

# ONE - Study of Ephesians

## Part 2 - For This Reason

Origin stories, to be a good origin story, needs a mysterious and exciting history that gets revealed and impacts our hero

There's a deep and abiding hunger in people to find that there is something 'greater than' in the past, something that picks them up out of the mundane, will move us from an obscure existence walking through the world, and makes us something more...

Ecclesiastes 3:11

### **Previously, on Ephesians...**

Paul has introduced himself, and set up the fact that he is writing to the saints in Ephesus, and we know from the way he opens up the truth about God, that he's writing to the wider church, and as we know now, the church throughout the world and throughout history. (Take a listen to our Bible Streams podcast if you want more background and some deeper detail on the text.)

From the first part of chapter 1:

- God has had a master plan all along
- That God has made us all sons and daughters, through what Jesus has done for us
- And all of this is to the praise of His glory!

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. -

EPHESIANS 1:15-23 (ESV)

### **Thanksgiving**

Paul had left Timothy in charge, and no doubt it was through him that Paul had 'heard of their faith and their love for others.

And why? Because it's producing fruit!

Every spiritual blessing that the Father has given can end up noticeably changing how we live our lives.

### **Intercession**

Ephesians 1:16-17

The truth is that the Holy Spirit is the real gift, and the gifts and fruit are what He chooses to do through, with and in us.

I find it so amazing that the fruit of the believers' lives causes Paul to overflow with thanksgiving. What an invitation to us: when we look around at what God is doing in the lives of those in our family, it's an invitation to overflow with thanksgiving!

### **What the Spirit Does**

Ephesians 1:18-19

Did you realise that, when you said yes to Jesus as Lord of your life, He opened your eyes to the reality of Him?

Are the eyes of our hearts still open, or have we tried to put a veil over them? Have they got dirty and dusty from mis-use or under-use?

### **Three Things Paul Wants Us to Know**

- The hope he has called us to (past – what He has done)
- The riches of God's inheritance in the saints (future – what He will get)
- The greatness of God's power to us believers (present – into vv20-23)

Ephesians 1:19-21

If Christ is raised from the dead, we have hope for the future, and Spirit-empowered purpose for today.

1 Corinthians 15:17-19

Romans 8:11

### **Praise God!**

Ephesians 1:22-23 (ESV)

God set it up that we, the church (and the whole church, not just you and me, but the church past and global) is the FULLNESS of Jesus!

We can no longer treat our faith a set of beliefs that we can attest to with knowledge alone but we are to live out the supernatural power of God at work in us as we are in Christ.

Hebrews 12:22-24

## Discussion Questions

1. How does 'eternity in your heart' present itself in your life? What are your dreams and desires that go beyond your normal life
2. What stood out as interesting or unusual from this week's passage: Ephesians 1:15-23?
3. What are the aspects of your life that someone who has discipled you could give thanks for? What do you give thanks about in the lives of others?
4. What condition are the 'eyes of your heart' in at the moment? What do you need to do about that?
5. How does your life reflect the statement: "if Christ is raised from the dead, we have hope for the future, and Spirit-empowered purpose for today"?
6. "We can no longer treat our faith a set of beliefs that we can attest to with knowledge alone but we are to live out the supernatural power of God at work in us as we are in Christ." Discuss this statement, and what you need to invite God to do in your life to continue to journey toward this.
7. Spend some time praying into this for the members of your group, or for yourself. Spend time in repentance for where you have let the real power of God become distant, abstract or academic; or where you have put the emphasis on your and your preferences, instead of God's word and declaration over you.
8. Instigate a regular time of thanksgiving for what God has done for you through Jesus, and for the hope we have today and forever because of the great power He has worked in us.