

EPHESIANS

PAUL'S PRAYER



SUPPLEMENTAL VERSES

Col 4:12

1 Cor 13:12

Romans 8:29

Mark 1:35

Rev 7:9-17

Romans 12:2

Luke 22:39

I Thes 2: 19-20

Heb 4:12

Dan 6:10

John 5:17

2 Cor 10: 3-5

Col 4:2

Romans 1: 16

Eph 4: 11-13

Jer 9: 23-24

John 3: 5-6

Eph 2:10

John 17:3

Romans 8:29

Romans 1:20

Philippians 3: 7-8

John 3:5-6

Psalms 19:1-4

REVIEW WEEKS 1-5

Paul begins his letter to the Ephesians with a run on sentence that contains over 200 words in the Greek.

In opening remarks, He begins by praising God for the Spiritual Blessings that we have in Christ.

The Ephesians were rich materialistically...Paul wants them to know that they are rich spiritually.

He says: You are chosen, adopted, accepted, redeemed, forgiven, God has given us wisdom & understanding, He's given us an inheritance, and He has sealed us signifying that we are His!

We are rich spiritually!

PAUL'S PRISON PRAYER

The second half of chapter one is a prayer.

It is 1 of 4 prison prayers that Paul prays.

The other 3 prayers are recorded in Eph 3:14-21, Philemon 1: 9-11, Col 1: 9-12.

Why is it called a prison prayer?

Paul was a prisoner when he wrote it.

If you were in prison, and your life was on the line, what would you be praying for?

You might be praying for your release, maybe some comfort items, maybe to get to talk to some loved ones.

What does Paul pray for?

PAUL'S PRAYER IS FOR OTHERS, NOT HIMSELF

Let's read **Eph 1: 15 - 22**

Notice what Paul says in Eph 1:16 I haven't stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.

Paul is praying for the Ephesians...not for himself!!!

For many Christians, prayer is an afterthought.

It's something that we do when we feel like it or when we are in need.

When we pray in this manor, our prayers are usually focused on ourselves.

Paul wasn't praying for himself...he was praying for the church in Ephesus!

ARE YOU FERVENTLY PRAYING FOR OTHERS?

Are your prayers more focused on yourselves or others?

Col 4:12 Epaphrus is always wrestling (laboring, fervently, earnestly, striving) in prayer for you.

He was fervently praying for the Ephesians and the church!

What would it look like if we were praying fervently, for our church at Riva Trace, for the Pastors, the Elders, the Deacons, the Ministry leaders,...praying that God would watch over these people, giving them a sense of His presence, keeping them grounded in His word, filling them with His Spirit, watching over their families, using them in a powerful way. What do you think God would do here in this place?

How can we pray more fervently?

HAVE A DAILY TIME TO PRAY

1. Have a daily time to pray: A regular, uninterrupted time...When you are awake, alert, and have no distractions. First thing in the morning is what Jesus modeled.

Mark 1:35 very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus went up to pray.

Remember that the battle is won in prayer. Satan does not want you on your knees. There will be obstacles, interruptions, distractions thrown at you. Keep your appointment with God every day! He is there waiting for you!

If you begin your day with prayer and connecting with God...what do you think it will do for your day?

HAVE A PLACE TO PRAY

2. Have a place to pray: Notice that when Jesus prayed he went to a solitary place.

There was also a regular place he liked to go to for his time with the Father.

Luke 22:39 He like to go to the Mt of Olives.

There is something about having a daily time and a regular place to pray that puts you in the right frame of mind to pray.

Daniel 6:10 Daniel went home to his upstairs room with the windows open towards Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed.

HAVE A STRUCTURE OF PRAYER

ACTS

Adoration: Praises to God for who He is, what He has done and is doing!

Confession: Confess to Him your sins and ask for forgiveness

Thanksgiving: Thank him for his blessings in your lives and the way He has been working in you and around you.

Supplication: Bring your requests before God. Praying for others and lastly praying for yourself.

Have a list of people and things that you are regularly praying for.

DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO PRAYER

Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer being watchful and thankful

What does it mean to devote yourselves to prayer?

Devote= Give time to, concentrate on, diligently pursue, purpose yourself to do something.

