

EPHESIANS 1. 15-23

Paul's opening prayer

After Paul's rapt, sentence long doxology (Ephesians 1. 3-14), he offers a prayer for his Gentile readers, most of whom he has never met. This is the customary format for letter writing in the Roman world in the mid-First Century. Paul structures nearly all his letters this way. Once again, verses 15-23 in Greek are just one, very long sentence.

v.15-16 Paul prays because they already have faith and love "...ever since I heard of your faith and...love..." **THERE IS POWER IN PERSISTENT PRAYER**

v.17 Paul prays for a Spirit of wisdom and revelation (the Holy Spirit) with three results:

v.18 The Christians will realize #1 **THE CONCRETE HOPE OF THEIR CALLING--** Colossians 1.27 "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon were written at the same time and most likely in the same place. They were delivered by the same "mailman." Tychicus.)

Our hope is the reason for which we were saved, namely, to become like Jesus, to become completely ourselves and yet just like our big brother, Jesus. Being a Christian is the person of Jesus in our personalities.

However, becoming like Jesus requires pain and suffering (see Hebrews 2.10-11 and 5.8). We need wisdom and revelation so we will see the pain is productive and not give up.

v.18 The Christians will realize #2 **THE INEXHAUSTIBLE FORTUNE OF THE GLORY OF OURS INHERITANCE IN THE HOLY ONES.**

God's inheritance is the Church, the people of God. Christians possess a fortune in the resources of God in one another. God is designing miracles for each of us through each one of us. Those miracles will not come in any other way than through the people of God.

But Christians are weak and stupid people! That's right! That is why we need a Spirit of wisdom and revelation to get past the obvious and discover the treasures inside each of us.

v.19 The Christians will realize #3 **THE UNSURPASSED GREATNESS OF THE POWER OF GOD WORKING ON BEHALF OF US WHO BELIEVE.**

How great is this power? Look at the words Paul uses: power (*dynamite*), surpassing, greatness, working (*energy*), mighty, strength, 20 exerted (*energized*).

v.20 **DEMONSTRATED** in Jesus' resurrection

v.20 **DEMONSTRATED** in Jesus' exaltation v.21 far, far above everything. v.21 Jesus is Head over everything to benefit the Church v.23 and the Church is the fullness of Jesus Himself!!! We need wisdom and revelation to get past fear and negativity.