.

He delights in you, and you are his glorious inheritance. Now there'll be times in your life. Maybe this is going on right now for you that; there'll be times when the enemy is just going to whisper voices in your ear and say no one wants you. You're undesirable. I mean, even after that sin again, like a dog to its vomit, you keep going after that sin, and that makes you disgusting.

That makes you broken. That makes you unbearable. Who would want that? I just want you to know God is saying I do. I want that. I want him. I want her because I love them. And

specifically, he loves you. The question is, do you know it? And Paul wrote this because he knew those voices from the enemy would be coming in your life.

Those voices would be real, but he also knew those voices would not be true. So, what voice do you listen to? The voice that's telling you you're invaluable or the voice that's telling you, you are a glorious inheritance from God. Do you know how much God values you? Which is point number three. The third thing we should pray for is to ask God to know the value we have in him.

Now he finishes his prayer by saying, that I pray that you would know this fourth thing, and it's this, **“I pray that you would know his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at the right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”** So, he says, I pray that you would know the power you have available to you in God. And then He, then He makes a crazy claim. He says this same power is the same power that rose Jesus from the dead.

Then he says, this God sits on a throne. That's above every other throne that's ever existed. This God has more power than the white house has power today. More power than the Greek gods and goddesses had at the time of this writing. The question is, do you know that power? Which is point number four. We should ask God to know the power that you have in him.

#### 4. Ask God to know the power that you have in him.

At the beginning of 2020, someone actually gave me a Ford F 250 diesel truck, and this thing was like a beast. And, uh, I'm not necessarily a truck guy, but I've got a buddy who loves trucks, and he's like, Bro, you don't know what you got. That thing can haul like 25 cows or something. And, uh, I mean, in fact, we got a picture of it.

Here's what it looks like. And I use this truck every single day for my five-minute commute to work. And yeah, I don't think I carried a single thing of mine once except for maybe golf clubs. I think I put them in the back once. I know for a fact I never once hitched anything onto the tailgate before. I think it's a trailer hitch.

Like, I never used it, don't know what it's called. I had this beast of a truck. And I didn't need it really for anything. So shortly thereafter, I got rid of it and got something else. I got a Ford Escape, which is awesome. I can't pull anything. And, uh, I tell you that because I think that looks like our Christian life.

We got this Ford F two 50 massive beast of a truck with all the power in the world, and we don't really use any of it. We don't ask God to use any of us. Scripture says that the same power that rose Jesus from the dead is available to us. And we're like, I'm good. I'm okay. I don't need it. I think there's a few reasons for that.

And one of them maybe you're afraid to ask him to use that power because you're afraid that you'd be let down. I bet you've prayed a prayer before, a big prayer, asking them to use that power only for him not to use that power. And it's left you disappointed. This week, we had a staff meeting, and JP led us in that staff meeting to pray for our church.

So, all of us individually went outside of our church and just walked around the walls of our church in the parking lot. And we're all on our own praying for different things, praying for you guys, praying for our church. And eventually I walked over to the land that we recently bought. And I was just looking over at the land, and I was like, man, it's a field now.

What if it was something else? Like it harvests sunflowers. Now, what if it, like, harvests people there later? Like, what if we had a place that we could gather more people, that we could send out more people in a ministry that God could restore more people, that more marriages could be restored, that more people could be ministered to that more people could be saved.

What if God used that place to do more ministry? He's already doing a lot here. We out-punch our coverage here. I don't even know if that's the right phrase, but there's a lot of ministry that happens here for a relatively small church. What if we had something bigger?

That would be awesome. So, I was just looking at that land, and I started praying. I was like, God, I just asked that by the time I stepped back in the doors of our current building, someone would give 70 million. I just made that number up. God, I pray that someone gives 70 million by the time I get back into the doors of Harris Creek.

So, I got done praying, and I walked back in the doors of Harris Creek, and to my knowledge, now they don't let me see these things, so I could be wrong, but I don't think that happened. And that's disappointing. Like it is. I think I was believing God for it. I was like, you could do it. The Catalina Thousand Hills are yours.

Would you prompt someone to give 70 million so we could do more ministry? And I think he said no, and it's disappointing. And maybe this isn't true for you, at least for me. And in the back of my mind, I'm going, is that power really available? Like I read this in Ephesians, and I look at my life and I'm like the same power that rose Jesus from the dead.

I'm not necessarily seeing it here, but I think here's what's important. This scripture says that this power is available to us. But that the use of that power is not determined by us. Just because He doesn't do what you ask doesn't mean he can't do what you asked. Scripture says he can do more than we can even ask or imagine.

He just knows how to use that power better than I do. So, I can ask him for something, all the while knowing even if he says no, Romans 8:28 is still true. He's going to put all things together for my good and his glory. And just because He said no one time doesn't mean He'll say no all the time.

So, if this is true in Ephesians chapter one, that the same power that rose Jesus from the dead is available to us, it would be crazy not to ask him to use it. I've said this before recently up here,

but I think it's worth repeating. I would rather pray for things and believe for things that make me look like a fool in front of you than pray for things and believe for things that make me look like a fool in front of him.

