

Ephesians 1:17-19

It seems to me that there is great confusion about what God is busy doing in the life of believers. We live in a world in which any cooky or bizarre story is supposed proof of God's power in the lives of His children, but very little concern is given to the biblical witness of His power as it is fleshed out in our lives according to His own revelation. Today's passage is incredibly valuable as it sheds light on the beauty and blessing we (as redeemed children of God) can expect to receive from the Lord. Paul continues His theme of praying for believers by naming some of the specific prayer requests he offers on behalf of his beloved church. May we study this text in order to be humbled and thankful for all that God is doing and reminded of how we should pray for our brothers and sisters in order that they would grow in the blessing of the Gospel as well.

1. Echoes of the Trinity

- a. This isn't the main point, but I do think it wise to point out the declaration of the work of our Triune God in redemption
- b. Notice here that all three members of the Trinity are mentioned
 - i. God the Son is alluded to here (particularly important contextually as the Gospel of Christ revolves around His death and resurrection)
 - ii. God the Father is the One who is the giver of the gift of the Spirit
 - iii. God the Spirit is the One who provides the blessings that are enumerated for us here
- c. We see, in this passage, more evidence for the Trinity both as indicative of the essence of God and as necessary in accomplishing redemption
 - i. Consider, for a moment, what would happen to us if one of the members of the Godhead did not exist
 1. No Father, no plan of redemption
 2. No Son, no accomplishment of redemption
 3. No Spirit, no application of redemption

2. The Blessings of salvation

- a. You will notice that Paul's desire here is for the Ephesians to be blessed in light of the salvation they have received
- b. The term "enlightened" is a very important, biblical word
 - i. It means to shine on something, thereby enabling the eye to see what would otherwise be hidden
 - ii. In biblical parlance, "enlightenment" is associated with spiritual sight which is a gift of God
 - iii. Notice again here that God is the main mover

1. Paul's prayers for the Ephesians is grounded in God's Providential work on their behalf
 2. He knows that the Spirit of God is the One who gives sight to God's people and the effect of that sight is listed for the reader as follows
- c. First, those who have been "enlightened" know "hope"
- i. The word "hope" literally means "expectation"
 - ii. It refers to the assured confidence that God is going to fulfill all of His saving promises to believers
 - iii. This hope is not universal, instead it is pressed upon the souls of those who have been saved
 - iv. The world has no hope because those who are still in their sins still live under the tyranny of death
 - v. Hope comes only to those who have come to see and savor the victorious death and resurrection of Christ which is applied to them by faith
 - vi. If you are a believer today, you have an assured and confident hope that your eternity is secure
 - vii. This is a function of the Spirit
 1. The Spirit of God gives us the ability to see the resurrected Son of God and in His resurrection, we have assurance that we will rise too (see 1 Corinthians 15)
 2. Consequently, the believer has an unshakable confidence that cannot be altered or eroded by any threat the world might offer
- d. Second, those who have been "enlightened" come to know "the riches of His glorious inheritance"
- i. What does this phrase mean?
 1. Notice whose inheritance is in view... it is "His"
 2. What is in view here is the perspective of God who looks upon His children as His treasured inheritance
 3. The word inheritance means, the portion or heritage which one receives by virtue of birth or by special gift from someone who has died
 - ii. Literally, Paul prays for believers to come to see the worth of the saints in the eyesight of the Lord
 1. He views His children as "riches"
 2. When I know how much I am worth in the eyes of others, I am richly blessed!

3. This is the goal that is set forth here... the Spirit shows us the value of our souls to the Lord and this increases our hope and peace and joy because we come to know that our God would never forsake that which He died to redeem and which He now treasures
- e. Third, those who have been “enlightened” see the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us
 - i. There are few things that give a child more peace than knowing that their parents are powerful enough to defend them
 - ii. Paul’s goal in this portion of the prayer is for believers to see in the Gospel evidence of the power of God to protect and preserve His own