

## **PAUL AT PRAYER**

Thursday, April 11

Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

**Ephesians 1:16** *I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. 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.*

These verses contain an extended prayer by the apostle for the church. The main focus of this prayer is that believers would know God better. This is done through the Spirit's wisdom opening our eyes to the hope of God's call (1:17-18a), the riches of God's inheritance (1:18b), and the greatness of God's power (1:19-23).

We are called to be like Christ (Romans 8:29-30). Our great hope (assurance) is that when Christ returns He will finish the job He has begun in our lives (Philippians 1:6). This hope should spur us on to live for Christ and build a growing, personal relationship with Him.

Our inheritance in heaven centers on the fact that we will be with the Lord. We are precious to God because we are His treasure. This should spur us to live to please God.

Paul uses several Greek words to describe God's power. (1) *dúnamis* – we get our English words dynamic and dynamite from this word, (2) *enérgeia* – we get our word energy from this word, (3) *ischús* – power that overcomes resistance, (4) *krátos* – presence of strength or might. This great power was shown in the resurrection of Christ. It is also shown in Christ's position as head of the church. It is to this church that Christ displays His power by filling the members of His body with His blessings and power for service.

**LESSON ONE:** “Remembering You in My Prayers.” Notice that Paul does not spend time praying for the physical needs of people. He focuses on the more important need for a strong relationship with the Lord. While praying for physical needs is necessary, it cannot be the only thing we pray about. We must also pray for the spiritual needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Read over Paul's prayer several times and write down the spiritual issues he mentions. Then add these to your list as you pray for people.

**LESSON TWO:** “That You May Know Him Better.” The Christian life is not about obeying a bunch of rules, going to church, or being a good person. The Christian life is about knowing God better every day. Those other things might be helpful, but your quest is to have an intimate relationship with God so you become like Jesus Christ. What are some key ways you can know God better? Chisel out some quality and quantity time with God this week. Meditate on His Word and prayer.

**LESSON THREE:** “His Incomparably Great Power.” Why are we so timid about sharing our faith and living for the Lord? The power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him at the right hand of the Father is available to all believers through the Holy Spirit. Maybe we cannot tap into God's power because we don't have a strong relationship with Him. Spend some time praying about areas you need to see God's power working in and through your life. Then step out in faith depending on His power and not your own.