

Ephesians 1:15-18 "How to Pray"

Introduction

We began with Paul thanking God for ALL the spiritual blessings in Heavenly places. Vs. 3 - 14 is one long single sentence.

All blessings come from Believers being "**IN JESUS**", "**IN CHRIST**", "**IN HIM**", "**IN THE BELOVED**".

Someone said it this way:

1. He blessed us *immensely*.
2. He chose us *unconditionally*.
3. He adopted us *adorningly*.
4. He has redeemed us *graciously*.
5. He forgave us *completely*.
6. He showed His grace *lavishly*.
7. He revealed His mystery *wisely*.
8. He granted us an inheritance *eternally*.
9. He sealed us *permanently*.
10. He guaranteed our salvation *personally*.

All these things are all a part of "the glorious gospel of salvation".

Today we get to look into the Prayer life of the Apostle Paul.

This is one of 2 prayers in the book of Ephesians. The first one here **Ch. 1:15-19** and the other in **Ch. 3:14-19**.

Today we are going to see 3 major points in this prayer:

1. God's calling of us
2. God's inheritance in us
3. God's Power for us

1:15 Faith and Love....the marks of a true believers

Eph 1:15

15 Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,

A. after I heard of your "FAITH" in the Lord Jesus

Eph 1:12-13

12 that we **who first trusted in Christ** should be to the praise of His glory.

13 In Him **you also trusted**, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, **having believed**, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Eph 2:8

8 For **by grace you have been saved through faith**, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

Rom 5:1-2

1 Therefore, having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2 **through whom also we have access by faith into this grace** in which we stand, and **rejoice in hope** of the glory of God.

B. your “LOVE” for “ALL” the saints

Rom 5:5

5 Now hope does not disappoint, **because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit** who was given to us.

C. For ALL the saints

Paul’s prayer is fully in agreement with what Jesus taught.

John 13:35

“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, **if you have love for one another.**”

Not all Christians walk in the spirit and act like Christians and often they are very “unlovable” even though they are saved. But God’s plan is that we would walk in the Spirit and Jesus’ love would flow through us in order for men to see Jesus.

Gal 5:25

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Gal 5:22-23

22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** 23 **gentleness, self-control.** ...

Often God puts people in our lives, some Non-Christians and some Christians, to see if we are truly living in the Spirit, thus loving the un-loveable.

Luke 6:32

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

Matthew 5:44

“But I say to you, **love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you,

1 Corinthians 13:13

“But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Note: Here in the book of Ephesians Paul is “Praising them for their Love”, however in the book of Revelation....

Rev 2:2-5

2 "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;

3 "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.

4 "Nevertheless **I have this against you, that you have left your first love**.

5 "(1) **Remember** therefore from where you have fallen; (2) **repent** and (3) **do** the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you repent.

Once we are walking in Love, we must then KEEP ourselves in the Love!

Jude 1:20-21

20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

21 **keep yourselves in the love of God**, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Matthew 22:37

37 And He said to him, “ **'You shall Love the Lord your God** with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’

Matt 22:39

39 "And the second is like it: **'You shall love your neighbor** as yourself.’

John 13:34

34 "A **new commandment** I give to you, that you **love one another; as I have loved you**, that you also love one another.

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| 1:16 Paul had a 24X7 prayer life |
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Eph 1:16

16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:

A. do not cease to give thanks for you

1 Thes 5:17 pray without ceasing,

Rom 15:30

30 Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that **you strive (syn-agonizomai) together with me in prayers to God** for me,

B. making mention of you in my prayers

Sometimes in his purposeful prayer time, but sometimes as the Lord brought them to mind.

Note: Let us pause from these scriptures for a moment!

Before we get started looking at this Prayer I would like us first to notice what is NOT in this prayer!!!

A. Notice what Paul does NOT pray for....

Paul doesn't pray for their:

- material needs,
- marital problems,
- physical elements,
- or material or financial needs.
- Sounds like a shopping list and by the way God I need it all by Thursday at 2:00 o'clock".

Nothing wrong with praying for all these relational and earth things, but often that is all we pray for!!

But these things should not be the priority of our prayers, or the Passion of our hearts in our prayers.

