

Ephesians 1:15-23

EMC Wednesday Night Bible Study - 7-8-15

Welcome/salutation (1-2). Praise (3-14). **Prayer (15-23)**.

Trinitarian structure

Makes intercession to “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the **Father** of glory” (v. 17)

Refers to God’s work in and through Christ - “which He brought about in **Christ**” (v. 20)

That we may know these things through “a **spirit** of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him” (v. 17)

- Cf. 2:18 - “through (Christ) we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father”
- Blessing: **F** ↓ **S** ↓ **HS**. Prayer: **HS** ↑ **S** ↑ **F**.
- Acknowledging this structure is not merely a theological exercise

The essence of Paul’s prayer is “that they may **know**” (v. 18, cf. 3:18; Col. 1:9; Phil. 1:9)

- Growth in knowledge is _____ to growth in holiness
- V. 17 - “knowledge of Him” - that is, of him _____

Role of Revelation

Revelation is the means by which he makes himself _____

v. 17 - “(S)pirit of wisdom and of revelation” - cf. Jn. 14:17, 16:13; I Cor. 2:10)

V. 18 - “enlightens the eyes of your hearts” - whole inner self

The Specifics of Paul’s Prayer for the Ephesians (vv. 18-19)

1. “the Hope of God’s Call”

- God has called us (Rom. 8:30)...
 - “to belong to Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:6)
 - “into fellowship with Jesus Christ” (I Cor. 1:9)
 - “to be saints”, “called with a holy calling”, called “to be holy for (He) is holy” (Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:2; II Tim. 1:9; I Pet. 1:15; I Thes. 4:7)
 - “to freedom” (Gal. 5:1, 13) - cf. Bill’s sermon
 - to be “one body”, to enjoy “the peace of Christ”, and to “live a life worthy of the calling to which we have been called” (Col. 3:15; Eph. 4:1-2)
 - Also to unjust suffering (because of our union with Christ) and therefore patient endurance. We follow in Christ’s steps. (I Pet. 2:21)
 - “into his own kingdom and glory”, his “eternal glory in Christ”, which is the “upward call of God in Christ Jesus” for which sake Paul presses on (I Thes. 2:12; I Pet. 5:10; Phil. 3:14)

2. “the Glory of God’s Inheritance”

That which he **receives** vs. that which he **bestows**

V. 11 = His inheritance/heritage. V. 14 shift to “our” inheritance. V. 18 = continuation of this thought (cf.

Col. 1:12)

- In the NT:
 - I Pet. 1:4 - born again “to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you”
 - Rom. 8:17 - God’s children are “fellow heirs with Christ.” Whatever the Father has in store to give his Son by nature he will also share with his adopted children by grace.
 - (cf. Rev. 22:3-4; I Jn. 3:2; Phil. 3:21; Rev. 7:9; Acts. 20:32)
- “riches of the glory” - not particulars, but grandeur and beauty

3. “the Greatness of God’s Power” - lit. “the energy of the might of his strength”

Demonstrated via:

- Resurrection and ascension (v. 20a)
 - No corruption (Acts 2:27) or mere resuscitation
- Enthronement over all powers (20b-21)
 - “right hand” = supreme honor and executive authority (cf. Ps. 110:1)
 - Above all _____ (cf. ch. 6)
 - Above all _____ - “every name that is named”
- Headship of the _____ - (vv. 22-23)
 - Made “head over all things” - all of creation, both visible and invisible - given “to the church”
 - Cf. v. 10 - “summing up of all things in Christ”

“the church, which is his body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” - 3 possible meanings:

- “Fullness” describes Christ - i.e. “the church, which is the body of him *who is the fullness of him* who fills all in all”
 - Syntax - God both the subject and object of the same sentence?
 - Theological - fullness dwells in vs. is the fullness
- “Fullness” *actively* describes the church - i.e. “the church, which is His body *that fills him up,*” - that which completes him
 - Lacks Scriptural corroboration
- “Fullness” *passively* describes the church - i.e. “the church, which is His body *that he fills*”
 - In the NT Christ is constantly said to indwell or fill his church (cf. 2:21-22)
 - Immediate context of lordship
 - Two expressions: Church is his “body” - he directs it. Church is his “fullness” - he fills it.
 - The head fills the body with powers of movement and perception, and thereby inspires the whole body with life and direction. (cf. Eph. 4:13-16; Col. 1:18-19)