Are you devoted to prayer? Or do you just pray when you feel like it?

Discipline where take you where motivation can't!!!

Daniel was a disciplined man, devoted to prayer, Epaphras was a man devoted to prayer, Paul was a man devoted to prayer, Jesus was disciplined & devoted to prayer!!

Look at what God did in them and through them!!!

WHAT DOES PAUL ASK FOR IN HIS PRAYER

Notice verse 17. Paul says “I keep asking”

Paul is continually praying for them, continually striving for them in prayer.

What is Paul asking for in His prayer?

1. That they would know Christ better
2. That they would know the hope to which they are called
3. That they would know His glorious inheritance
4. That they would know His incomparable great power

KNOWING CHRIST BETTER

verses 15-17

What is first thing Paul prays for?

That they may know him better. Verse 17. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know him better.

Why do you think Paul prays that they would know Christ better?

It's about having a relationship with God! Knowing Him, spending time with Him, walking with Him!

It's not about a religion or a belief system.

NOTHING ELSE MATTERS EXCEPT FOR KNOWING CHRIST!

So many times, when we come to read God's word, we come with the intention of learning some spiritual truth or we want to read something that will comfort us or give us hope.

Instead...what would it look like if...we read the Scripture and asked ourselves...What does this teach me about the character and nature of God? How does this passage help me know and understand God better?

Jeremiah 9:23-24 Let him who boasts...that he understands and knows me.

John 17:3 This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God & Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

Phillipians 3: 7-8 I consider everything a loss in view of knowing Christ.

Paul is praying that the Ephesians would know him better! That really is all that matters!

KNOW THE HOPE TO WHICH HE HAS CALLED YOU

Verse 18: I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you.

What is he praying for here?

What is “the hope to which he has called you”?

The word hope *is not a reference to uncertainty or a lack of confidence* in what the future will bring.

Hope = Confident anticipation

Confident anticipation that something will happen in the future.

WHAT DO WE HAVE CONFIDENT ANTICIPATION ABOUT?

We are confidently anticipating and waiting to see Him face to face and to be with Him forever (eternal life)!

1 Cor 13:12 Then we shall see him face to face & I shall know fully even as I am fully known.

In the book of *Genesis*, we are told about the times when God would meet with Adam and Eve. He would walk with them in the garden. Before the fall, Adam & Eve had a face to face relationship with God. God restores that ability for fellowship through Jesus. We eagerly await the time when we shall see him face to face again.

PAUL WANTS THE EYES OF OUR HEARTS TO BE ENLIGHTENED TO KNOW THIS HOPE

Paul is praying that the *eyes of our hearts* would be enlightened to know this hope.

What does this mean?

He doesn't want this to be an intellectual truth, He wants it to stir us up in the deepest parts of our being. He wants us to know in our hearts this truth! To have confident assurance in this hope that we will be with Him!

Paul wants this truth to affect us in our hearts. To inspire us, to move us, to motivate us, that we will see Him face to face and be with Him forever!

HIS GLORIOUS INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS

The third thing that Paul prays for is that they may know “the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints”

Notice that this time its not our inheritance that he is talking about...It's His inheritance...It's Christ's inheritance.

What is Christ's inheritance? It's us! It's all the saint's and believers who come to him through faith!

Why is it so glorious?

Think of the scene in **Rev 7: 9-17** people from every tribe, nation, and tongue praising God, serving him in His presence!

WHAT WILL WE GLORY IN? IS IT NOT YOU?

The saints are Christ's glorious inheritance...and we get to play a part in it!

1 Thes 2: 19-20 What is our hope our joy that we will glory in? Is it not you?

Paul says that when we come into the presence of God... & others are there, in the presence of God because they came to Christ through us...*that's what we will glory in!*

We are going to glory in the fact that others are there, sharing in this glorious inheritance, because God used us in their lives to save them.

That's what will bring us great joy when we come before God! We weren't just saved...but we brought others with us!!!

HIS INCOMPARABLY GREAT POWER

Verse 19...Paul prays that we would know his incomparably great power for us who believe.

This is an amazing prayer! Let's unpack what he is saying.

