

# RICH *in* GRACE

## *Sermon Series in Ephesians*

**Preparing for Small Group:** Read the passage below, and answer the following questions.

- (1) What do these verses tell me about God?
- (2) What do these verses tell me about sinful humanity?
- (3) What do these verses tell me about Jesus?
- (4) What does God want me to know?
- (5) What does God want me to do?

---

### **“I’m Praying for You”**

*Ephesians 1:15-23*

**Main Point:** With thanksgiving, we should pray for each other.

*How and why we should pray for each other?*

#### **Pray for others to have godly wisdom and to know God more (15-17).**

As Paul thought about the way that the believers in Ephesus loved one another and loved Jesus, his heart filled with thanksgiving for what God was doing in their lives. He was thankful for these believers, who were a strong witness for Jesus, and with a heart of thanksgiving, he was prayerful for these believers for their continued life in Christ. Paul prayed for the two most important things these believers needed in order to grow and to protect their faith and their witness for Jesus. He prayed for godly wisdom so that the believers would know how to live for Christ in a world that’s increasing anti-Christ. Paul prayed that the believers would know God even more, growing their faith and increasing their witness for the Lord. As believers who still live in a fallen world, we still need these two things in our lives today. More than ever, God's people need His wisdom to live in a world that is increasing anti-Christ. God's people need the Lord to strengthen their faith, love, and life in Him each and every day. Today, we still need to pray for each other for godly wisdom and to know God more.

1. Are you thankful for other believers? What are some things that tend to detract from your thankfulness for other believers in the church? Share, and discuss. How can you protect thankfulness to God in your heart?
2. Are you praying for the spiritual health of other believers? Why, or why not? What would it look like for your small group to pray regularly for spiritual growth in your lives and in the lives of others in the church?
3. Discuss the “Spirit of wisdom” that Paul mentions in verse 17. What does he mean? Why does Paul want the believers to have this “Spirit of wisdom?” Why do we need this today?
4. Discuss the “revelation of the knowledge of Him” in verse 17. Why is the knowledge of God important in the life of a believer?
5. Take time right now to break-up into groups of two or three and to pray for each other, as well as others, in our faith family.

### ***Knowing God and His wisdom brings hope (18).***

Paul explained that his desire for these believers was to know God more and to have godly wisdom in their lives so that the believers in Ephesus would have hope. Paul wanted them to know the hope they had in Jesus Christ, and specifically, Paul wanted them — and you today — to gain hope through understanding that

- *Hope is in the riches of your salvation in Christ (18);*
- *Hope is in the power of God in you (19); and*
- *Hope is in the sufficiency of Jesus (20-23).*

Paul's already talked about inheritance, pointing to the rich inheritance that believers have in Jesus, but this time, he also reminded them that the riches of that inheritance included the fact that they were Christ's inheritance too! In Christ, believers have an eternal, unchangeable, indescribable inheritance through God's grace, and their eternal salvation should be something that brings extraordinary hope into their lives. In verse 19, Paul encouraged the believers to hope in the power of God that was available to them. Connecting verses 19 and 20, Paul reminded the believers that they could have hope because of the resurrection power of God that was available to them and at work in them. Ultimately, all of their hope in these spiritual blessings was grounded in the sufficiency of Jesus Christ! Paul recounted the hope-filled truth that Jesus was raised from the dead, reigning over all and filling His body — the church — with all that's needed in everything and every way. Today, knowing God and His wisdom still brings hope in these same ways into the lives of those who believe!

1. What is hope? How does knowing God impact hope in your life? How does knowing God's wisdom impact hope in your life? Discuss these questions, and share personal testimonies of when and how God provided hope in your life through knowing Him and His wisdom.
2. Discuss the riches of your salvation in Jesus? What does that mean? How are believers the inheritance of Jesus? How does this fact impact the richness of our inheritance in Jesus?
3. Read verse 19. What does the "immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe" mean? The power towards us is said to be according to "His great might," which God's Word goes on in the following verses to connect to the resurrection and reign of Jesus. What does this mean in a practical way in our lives?
4. Do you know someone who needs hope in their lives right now? Take time to share and to pray for them in your group, and then discuss how you will share what you've learned in these verses with them in the coming week.
5. What area of hope do you struggle with most in your life right now? Why? Close in prayer for one another, praying that God will grow and protect your hope in Jesus.