

Episode #2-40 – Ephesians 1 Part 6: Paul Prays for Us In Christ

I. The purpose of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians is to tell us what God's present purpose is in all His work today. This includes His work in the world and in the individual believer. Ephesians is the book of God's present purpose, the book of being "in Christ," and the book of God's grace.

II. The longest sentence in the Bible is found in Ephesians 1:3-14. From verse 3, we learned that the subject is "God," the verb is "blesses," and the direct object is "us," those who are "in Christ." God makes these things true of us, and then He speaks well of us about them. Therefore, this sentence is a long statement of all the glorious things God makes true of us in Christ. In verses 10-12, we learned that when the time is right, He will sum up everything in Christ, in whom our lot is cast, so that we who have hoped in advance in Him might extol His glory.

III. Ephesians 1:13-14. Concluding this huge sentence.

A. Verse 13. How we received this hope.

1. Paul switches from "we" to "you," for this was not true of him. Paul hoped upon seeing the Lord from heaven.
2. We believe upon hearing the Word without seeing. John 20:29.
3. What we must hear is the gospel of our salvation. A "gospel" is a "good message," good because it is right. A gospel is spoken in view of a need, and contains an element of promise.
4. Upon believing, we are sealed with the Spirit. Has to do with the promise. What promise? Regarding our full portion.

B. Verse 14. He is the earnest (down payment, earnest money) of our full portion yet to come. This will be when we receive all we will receive in His kingdom. This redemption of what has been purchased will be for the extolling of His glory through the gracious portion we will receive.

IV. Ephesians 1:15-2:3. Now Paul prays in light of all this.

A. Verse 15. Paul heard of their faith.

1. He was not personally acquainted with those he is writing to, but has heard a good report of them. This shows it was not the Ephesians he knew so well back in the Acts period.
2. He also heard of the love they have to all the saints. Many of these new believers were Gentiles. They had not grown up learning of the Israelite fathers, any more than I know the heroes of Australia or West Africa. Yet now they had come to know them, and had love for all the saints. Also, for the largely Jewish saints of the Acts period. Their newfound faith in God resulted in them loving all the saints of past and present.

B. Verse 16. Paul is delighted by these things, and gives thanks for them constantly in prayer.

C. Verse 17. His prayer is that they will have a spirit (mind) of wisdom and revelation in the realization of Him. We need to know Christ! This is our greatest need.

V. Conclusion: Paul concludes the longest sentence in the Bible by speaking of the fact that we today do not believe as he did: after seeing a vision of Christ from heaven. Rather, we believe only upon hearing, John 20:29. After believing, we are sealed with the Spirit of promise, who is the earnest of our full portion before we redeem it. Then, Paul begins to pray in light of all this. He is thankful for the good report he has heard of these new believers, but more than anything, he wants them to know Christ. This is our greatest need as well!