What descriptors does Paul use here?

1. **His:** Notice that it is God's power...not ours, not an energy source, not something that we conjure up. It is God's power alone that God uses as He sees fit!
2. **Incomparable:** Notice that God's power is incomparable to any other power. There is no other power in the world that can compare to God's power!
3. **Great:** the Greek word used here is "Kratos". It means mighty, strength, force. In our day...we might say "super power". It is power that is not human.

POWER

The word power that is used here in the Greek is: “Dunamis”

It's where we get our word Dynamite.

His incomparable great power is like dynamite. It's powerful, it's explosive, it represents miraculous power that is waiting to be activated!

Paul says this is the same power that God used when?

When He raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him in the Heavenly realms!

This miraculous, super, explosive, dynamite power is still at work today!!!

John 5:17 My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.

Paul is praying that we would “know it”. Why? ***Because it is for us who believe!***

DO YOU KNOW HIS POWER?

What good is a stick of dynamite if you don't know how to use it or when to use it?

What is God's great, mighty, incomparable power used for?

Part of living with "Spiritual Power"...is understanding how and when God uses His power...and "walking in step" with His Spirit.

Here are some of the ways that God uses His power:

1. Salvation: (spiritually dead people come back to life)
2. Sanctification: (demolishes strongholds in our lives and transforms who we are)
3. Service: (It comes out through using our spiritual gifts. We are his workmanship)
4. Circumstances (Praying for others & seeing God work in us and around us)

GOD'S POWER IN SALVATION

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the Gospel...because it is the power of God for salvation.

Paul says that the Gospel is God's power that he uses to save people!

What happens when a person is "saved"? The Holy Spirit comes into their hearts. Before salvation...they were spiritually dead...then when they come to Christ, they come to life spiritually! This is why Jesus said you must be "born again" **John 3: 5-6**.

It's miraculous right? Dead men and women so to speak are born again spiritually.

If we want to see God's power at work...we need to unite with Him in what His power is being used for on this earth!!! We need to join with God in sharing His Gospel!!! The message of God's grace and love through Christ.

SANCTIFICATION

What is sanctification?

It is the process of being transformed into the likeness of Christ.

Romans **8:29** tells us that we are predestined for this! We are predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son!

God wants us to look like Jesus...spiritually. His destination for us is Spiritual Maturity!

SEE GOD'S POWER IN SANCTIFICATION

We know that it is God's will & desire for us to be transformed and to look like Jesus!

This is a miraculous event that continues throughout the life of every believer!

We actually become changed. Inside & out! This is a miracle!

If you want to see God's Power at work...then we need to join with Him...not only in our own sanctification process...but in helping others to walk with God and to be transformed!

Coming along side others who are younger in the faith and helping them to walk with God, understand the Scripture, pray, understand their Spiritual Giftedness, and then becoming used by God themselves! When we do this...we will see God's Incomparable great power as He transforms lives!

HOW DOES GOD SANCTIFY US?

God uses many different things in our lives to “Grow us up” in Him!

Primarily He uses His word!

Romans 12:2 Be transformed by the renewing of your mind! Believe ---Think/Feel---Act

Personal times of daily devotion & reading His Word are crucial for this! **Heb 4:12** God’s word is living and active...it penetrates even to the dividing of the soul and spirit. There is POWER in God’s WORD!

2 Cor 10: 3-5 The weapons we fight with have “divine power”. They demolish strongholds!! What is a spiritual stronghold? It’s a place that is fortified.

He uses Bible Studies, Sermons, Christian Education, Worship & Prayer.

He uses others in our lives to help us and guide us. Pastors, Teachers, Godly friends, Counselors, Mentors.

He sometimes brings trials into our lives that challenge our faith and our character.

SERVICE THROUGH USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

We see God's Incomparable great power in Salvation, Sanctification...and also when we use our spiritual gifts to serve Him.

What is a spiritual gift? It is a gift that God has given to the believer to help build up and serve the body of Christ so that we may all be brought to maturity. Eph 4: 11-13

Notice...These are spiritual gifts...and when we use them...the Spirit of God fills us and empowers us in miraculous ways! God shows up (with His Incomparable great Power) when we serve Him and the Body of Christ using the Gifts He has given us!