B. Jesus taught us to pray in this way....

1st to start with praise.... our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Praise is the priority!!

2nd is petition but notice how.... Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done! The Priority is NOT for our will but God's will to be done!! Praying to further His kingdom, not our own kingdoms.

C. There is a truth here we need to catch!

When we are right with God and His will and this is what we are seeking first (Matt 6:33) "Seeking 1st the Kingdom of heaven and His righteousness then these temporary earth things will fall into place as God sees our needs to be best met (whether little or much, God knows best)".

So often we are praying about the symptoms and not about the real spiritual issues.

So we need prayers like this one here in Ephesians 1, to help us to pray more maturely and in the will of God.

D. Do we get this?

The important thing is the vertical things are first, that is our relationship with God and the importance of His Kingdom and the eternal truths and the eternal relationships and rewards.

Secondly, is the horizontal things, the earth things and our earthly relationships.

Now let's look at the content of this prayer.

1:17 God the Father would give to us, 1. Wisdom, 2. Revelation ...of the knowledge of Jesus

Eph 1:17

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

A. that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Christ in His humanity (while abiding in human flesh 100% as a man), referred to His Father also as "His God".

On the Cross:

Matt 27:46

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "**My God, My God**, why have You forsaken Me?"

After the resurrection:

John 20:17

17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, "**I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.**" "

B. the Father of glory

Not just from the Father period, but the Father of **GLORY!**

Do we understand God's glory?

I have discovered that to understand this word, we need to go to the Old Testament and look at the word in Hebrew (Kabowd) = means "weight", in a figurative sense.

Many Pictures of God's power = Glory (Kabowd):

- Moses – People were afraid, Moses' face shone with God's glory
- Tabernacle being dedicated
- Nadab and Abihu – (Lev 10)

C. may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him

First, we need to realize "How" God wants us to know Him.

Simply, "That they would know all that they have in Christ".

Paul wants them to know God personally, intimately, and powerfully.

The word "Knowledge" in the Greek:

"Epignosis" =

"Gnosis" = to know by experience

"Epi" = means above or on top of.

"Epi-Gnosis" = **an over the top experience in knowing God**, an overflowing, experiential and personal knowledge.

This is the same idea of what Paul said to the **Philippians 3:10a** "that I may know Him....."

D. spirit of wisdom and revelation

A "Spiritual" wisdom and revelation. This reminds me of what Paul said, in 1 Corinthians.

1 Cor 2:6-16

6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,

8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

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.

15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.

16 For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

Here is how we are to pray for one another!!

1:18 Enlightenmentof our hope and how God sees us as His riches

Eph 1:18

18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

A. the eyes of your understanding being enlightened

Most of the modern translations translate it, "eyes of our "hearts"

B. that you may know what is the hope of His calling

1. Our Calling:

a. before foundation of the world

Eph 1:4

4 just as He **chose us in Him before the foundation** of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

b. called us with a holy calling, ... according to His own purpose and grace

2 Tim 1:9

9 who has saved us and **called us with a holy calling**, not according to our works, but **according to His own purpose and grace** which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

c. called me through (or because of) His grace

Gal 1:15

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and **called me through His grace**,

d. called you (us) out of darkness into His marvelous light

1 Peter 2:9

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who **called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**;

2. Our Hope:

a. blessed hope

Titus 2:13

13 looking for the **blessed hope** and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

b. living hope

1 Peter 1:3

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

c. Hope we have...is both "sure and steadfast"

Heb 6:19a

19a This **hope we have** as an anchor of the soul, **both sure and steadfast**,...

3. **God's "calling of us" and His "hope to us" should give us "ASSURANCE"**

C. **what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints?**

Matt 13:44

44 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like **treasure hidden in a field**, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and **sells all that he has and buys that field**.

Matt 13:45-46

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant **seeking beautiful pearls**,
46 "who, when he had found one pearl of great price, **went and sold all that he had and bought it**.

Matt 18:12-14

12 "What do you think? If **a man has a hundred sheep**, and **one of them goes astray**, does he not **leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying?**

13 "And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, **he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray**.

14 "Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

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| Conclusion |
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