"SPIRITUAL REALITIES WE NEED TO KNOW"

Ephesians 1:15-19

2-8-2023

INTRODUCTION:

Verses 15-23 reveal the prayer life of Paul. He prayed that believers would know certain realities.

***Some things are too important to not know!**

What are the spiritual realities that we all need to know?

I. We need to know HIM (v. 17-18a)

II. We need to know THE CERTAINTY OF HIS SALVATION (v. 18b)

III. We need to know THE RICHES OF HIS INHERITANCE (v. 18c)

IV. We need to know THE GREATNESS OF HIS POWER (v. 19)

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V. 15

"After I heard" - an evidence that this Epistle was an encyclical letter that went to more churches than just Ephesus.

NOTE: The object of their faith is the Lord Jesus (Acts 16:31; 4:12)

Note the order: "Faith" then "love"

Faith comes before love (cp. same order in Col. 1:4)

Love is the result of true saving faith (I Jn. 4:7)

True faith produces a true love -
--unconditional love ("agape" - Rom. 5:8)
--impartial love - "all the saints"

Sadly, in time, the Ephesians "left their first love" (Rev. 2:2-4)

Faith & love must be kept in balance. Ill. of the extreems today of faith without love ("heresy hunters, eager to tear down that which is wrong, but do little to build up what is good) The opposite extreem is love without faith (a wishy-washy, sloppy agape, comromising tolerance of doctrinal error in the name of "love")

V. 16
Paul thanked God for their faith and love because He is the giver of it!

Paul knew the importance of prayer and he knew the most vital needs to pray about.After stating their awesome and unlimited blessings in Christ, Paul now prays that they would fully know and appreciate those blessings.

Cp. Paul's prayer in: Eph. 3:14-19
Col. 1:9-11

V. 17

"**that** (v. 17)... **that ye may know"** (v. 18) = the content of Paul's prayer. He prayed with purpose; with a special goal in mind.

***Some things are too important to not know!**

What are the spiritual realities that we all need to know?

What did Paul pray about?

I. We need to know HIM (v. 17-18a)

V. 17

The fact that Paul prayed about such wisdom and insight shows that we depend on God to give us wisdom and insight. he is the source of both.

"Wisdom" = keen insight that is practical not merely theoretical.

"Revelation" - to unveil, "reveal," unfold; lit. to remove the veil and open up that which has been hidden from view.

Paul is not saying that they should seek new revelation about God, but rather that they would gain new insight into the revelation that has already been given. That they would gain a deeper perception of the truth about God, through the word Paul is about to reveal to them.

"The spirit of wisdom and revelation" = a wise spirit and an insightful spirit.

"Knowledge" = direct knowledge; not just a knowing about (head knowledge) but a close, life-changing, personal knowledge.

To know God is man's highest ambition (Jer. 9:23-24)

To know His will (plan is life's greatest privilege.

To know who He is and what He has done; His attributes (holiness, righteousness, graciousness, mercy, love, patience, etc.); and His actions (His mighty works - the chief one being Calvary).

V. 18a

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened" - a statement referring to the spiritual illumination which occurred by the Holy Spirit at conversion.

--Acts 26:18 - "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

--II Cor. 4:3-4 - "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

(cp. Heb. 6:4, 10:32)

Prior to this enlightenment, man had no capacity to <u>know</u> God. We knew <u>about</u> God (Rom. 1:19-20), but were spiritual blind (I Cor. 2:14)

"Understanding" = lit. <u>heart</u>, the inner core of your being.

Your heart has <u>eyes</u>! It can see, perceive, and <u>know</u>!

"Hope" = confidence; assurance (cp. Eph. 6:17 - helmet of salvation = the assurance of salvation)

Hymn - "Blessed Assurance"; "I know Whom I Have Believed"

II. We need to know <u>THE CERTAINTY OF HIS SALVATION</u> (v. 18b)

"Hope" = salvation is a know so, not a "hope so" int he way we use the term today.

"Calling" - invitation; God's invitation to eternal life is legitimate, real, and trustworthy! (EX: gettinginvitedtosomethingandfindingithardtobelievetheywould invite you)

"The <u>hope</u> of his <u>calling</u>" = the <u>certainty</u> of God's <u>invitation</u> to salvation. In other words, Paul wanted them to be secure (not doubting) in their eternal salvation.

The reason Paul would pray such a prayer (regarding assurance of salvation) is because he knew what the accuser of the brethren would be up to.

III. We need to know <u>THE RICHES OF HIS INHERITANCE</u> (v. 18c)

"The riches" of the glory of his inheritance" - the wealth of His glorious Heaven (which we inherited).

We are so blessed! (Ephes. 1:3)

Ill. William Randolph Hearst & the valuable piece of are (MacArthur, p.41)

"In the saints" = in [store for] the saints. Only the saints (believers) will experience His inheritance (Jn. 3:3, 7)

IV. We need to know <u>THE GREATNESS OF HIS POWER</u> (v. 19)

"Exceeding" - God's power goes beyond, exceeds, or surpasses anything!

"His power" - God's mighty ability. "God is able to save to the <u>uttermost</u>!"

"According to..." = this reference to "power" when tied to verse 20 refers to the power which raised Christ from the dead. This is the same resurrection power that Paul looked forward to (Phil. 3:10 - "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.")

"To usward who believe" - such resurrection power will be realized only by the saved.