Because if the same power that rose Jesus from the dead is available to us, we should ask that he would use it. We should ask for healing. We should ask for restoration. We should ask, what if, what if he did this? We should ask that he would save every single person on planet Earth. Like, if that power is available to us, we should ask that he would use that power.

And who knows, maybe he's saying, sure. And then you'd come back with a story to tell. You would come back knowing the power available to you and God. Now, the good news is the freedom is we don't have to be disappointed that he doesn't use his power the way we want him to because he used his power in the way we needed him to.

He rose Jesus from the dead, which freed us from sin, death, and the devil. Anything else he does is just an added bonus. We don't need those things, but we can and should ask for those things because that power is available. The question is, do you know it? So, in summary, Paul prays that the Ephesians would know four things.

One is that they would know God. Two is that they would know the hope they have in God. Three is that they know the value they have in God. And four is that they know the power that they have in God. Well, why should we know these four things? Why does it matter? Well, to close, every single time you're on an airplane, the same thing happens.

Either a flight attendant stands up in the middle, or they created a video to try to make you more engaged, and they say the same thing. And by the time that happens, I'm almost always asleep because I don't really care. Because I've made a decision and based on my experience and being on airplanes, it seems like everyone else has made the same decision.

Like, I don't see anyone else taking notes during this time or paying attention during this time because I think they made the same decision as me. And my decision is I don't need to know all that stuff because the odds are like, the overwhelming odds are is this plane is not going down. So, if this thing doesn't go down, I don't need to know what happens in case it goes down, so I can take a nap.

Why do you need to know all this stuff? Why did Paul pray for the church in Ephesus praying? I just pray that they would know God, that they would know the power they have in God, the value they have in God, and the hope they have in God. Why did he ask that they would know these things? It's because he knew that from the moment you and I stepped into this vessel, we were on a vessel going down.

My body and your body is going down specifically six feet down. And the odds are good. Well, like, a hundred percent chance that the vessel that you're in right now is going down. If that's true, it'd be really helpful to know the one who's defeated death. If you're going down, it'd be really helpful to know the one who could raise you up.

If you're going to die, it would be really helpful to know your creator. So, Paul's saying this stuff is not like break glass in case of emergency. He's saying, no, the emergency's already here. Sin's already here. Death is already here. You gotta know this stuff. Don't brush it off to the side. This is the most important thing you could ever know because you're going to die.

But more than that, you don't just have death coming your way. You will have seasons of hopelessness coming your way, perhaps even the dark night of the soul. Maybe you've walked through that. When that comes, it'd be really helpful to know the hope you have in God. There are going to be seasons of failure and discouragement in your life.

And when that comes, it'd be helpful to know the value you have in God. There's gonna be seasons of sickness in your life and brokenness in your life and weakness in your life. And when those days come, it'd be really helpful to know the power you have in God. You see, it's not an if those days are come, they're gonna come, they're gonna come.

Which is why the most important thing you could do for the rest of your life is to get to know God and all the benefits of knowing God. My question for you is, do you know him?

Do you know him? I know there are people in this room, people watching online, and you tuned in this morning. You showed up this morning and you don't know who your God is. You can know him right now today. You can know him. You can know your maker. All you have to say is, God, I want to know you. What an opportunity for the people here today who showed up today, who tuned in online, man.

You came in knowing God. My question to you is like, do you know all you have? Do you really understand all you have? Let me answer that. You don't. You don't. So, what you get to do is you get to get to know him every day of your life for the rest of your life. And you know what? Today is a great opportunity to continue to get to know him.

Let me pray that we would.

God, would you allow us to believe the urgency of this? The importance of this? That knowing God, and knowing the hope we have in God, and the value we have in God and the power we have in God isn't just like some extra credit assignment. It is the assignment for the rest of our life. It's more important than our career.

It's more important than anything else I could possibly name right now. The most important thing that we could ever do is to get to know you. So, God, if there's more of you to know, would your Holy Spirit allow us to know it? Would you allow us to know you more? Because I believe that the better, we get to know you, the better we'll realize you are.

And the more we see of you, the more beauty we'll see in you. And God, I just pray for the people here who came in today not knowing God. I pray that they would leave knowing you. Knowing that their God, and their creator sees them, loves them and has fully forgiven them. I just pray that even right now, they would say, God, I want to know you in a real way.

Even for the very first time, I've been in church for years, or I've never been in church before. And God, I just want to know you. And father, I just pray that you'd reveal yourself to them. And God, you have through the person of Jesus Christ. He came and lived a perfect life and died a death that we did that we deserved.

And he rose again so that we could know you and God for the rest of us. I pray that we'd have the same mindset as what scripture says. I pray that we would resolve in this life to know nothing else but Christ Jesus and him crucified. You're more important than knowing how much money is in our bank account, or knowing who won the game the other day, or knowing how to run a business really well.

The most important thing is, is knowing you. And then God, after we know you and know you more, that we would spend our life helping others know you as well. So, God, thank you so much that this morning we have reason for hope, that we have value in you, that we have power available to us. And it's only because of one reason.

The only reason we're here today with a reason to worship is because Jesus is alive and with us and for us. It's in his name. We pray. Amen.