

Something to Pray About

Ephesians 1:17-18 Sunday AM, May 21, 2023

Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 1:15-18 (NASB95) ¹⁵ For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

With his identity and mission firmly fixed with and under Christ, Paul gives testimony to God's grace to all His saints. What gracious gifts do these saints receive from God? **Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places**—specifically, they have been chosen **in Him before the foundation of the world**. And this choosing leads to God-defined mission and standing—He chooses saints **to be holy and blameless**. But Christians are not merely chosen, placed on God's side, and given a job, they are predestined to adoption as sons/daughters through Christ. Saints belong to Him—they are loved as His very own. How precious is this love-bought tie? It is blood-bought. God redeemed His own through the blood of the fully God/fully man Jesus—the only payment and person who could sufficiently pay for the otherwise impossible gift of forgiveness of our trespasses and give righteousness to make us truly righteous/holy before Him. This gift is sealed in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise, lifting our gaze from ourselves and all His gifts to God Himself, to the eternal where there is so much more—namely recognizing that all these gifts point to the time we receive the full realization of His gracious inheritance—the glorious welcoming by God into His eternal kingdom because we have been redeemed as His own possession! All this leads Paul to pray for the saints at Ephesus with thanksgiving. These believers are blessed. Paul is blessed. And so are you IF you are truly born again! Give thanks to the Father! Give thanks to the Son! Give thanks to the Spirit! Hopefully you can sing this song with more and more meaning as it becomes more familiar to you.

***Hymn (Powerpoint): O Give Thanks**

Gratitude because of God's goodness to you and to those saved leads you to continue to come to One so gracious. **For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.** From whom do you need wisdom? The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory. What do you know of Him? There is wisdom, a specific way forward INSIDE that knowledge. This song prays for life inside God's character. Pray this now and throughout week.

***Hymn #390: May the Mind of Christ, My Savior *Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn Choir: I Will Arise**

Scripture: Matthew 19:16–30 (NASB95) And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" ¹⁷ And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is *only* One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." ¹⁸ Then he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS; ¹⁹ HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."²⁰ The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?" ²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."²² But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property. ²³ And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."²⁵ When the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁶ And looking at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."²⁷ Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?" ²⁸ And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰ "But many *who are* first will be last; and *the last*, first.

Offering: *Doxology:

Paul continues, **I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints**, To be faithful in your calling—fulfilling the mission, the purpose for His calling, you must see the hope of that calling—riches, rewards, benefits—the ONES we've been studying in these first verses. One of the things keeping us from studying God's rich rewards is us studying and maintaining other rewards. Did you hear this sobering lesson played out from one SEEKING eternal life FROM Jesus? He missed the treasure of heaven because of his other treasures. What keeps you from studying heaven's treasures? Sing this account.

***Hymn (Powerpoint): Simple Living**

Nice song, sobering account. LEARN from it. But learning from it in a way that leads to true reward from God comes from looking to God for faithfulness, not to yourself. And part of what will make you faithful to study heaven's rewards will be to study the faithfulness of the One who calls you to Himself. If His call is backed by His ability to back up that call and give all He promised, then we must look to Him for what we cannot ever do ourselves. You will know that you are doing it correctly when alongside your prayers for help and victory over sin, you see beyond your need to His gracious faithful love and care inside history—including allowing you to hear and sing of Him together with many true believers today! As Pastor Jahn prepares to preach, ask God to help your mind be alert to wander INSIDE His Word, that you might grow to see more of the hope of His calling, leading to your faithfulness in service to Him!

***Hymn #43: Great is Thy Faithfulness**

Message: Something to Pray About Ephesians 1:17-18

***Hymn #395: Teach Me Thy Way *Prayer**