

What is it that we know? "THAT YE MAY KNOW..."

Enlightened Eyes

Text: Ephesians 1:15-23

INTRODUCTION: Story of woman who took first ocean voyage--half way across she was carried to ship's doctor with mal-nutrition--in her cabin were found pieces of stale bread and cheese--she did not know that the price of her ticket included all meals in the ship's dining room.

Some say Heaven. This is true, but not the whole truth. These Ephesians know this already. Paul is talking about something else. There are many Christians like that--suffering mal-nutrition because they are ignorant of what they possess. "My people are destroyed from want of knowledge."

Ignorance can be destructive. Illustration of man who put his foot in the water and nearly bled to death because he was ignorant of it. We are told that ignorance in space field can be destructive for our country. Labels on bottles of poison--lack of knowledge could be fatal. How much greater in the spiritual realm.

Paul recognizes this truth. He prays for their spiritual illumination. He hears of their faith and love and is thankful for it, but not satisfied with it.

He gives thanks for what they have already attained, but not content with present attainments. Self-satisfaction means defeat in the Christian life. *far more to progress is a*

The true test of a church's prosperity is not the number of members on roll, financial assets, social standing, etc., but its spiritual progress.

Paul is thankful for the foundation already laid, but he is concerned with the superstructure going up; thankful for past attainments, but desires future advancements; thankful for the actual, but concerned with the potential.

But in order to grow, to make spiritual progress, there must be a spiritual insight, a fuller comprehension of the scope of God's work. Open the eyes of their hearts, understanding so that they may see their significance to God. A fuller measure of God's Spirit is required.

4. A call to judgment--it is the word that is used for citing a witness to appear before the judge. The Christian's life is not going nowhere; it is going to the judgment seat of Christ; a call to give an account.

This is important knowledge - the burden of the prayer - "that ye may know..." - implies fullness of knowledge - perceive

What is it that He wants us to see; to know?

Our Expectation of us

Call = latest equipment, etc - yet must be controlled & directed - you must put it in motion - the maker expects you to do it

I. GOD'S HOPE IN CALLING US. (Verse 18a)

The called of God are always those to whom the call has come with effect, who have listened to it and have been made believers. What is the hope, what is the expectation of God in calling us? What is the expectation that results in our answering the call of God? What does God expect?

Some say heaven. This is true, but not the whole truth. These Ephesians knew this already. Paul is talking about something else. It is not only heaven. There are a great many steps between salvation and heaven. And the man who thinks that heaven is the only purpose of God's calling us is living a fruitless life. He pictures salvation as a train and he has a pullman ticket. "Wake me up when we get into the station." *what is it going to do for us & make of us.*

God's calling of no man reaches its final goal in the man. He is called to a place and part in the vast enterprise of God's work of redemption. What is wrapped up in the calling of God? Examine the word for the answer.

1. Preparation--the word was used as a command to attend the King's court. This is the expectation of God's calling--to see the King.

But this means preparation--being dressed in the right garments.

I John 2:28; Titus 2:11-13

Are you ready to meet the King?

of marriage feast

2. Privilege--an invitation to a feast--this is the joy of His calling. If men knew the joy of it, they would never run from it. Men are hungry, spiritual starved.

Jesus: "my meat"

3. A Summons to duty--calling a person to a task, a place of responsibility. Always the Christian is summoned to a task. God offers us a job--to be of use.

4. A call to judgment--It is the word that is used for citing a witness to appear before the judge. The Christian's life is not going nowhere; it is going to the judgment seat of Christ; a call to give an account.

This is important knowledge!

makes a difference if he sees with enlightened eyes

God's Expense for us

II. GOD'S WEALTH IN THE CALLED. (Verse 18b)

"The wealth of God's inheritance in the saints. Believers are God's heritage; we are God's treasure; we are precious in the sight of God. God's greatest wealth consists in the redeemed. This is amazing--it is the work of grace.

He sets upon us an infinite value

1. Because of the cost of purchasing us--this makes us precious in His sight. God bankrupt heaven to buy us. He has a mighty investment in us.

The reason a Christian backslides is that he minimizes the cost of his redemption.

II Peter 1:9--"...hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

2. Because of the gain which God has through our witness.

In us He gains a vehicle of revelation--God is glorified by our transformation. We win others to Him, making Him still richer. Let's make God even richer.

God's Energy in us

III. GOD'S POWER AT WORK IN THE CALLED FOR ACHIEVING HIS PURPOSES. (verses 19-23)

He prays that we may realize God's resources--secret of victory and confidence. This is the guarantee of the fulfillment of the Christian hope.

we could before the enemy -

"We are stronger than He in the world"

1. The power that works in believers surpasses all limits. It is so great that Paul struggles with language to describe it--uses four different words to describe it.

(1) Dynamite - *δυναμις* - 1st power

(2) Superhuman--energy, indwelling, efficient. *operation - ενεργησις*

(3) *Strength* Mighty--ability to conquer--force, mastery, power shown in action. *κρως*

(4) Might--infinite resources - *εις* - *χρως*

The efficiency of the exertion of the might that dwells in God.

exhausts resources language

operation - ενεργησις working

Church is the organism thru which X acts, & which shares all the experiences of X. The body is servant of the head - moves at the head's bidding is powerless & lifeless without the head.

- X is inseparable from the Church. Identified with it

- Privilege

warning - Possible to make a body unhealthy & unfit. By undisciplined & careless living the Church can unfit herself to be the instrument of X.

Ignorance can be destructive - Paul recognizes this truth.

Christian life is a life of discovery. Prays for spiritual illumination. He gives thanks for what they already have, but not content with it.

Realize the power that is theirs - working in them even now - Tap this great reservoir.

He prays that we may realize God's resources - This is the ~~your~~ guarantee of the fulfillment of the Christian hope. Reliance on their divine reserves.

Want to gauge their resources - It is measure by what it did for X -

His resurrection has the power of all resurrections
in it. His exaltation is the guarantee that we
shall be exalted in & with Him.

2. The measure of this power that works in us.

It is measured by what it did for Christ. The operation of the exertion of the might of God, displayed in the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, is the measure of that surpassing power which He puts forward in us. Christ's dead body was the point on which this working of Divine power was exhibited.

He gives three evidences of this power.

(1) The Resurrection of Christ

Two standards of the Divine power are exhibited in the Bible--Old Testament it is the dividing of the Red Sea; in New Testament it is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That same power is at our disposal, working in us. We are reservoirs of that power.

The resurrection is the supreme exhibition of the Divine power. The standard of His operation ought to be the standard of our expectation.

(2) The Exaltation of Christ--the highest place in the universe.

(3) The Dominion of Christ--illustrates the power.

- a. Over all intelligent beings--"Rule and authority" Absolute authority.
- b. Over all Creation.
- c. Over the Church.

CONCLUSION: The future is with the Christian; the glory is before us. The reference to the resurrection and exaltation of Christ reveals that it is our FUTURE that is in view. Governments may fall, world in chaos, abyss of hopelessness, but as certainly as God lives, His people shall survive all wreck of matter and crash of worlds. God gives us such a great vision.