

# Ephesians 1:15-23

PRAYERS THAT PLEASE THE FATHER

# Ephesians 1:15-23

## ▶ Prayer

### ▶ Resists the assaults of Satan

▶ Matthew 23:41 & Ephesians 6:13-20

### ▶ Receives the gifts of grace

▶ Acts 4:31

### ▶ Seals Deliverance, healing and restoration for the Saints

▶ Ephesians 6:18, James 5:15, 1 John 5:16

### ▶ Supports Evangelism

▶ Colossians 4:3-4

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ Prayer
  - ▶ Fellowship and communion with God involving adoration, worship, praise, thanksgiving, supplication, petition, confession, repentance, meditation, dedications, and intercession.
- ▶ Wonderful model of how to pray for those we love and for whom we have been given responsibility to care for in the faith.

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ We discovered that we were “born rich” when we trusted Christ. But this is not enough, for we must grow in our understanding of our riches if we are ever going to use them to the glory of God. Too many Christians have never “read the bankbook” to find out the vast spiritual wealth that God has put to their account through Jesus Christ. They are like the late newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst, who invested a fortune collecting art treasures from around the world. One day Mr. Hearst found a description of some valuable items that he felt he must own, so he sent his agent abroad to find them. After months of searching, the agent reported that he had finally found the treasures. They were in Mr. Hearst’s warehouse.
  - ▶ What as Christians can we learn from this story?

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ 1:15 Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for God's people everywhere,
- ▶ 1:16 I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly,
- ▶ 1:17 asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God.
- ▶ 1:18 I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ 1:19 I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power
- ▶ 1:20 that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.
- ▶ 1:21 Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come.
- ▶ 1:22 God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church.
- ▶ 1:23 And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ 1:15 Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your **love for God's people everywhere**,
  - ▶ Described as “the hallmark of God's people”
- ▶ 1:16 I **have not stopped** thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly,
  - ▶ Do Not Cease – an echo of Thessalonians 5:17 “Pray without ceasing”



# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ 1:17 asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you **spiritual wisdom and insight** so that you might grow in your **knowledge of God**.
  - ▶ Spiritual Wisdom and Insight
    - ▶ A disposition of Godly knowledge and revelation that is possible only for a redeemed, sanctified mind.
    - ▶ These are not to be interpreted as mystical. “Wisdom” concerns practical, workable principles; “insight” refers to clear perception and applicable understanding. The Holy Spirit is the divine and supernatural source of both.
  - ▶ Knowledge of God – This is the highest possible knowledge. Paul understood a man really cannot understand much of anything else without a knowledge of God.



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- ▶ 1:18 I pray that your hearts will be **flooded with light** so that you can understand the confident **hope** he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.
  - ▶ Flooded with light – means enlightened, illumined, or given light; a reference to the Holy Spirit’s ministry of continually illuminating spiritual truth for the child of God.
  - ▶ Hope – This doesn’t mean “I hope so,” like hoping you get a raise or bonus at work. It carries with it “assurance for the future.” When we were lost, we were “without hope” but in Jesus Christ, we have a “living hope” that encourages us day by day.
  - ▶ Mirror Note: We are God’s assets and the measure of His wealth!

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ 1:19 I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty **power**
  - ▶ Power – Dominion, strength, manifested power. The word especially signifies exerted strength, power shown effectively in a reigning authority. Primarily refers to God's kingdom authority, dominion, and majesty.
- ▶ 1:17-19 – The Spirit of Revelation (Prophecy): The Holy Spirit gives “revelation,” but we should never give “revelation” more authority than his word. (Matthew 7:24-29)

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ 1:20 that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the **heavenly realms**.
  - ▶ Heavenly Realms – Does not refer to heaven in the sense of it being the destined home of the redeemed. Rather, the Greek word here refers to the invisible realm that surrounds our present daily situation, the arena or sphere of spiritual action and activity. Christ's authority, which encompasses every age and exceeds every age and exceeds every known power, is here and now.

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ 1:21 Now he is far above any **ruler or authority or power or leader** or anything else—not only in this **world** but also in the world to come.
  - ▶ "principality and power and might and dominion"
    - ▶ Terms used frequently in Jewish writings to designate the various ranks of angelic powers.
    - ▶ Terms consistently used for ruling authorities in both the visible and the invisible realms. The New Testament reveals an invisible hierarchy of evil power who deceive and manipulate human behavior, thereby advancing satanic strategies. Christ Himself and all who are in Christ are shown to be placed in authority above these powers, on authority that only spiritual warfare can assert, demonstrate, and sustain. (Eph 6:12)
  - ▶ World – Denotes an indefinitely long period, with emphasis on the characteristics of the period rather than on its duration.

# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ 1:22 God has **put** all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church.
  - ▶ Put – Literally means “to stand under”. The word suggests obedience, submission, subservience, subjection. The divine gift of prophetic utterance is put under the control and responsibility of the possessor.
- ▶ 1:23 And the church is **his body**; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.
  - ▶ His Body – The primary thrust of this letter is to show the church as the present, physical, presence of Christ. The church is to be filled with Him by the Holy Spirit, and assigned by the Lord Jesus to represent Him to society to minister His life, love, and power.

# Ephesians 1:15-23

For Christians, prayer is like breathing. You don't have to think to breathe because the atmosphere exerts pressure on your lungs and forces you to breathe. That's why it is more difficult to hold your breath than it is to breathe. Similarly, when you're born into the family of God, you enter into a spiritual atmosphere wherein God's presence and grace exert pressure, or influence, on your life. Prayer is the normal response to that pressure. As believers we have all entered the divine atmosphere to breathe the air of prayer. Only then can we survive in the darkness of the world.

Unfortunately many believers hold their spiritual breaths for long periods, thinking brief moments with God are sufficient to allow them to survive. But such restricting of their spiritual intake is caused by sinful desires. The fact is, every believer must be continually in the presence of God, constantly breathing in His truths to be fully functional. God's deeper truths cannot be seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, or comprehended by our reason or intuition. They are revealed only to those who love Him.



# Ephesians 1:15-23

- ▶ Someone has said, “The purpose of prayer is not to inform God of our needs, but to invite Him to rule our lives.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- ▶ In what ways do you need the eyes of understanding to be enlightened? How can you begin fully appreciating the riches of God's grace in your life?
- ▶ Write a prayer of thanks to God in response to this lesson.
- ▶ Colossians 1:9-12 show how Paul and his associates prayed for the Colossian believers under their care.