WE ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP

Notice what he says in Eph 4:12...that these gifts are to help others be prepared for works of service.

Paul says in **Eph 2:10** That we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.

It is God's desire for us to serve Him using our Spiritual Gifts! This is when God's power shows up!

The word workmanship in the Greek is "poeima"...it's where we get our word poem.

Paul is saying that God uses His incomparable great power...not just to save you...not just to sanctify you, but to use you. You are His workmanship. You are God's Poem. His masterpiece. God wants to write a beautiful story about your life and the way He is going to use you for His purposes! There is no one else in the universe like you! God has a purpose for you! God has a spiritual mission for you! When we engage in using our spiritual gifts, we see God work in us and through us in miraculous ways!

POEIMA SHOWS UP IN ROMANS 1:20

This word shows up also in **Romans 1:20** Since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, ***His eternal power and divine nature***, have been clearly seen through what was ***made*** “poeima”.

Creation is one of God’s poems! All of creation declares the glory of God **Psalm 19:1-4**

God’s invisible attributes, his divine nature, his eternal power are displayed through creation.

And...When we serve God...using our Spiritual Gifts, His invisible attributes, His divine nature, and his eternal power are displayed through you! His other poem!

As we serve Him, the word becomes flesh in you! People get a glimpse of who God is and what he is like through you!

God’s Incomparable Great Power shows up in Creation and also in you as you serve Him using your spiritual gifts! You are God’s masterpiece, his workmanship, His poem, created in Christ to do good works!

CIRCUMSTANCES

We see God's Incomparable Great Power at work in Salvation, Sanctification, Service (using our Spiritual Gifts), and lastly, we see it in life's circumstances.

Most Christians aren't engaged with God in the first 3 that we have mentioned...they are only looking for him to show up in Power during life's circumstances.

As a result...they miss seeing and experiencing God's Incomparable Great Power regularly.

In order to see God work...we need to focus on the ways that God is already pre-disposed to working! Those things that he has already made known to us that are His will.

That being said...God does show up in Power in Life's circumstances!

HE WATCHES OVER US AND PROTECTS US

As sons and daughters of God, we enjoy the protection and the overseeing by God in our lives.

There are countless Scriptures that remind us of this:

Psalm 121: 3-8 He will not let your foot slip, he who watches over you will not slumber, indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you, the Lord is a shade at your right hand. The sun will not harm you by day nor the moon by night. The lord will keep you from all harm, he will watch over your life. The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

IS 43: 1-3 Do not fear, I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you, when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire you will not be burned, the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy one of Israel, your Savior.

Psalm 34:7 The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him and delivers them.

Psalm 27:5 For in the day of trouble, he will keep me safe in the shelter of his dwelling, he will hide me in the shelter of his tent, he will set me high upon a rock.

God Miraculously watched over both myself and my daughter from horrific car accidents!





HE ALSO BLESSES US THROUGH HIS POWER

As our Heavenly Father...he doesn't just watch over us...sometimes he works in miraculous ways in our lives.

Things that we might think are unusual coincidences...but they are not...they are God at work in our lives.

Story of God meeting a Young Life leaders financial need...story of God's provision in business...Story of Dennis dream and containers shipped to Cuba.

Eph 3:20 He is able to do immeasurably more than all we could ever ask or imagine...according to His power that is at work within us.

EVERYTHING IS UNDER HIM!

Verses 21- 23

God has raised Jesus from the dead...seated him at the right hand of God.

What is the significance of being seated? Resting...work is finished

What is the significance of being at the right hand?...place of authority

Far above all rule and authority, power, and dominion, and every title that can be given!

Everything is under is feet! Meaning...He is over everything...both in Heaven and on earth...and under the earth. Everything visible and invisible. Everything reports to Jesus! He is the King! Amen!

PAUL'S PRAYER

Paul prays for the Ephesians that:

1. That they would know Christ better
2. That they would know the hope to which they are called
3. That they would know His glorious inheritance
4. That they would know His incomparable great power

This is not just a prayer for the Ephesians...but for all of us who know Jesus!