

The Church, God's Plan for This Age: What God Wants You to Know

Ephesians 1:15-23

June 14, 2020

Our supreme need is to know God. This is so important because we tend to drift toward our mental image of God. Therefore, what we believe God to be is of utmost importance.

Paul has just spent the first 14 verses expounding the riches that God has given to believers in Christ; we've been chosen in Christ by God the Father (1:4-6), redeemed by the Son (7-12), and sealed by the Holy Spirit (13-14).

In this intercessory prayer, Paul prays that these immensely blessed believers would not just know God and His blessings intellectually, but experientially. In verses 15-23, we'll learn not only how we should pray for one another, but we'll also learn what God wants believers to know experientially!

1. Know God's Person (15-17).

- a. We must be more in love with our Heavenly Father than we are with His blessings (15-17).
 - i. We came to know God on a very basic level at salvation – “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).
 - ii. We must go beyond that level to an ever-deepening relationship with God – “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings...” (Philippians 3:10).
- b. We must pray that God would give us a deeper understanding of Him (15-17).
 - i. Like Paul, we should thank God for the faith and love exhibited in the lives of the believers around us, but we must intercede for one another that we continue to go deeper in our relationship with God (15-16). Praying for our loved ones to be saved is just the beginning! Keep praying for growth in their relationship with God!
 - ii. He is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ to Whom we now have access through Jesus our Mediator (17a).
 - iii. He is the Father of glory Whom we must now live to glorify (17b).
- c. We must pray for enlightenment (17c).
 - i. The Holy Spirit reveals God through the Word of God.
 - ii. Psalm 119:18 Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

2. Know God's Hope (18).

- a. Our calling gives us hope!
 - i. 1 Timothy 1:9-10 “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:”
 - ii. 1 Peter 2:9 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”
- b. We are God's inheritance!
 - i. God called Israel His inheritance (Deuteronomy 4:20, 32:9-10).
 - ii. Here in verse 18, the church is called God's inheritance!
 - iii. We are God's treasured possession!

3. Know God's Power (19-23).

- a. God offers us His immeasurable, mighty power (19).
 - i. God's power is so extreme that He uses four different terms to describe it:
 1. Dunamis – “power
 2. Energia – “working”
 3. Kratos – “mighty”
 4. Ischus – “power”
 - ii. God's power is available to the believer by faith (Matthew 9:27-29).
- b. God demonstrated his power in Christ (20-23).

- i. God's power raised Christ from the dead (20a).
- ii. God's power placed Christ at God's right hand (20b).
 - 1. Matthew 28:19 "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
 - 2. Philippians 2:9-11 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
- iii. God's power placed Christ above all (21).
 - 1. He is above every spiritual dominion.
 - 2. He is above every earthly dominion both present and future.
- c. God's demonstrates His power through the church (22-23).
 - i. Christ is the head of the church.
 - 1. Christ is our spiritual head.
 - 2. We share his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation (2:6).
 - 3. Therefore, all things are under our feet as well!
 - ii. The church is His body on earth.
 - 1. The church is to be the embodiment of God's mighty power (3:20)!
 - 2. The church lives out this power through the proclamation of the gospel.
 - a. Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Conclusion:

- 1. Since knowing God is our supreme need, do you know God personally?
- 2. Are you more in love with God's blessings than you are with Him?
- 3. Are you standing confidently on the hope God extends to you?
- 4. Are you expressing God's mighty power in living and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ?