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Knowing the Hope of His Calling
Ephesians 1.15-23
Series: Near to the Heart of God
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- I. Introduction
 - A. Series: **Near to the Heart of God**
 - 1. Prayers of the NT
 - B. Motivation
 - 1. Studying the prayers
 - a. Realization that I don't pray like that!
 - 2. Pray-ers
 - a. Jesus
 - (1) Not many recorded
 - b. Paul
 - C. Series so far
 - 1. So-called **Lord's Prayer**
 - a. Jesus' instruction on prayer
 - b. **Matthew 6.9-15; Luke 11.1-4**
 - 2. **Jesus' High Priestly Prayer**
 - a. **John 17**
 - b. "The Real Lord's Prayer"
 - 3. Jesus in **Garden of Gethsemane**
 - a. Matthew 26.36-46 and parallels
 - 4. **Paul: Completing the Work**
 - a. **Philippians 1.3-11**
 - 5. **Paul: Walking in a Manner Worthy**
 - a. **Colossians 1.3-23**
 - D. **Paul: Knowing the Hope of His Calling**
 - 1. Ephesians 1.15-23
 - 2. **Ephesians 1:15-23** (ESV) —
 - a. 15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints,
 - b. 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,
 - c. 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

- d. 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,
- e. 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might
- f. 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,
- g. 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
- h. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,
- i. 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

II. Theological Context and Attitude

A. For this reason...

- 1. What reason?
 - a. Refers to the previous sentence
- 2. Previous sentence – Ephesians 1.3-14
 - a. ESV has 5 sentences in those verse
 - b. Gk is only one sentence
 - c. Mother of all run-on sentences
 - d. 200+ words
- 3. Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) —
 - a. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ **with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,**
 - b. Is there any lack of anything significant for our eternal salvation in Jesus Christ?
 - c. Cf Ephesians 2:4–7 (ESV) —
 - (1) 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,
 - (2) 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—
 - (3) 6 **and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,**
 - (4) 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- 4. Ephesians 1:4 (ESV) —
 - a. 4 even as **he chose us in him before the foundation of the world,** that we should be **holy and blameless** before him.
 - b. Election is one of the theological truths that drives Paul’s prayers
 - c. Why do we divide over election?

- d. Why do some believe that election leads to slothfulness in life and prayerlessness?
 - e. For Paul, election drives him to prayer!
5. In love **Ephesians 1:5** (ESV) — 5 **he predestined us for adoption** to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,
- a. There it is again – predestination!
 - b. For adoption – that we would belong to the family of God; that God would be our Father, Christ our brother!
 - c. And He did it all in love
 - d. Does that ever fuel your prayers for your brothers and sisters?
 - (1) Why not?
 - (2) It fuels Paul’s prayers!
6. **Ephesians 1:6** (ESV) — 6 to the praise **of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us **in the Beloved**.
- a. All this – every spiritual blessing, chosen in Christ, predestined for adoption
 - b. Leads Paul to an attitude of rejoicing in the grace of Christ
 - c. His glorious grace
 - d. Which we have because of our union with the Beloved, with Christ
 - e. That by faith in Jesus we are united with Him
 - f. This experience of grace, experienced in union with Him, drives Paul’s prayers for His brothers and sisters
7. **Ephesians 1:7** (ESV) — 7 In him we have **redemption through his blood**, the **forgiveness of our trespasses**, according to the riches of his grace,
- a. We are redeemed by the blood of Christ – purchased out of the slave market of sin, transferred from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of His beloved Son (cf Colossians prayer)
 - b. And the forgiveness of sins!
 - c. Just thinking about that drives Paul to his knees on behalf of his brethren
8. **Ephesians 1:8–9** (ESV) — 8 which **he lavished upon us**, in all wisdom and insight 9 **making known to us the mystery of his will**, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ
- a. What abundance! What extravagance in our salvation
 - b. The mystery of His will – while the predecessors in faith groped about in darkness, Christ has revealed to us the mystery of His will
 - c. Revealing to us His purpose in Christ
9. **Ephesians 1:10** (ESV) — 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, **to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth**.
- a. That’s the plan of God in Christ!
 - b. That’s what He reveals to us – this great mystery
 - c. And what does that great truth do for Paul?
 - d. It drives him to prayer!

