

January 20/21, 2001

The Truth About Our Life in Christ
A Study in the Book of Ephesians
A Prayer of Enlightenment
Ephesians 1:15-23

Opening Discussion

1. C. S. Lewis stated that too many Christians are satisfied with making mud pies in the street when God has promised a holiday at the sea. What do you suppose he meant by that?

How might that apply to our study of Ephesians?

2. Can you remember a time in your Christian life when God seemed to move you from where you were to a whole new level in your faith? Share what happened and what has been the result.
3. In the first half of Ephesians Paul tells us truth we need to know. Our tendency is to bypass what we need to know in looking for something we need to do. Why is it important that we establish what we need to know before we address what we need to do? In other words, why does Paul, in all his epistles, establish doctrine before duty?

Bible Study

1. Here in Ephesians 1:15, as well as in many of his epistles, Paul identifies faith (belief) and love as the marks of a Christian. Why is that?

How does that compare with Jesus' words in John 13:34,35?

Would you say the average person on the street would characterize Christians as loving people? Why or why not?

2. Paul is praying that the Ephesian believers (and us) would grow in their "knowledge" of Him. That word "know" is a term of intimacy, not intellect. Why does Paul want us to learn the truth of Ephesians?
3. Paul prays for the believers to be "enlightened" in three key areas. What are they?
4. The "hope of His calling" is a reference to the assurance of our salvation in Christ. Review what we learned about that from 1:3-14. How does this assurance set us free to live?

5. We are the “riches of the glory of His inheritance.” How does it affect your view of God to know that He views you as His treasure?

6. Paul stacks the terms to describe God’s power “toward us.”
Power: dynamite
Working: energy
Strength: force
Might: power to conquer

He then reminds us this power was demonstrated when He...

Raised Christ from the dead

Seated Him at His right hand.

Put all things in subjection under His feet.

Gave Him as head over all things to the church.

What does this passage teach us about God’s power? What does Paul mean by God’s power toward us who believe?

Why does Paul pray that our eyes will be enlightened concerning God’s power toward us?

How should this truth affect the way we live each day?

7. How does this enlightenment help us live out what is true of our life in Christ to the Praise of His Glory?

Application

1. Write down the 3 most significant truths you learned from Ephesians 1. Share with the group why you thought these truths were significant.

2. For each of the 3 truths you listed above, write down one way your daily life should be affected because you know that truth.

3. Spend some time in prayer with Paul, asking that the eyes of your heart might be enlightened to know the truth of Ephesians 1.