

THE EYES OF YOUR HEART (Ephesians 1:15-23)

Read Ephesians 1:15-23

Paul gave thanks for--

- Their faith in the Lord Jesus
- Their love for all the saints (15)
- What would the person who led you to Christ be giving thanks for in WIC today?

1/How Paul prayed

- continually
- to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ (not some other God)
- to the Father of glory (Ps 29:3; 24:7; Act 7:2; 1 Cor 2:8).

2/What Paul prayed

What he did NOT pray—

- to bind the devil
- for blessing
- for church growth
- for signs and wonders
- for conversions
- to ‘take the city’
- for people of destiny
- for prosperity

What he DID pray. For us to have—

- a spirit of wisdom
- a spirit of revelation
- in the knowledge of him...
- Spirit = Holy Spirit
- Wisdom = godly behaviour
- Revelation = godly insight
- Knowledge of Christ = ‘true, accurate, thorough... full knowledge’

What we are is more important than what we do!

3/The eyes of our hearts

Enlighten (*photidzo*) = illuminate, give light, shine upon. We need spiritual insight to grasp the great truths of God. Eg the story of Elisha and Arameans (2 Kings 6). Elisha prayed for his servant to ‘see’ spiritual reality. We need to have the eyes of our hearts enlightened to comprehend—

- The hope of his calling. We have a sure and certain hope in Christ. This keeps us going! See Eph 1:4,5,11,12; Rom 5:2-5; 8:24,25; 15:12,13; Eph 4:4; Tit 2:13; Heb 6:19; 10:23; 1 Pet 1:3

- The riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints. Riches = abundance. Glorious (lit. ‘of the glory’) = indescribable. Inheritance = free gift. Saints = all believers.
- His incomparably great power. Immeasurable = *hyperballo* (lit. throw beyond). Great = *megethos*. Power = *dunamis*. His dynamiac, methonic, hyperballistic power! The power at work in us is resurrection power! We share in Christ’s victory over sin and death

4/To us who believe

- Faith is the key to realising these great insights
- Do we believe what God says?

5/His incomparably great power

God did five incredible things when he opened the tomb...

5.1/God raised Jesus from the dead (20). This means we no longer fear death

See Hebrews 2:9,14,15

5.2/God seated Jesus at his right hand (20)

Seventeen times in the NT Christ is described as seated at God’s right hand. This is a position of authority. It was prophesied centuries before. See Psalm 110:1; Matt 22:44; Mk 12:36; Lk 10:42)

5.3/Far above all (21)

Jesus is not just above but far above all—

- Rule [*arche* = first, original]
- Authority [= right, privilege]
- Power [*dunamis* = force]
- Dominion [= lordship]
- Name [*onoma* = name, title]

Not only in this age but also in the one to come (21). Never will any rule, authority, dominion, power or name rise above the name of Jesus! See Phil 2:11

5.4/God put all things under his feet (22)

Everything is under the feet of Jesus. See Psalm 91:13; Luke 10:18. If the church is the body of Christ, then all things are under our feet, too! Satan, sin, disease, fear—we can tread them all under foot!

5.5/God made him head over everything (22)

Head = source of leadership, authority. See Eph 5:23. God gave Jesus to the Church as head over everything. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is at work in us who believe! This power raised Jesus to the right hand of God and put all things under his feet for the church. So they are under our feet as well!

6/Open eyes

Let’s pray that God will enlighten the eyes of our hearts to grasp these great truths! Amen!

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Read: Eph 1:15-23

1. Paul prays that we will have the Spirit of wisdom and revelation (17). Can you recall times in your life when the Spirit has revealed great *biblical* truths to you? How did it happen? What was revealed? Share with the group. (Be specific here—stick to the question!)
2. What do you think is the ‘hope of his calling’? (18). What sort of things can we hope for?
3. What are ‘the riches of his inheritance’? (18). What sort of things can we expect to inherit? (Which biblical passages might help you here?)
4. In what areas do we see the ‘incomparably great power’ of God work in our lives? For some examples, read Acts 1:8; 4:33; Romans 8:13; 1 Corinthians 1:18; Colossians 1:11. To what extent are these passages true of you personally?
5. How does Paul describe the power of God that is at work in us? (19,20)
6. What does it mean for us today that Jesus is seated ‘far above all’? (21)
7. What are some of the ‘all things’ God has placed under Jesus’ feet? (22). Find Bible passages that name some of them. What does this mean for you?
8. Discuss the five groups over which Jesus has been exalted (21). What is the difference between them? Is Paul talking of the material world or the spiritual world here? (Or both?)
9. Memorise verses 22 and 23.

Want to read more by Barry Chant? Easy. Just go to www.barrychant.com and browse around. There is something for everyone – Bible studies, children’s stories, articles, devotional materials, poems, short stories, Christian resources, pioneer Pentecostal research and more. And lots of it is free. Dr Barry Chant is a regular speaker at church services, seminars, conferences and conventions. Hundreds of thousands of his books have been sold around the world. He has degrees in arts, theology and ministry, a diploma in education and a PhD in history. He is Senior Pastor of the Wesley International Congregation in Sydney, Australia. He is an ordained minister in the CRC Churches International and was the founding president of Tabor College, Australia. He is married (to Vanessa) and they have three adult children and twelve grand-children.