10. **Ephesians 1:11–12** (ESV) — 11 In him we have obtained **an inheritance**, having been **predestined according to the purpose of him** who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ **might be to the praise of his glory**.
 - a. Our inheritance in Christ – more about that in a moment
 - b. Predestination again! Third time!
 - c. All so we would glorify Christ!
 - d. How could we not pray?
 11. **Ephesians 1:13–14** (ESV) — 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were **sealed with the promised Holy Spirit**, 14 who is **the guarantee of our inheritance** until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.
 - a. In addition to all that doctrine – the doctrine of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Sealed with the HS! – guarantees our inheritance
 - c. Again – all “in him” – our union with Christ is the basis for it all!
 12. Paul’s theological reflections don’t detract from his devotional life
 - a. They fuel his devotional life
 - b. And they drive him to pray
 - c. Let’s see how
- B. **Thanksgiving**
1. **Ephesians 1:15–16** (ESV) —
 - a. 15 For this reason,
 - (1) because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus
 - (2) and your love toward all the saints,
 - b. 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you,
 - (1) remembering you in my prayers...
 2. Paul connects the dots here
 - a. Puts his theological reflections – union with Christ, predestination, adoption, redemption, forgiveness, revelation, the mystery of God’s plan to unite all things in Christ, the inheritance, the sealing of the HS
 - b. And he’s heard of their faith in Jesus
 - c. And he’s heard of their love toward the saints
 - d. This all applies to these people!
 - e. This all applies to you!
 3. And so – putting these things together drives Paul into thanksgiving
 - a. Relentless thanksgiving
 - (1) “I do not cease to give thanks for you”
 - b. As he remembers them in his prayers
- C. And we haven’t even gotten to what he’s praying for!

III. **Petitions**

- A. **Spirit of wisdom and revelation**
1. **Ephesians 1:17** (ESV) —
 - a. 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,

- (1) the Father of glory,
 - b. may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation
 - (1) in the knowledge of him...
 - 2. Probably “a spirit” of wisdom and revelation
 - a. Already indicated they have received the HS
 - b. Cf Colossians – asked that they be filled with knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding
 - 3. Wisdom – application of spiritual truth
 - a. Pray that all this theology would have its intended effect
 - b. That they would be holy and blameless in their conduct
 - 4. Revelation – understanding of that which was formerly hidden
 - a. Remember the mystery of His will
 - 5. Purpose – “in the knowledge of him”
 - a. NIV – to know Him better
 - b. Supreme purpose in praying for our brothers and sisters is so that we all would know God
 - c. Knowledge of God is the key to successful Christian living
 - d. Theology proper is the knowledge of God
 - 6. Why wouldn’t we pray for that for our brothers and sisters?
- B. **Eyes of hearts enlightened**
- 1. **Ephesians 1:18–19 (ESV) —**
 - a. 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened,
 - (1) that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you,
 - (2) what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,
 - (3) 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe...
 - 2. Organ of enlightenment – heart
 - a. Moral implications – the central core of who we are as human beings
 - b. Enlightenment – to see what had originally been hidden in darkness
 - 3. Purpose of enlightenment – three are listed
 - a. **“Know what is the hope to which he has called you..”**
 - (1) Cf Ephesians 1.3-14!
 - (2) Chosen in Christ
 - (3) Holy and blameless
 - (4) Adoption
 - (5) Redemption
 - (6) Forgiveness
 - (7) Future – all things under Christ
 - (8) Us to be for the praise His glory!
 - b. **“What are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints..”**
 - (1) His glorious inheritance – Christ’s inheritance
 - (2) “In the saints”

- (3) Church is the inheritance!
- (4) “Riches of his glorious inheritance”
- (5) That’s you – that’s all of us together!
- c. “What is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe”
 - (1) The power of God is for us! Reserved for believers!
 - (2) Immeasurably great!
 - (3) We live in an age in which there is a relentless preoccupation with power
 - (4) But we believers already have power beyond anything the world can ever offer
 - (5) Currently in the midst of a political brouhaha over funding the government
 - (6) The parties jockey for power positions
 - (7) Don’t worry about it!
 - (8) You’ve already got immeasurably great power as believers!

IV. Explanation of Petitions

A. Nature of the power

- 1. Ephesians 1:19–21 (ESV) —
 - a. 19 ... according to the working of his great might
 - (1) 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead
 - (2) and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,
 - (3) 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named,
 - (4) not only in this age but also in the one to come.
- 2. “According to the working of his great might”
 - a. Of the same kind, similar in nature to
 - b. The resurrection of Christ
 - (1) The dominant feature of contemporary life is health
 - (2) Everything seems to be focused on health and well-being
 - (3) Health care is one of the chief things that our politicians fight over
 - (4) How about the resurrection? Raising someone from the dead?
 - (5) How does that stack up
 - c. The ascension of Christ
 - (1) Not only was He raised from the dead
 - (2) He was raised and installed in the seat of authority of the whole world – the position of power
 - (3) Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, above every name
 - (4) Now and forever
 - d. That is the kind of power we have in Christ right now

- e. And that is what Paul prays for in his brothers and sisters!
 - f. Why don't we pray like that?
- B. Purpose of the power
- 1. Ephesians 1:22–23 (ESV) —
 - a. 22 And he put all things under his feet
 - (1) and gave him as head over all things to the church,
 - b. 23 which is his body,
 - (1) the fullness of him who fills all in all.
 - 2. Christ is to function as the head
 - a. And now He exercises that through the church!
 - b. His body – the “second incarnation”
 - (1) Not in the sense that we are gods
 - (2) In the sense that we are, as a church, the body of Christ
 - (3) His manifest presence in this world
 - (4) The means by which He does His work
 - 3. Oh, that we would pray for one another like that!
- C. Pray through this passage...