

In Christ - Enlightened

Today as I wrap up the series "In Christ", we touch a topic that many other religions try to tap into.....enlightenment. The definition of enlightenment is - to give intellectual or spiritual light to.

You can get intellectual enlightenment from someone else who may have studied and really comprehends a topic. But there is only one source for spiritual enlightenment.....the Holy Spirit! This is what other religions have wrong, you can only shed light on something if you have the light to share. Our God lives and He IS the light! Amen?

Ephesians 1:18-23 (NKJV)

18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.
22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

This is a continuation of the prayer that Paul has for the church. Not only does he pray that God will give the spirit of wisdom and revelation but that the eyes of your understanding be enlightened!

You know..... this world, at least most of it, has heard the truth. You probably don't know too many people in America that haven't heard of Jesus, the cross, His resurrection, heaven, and hell. The problem is that many have yet to receive enlightening.

The eyes of your understanding (many translations say heart), this is the center of a man, the seat of the mind and will, the center of knowledge and understanding. We need not just clarity in our minds but in our hearts.

Do you know God has already given us all the truth we need in the bible? What we lack, even in the church, is having our spiritual eyes opened to those truths..... We see an example this in the NT with the Pharisees, they had all the head knowledge, knew all the OT scriptures and promises. They knew a Messiah was coming. And there is Jesus, the Savior of the world who they have been waiting for all their lives, standing right in front of them, yet they did not recognize Him.

It wasn't a lack of knowledge for them, just as it isn't for many of us. The inability to see and understand spiritual things is not the fault of the intelligence but of the heart. The eyes of the heart must be opened by the Spirit of God.

Here Paul speaking to the church saying it needs enlightening, this is beyond just a knowledge of Christ. Paul already covered election, redemption, trust, etc. We need enlightening, we need God to illuminate His inner secrets. The deep things of God! When He does this it's not like temporarily turning on a light for you to see for a just a moment. It's an enlightenment that you abide in, a permanent state.

What is this enlightenment for?

Ephesians 1:18-19 (NKJV)

18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; **THAT YOU MAY KNOW** what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power

This is the purpose of the enlightenment.....it's that the Holy Spirit will give you spiritual understanding. It's not for head knowledge it's for heart transformation.

"That you may know" means an illumination in your inner being, when God appeals to your heart and you have a knowing beyond a single doubt. When we doubt, there is uncertainty and question....even possibly distrust. But we can receive an enlightening where we may know something in our heart with complete certainty.

This is the kind of knowing Paul is praying for the church to have and there are 3 things he desires for us to know in this manner.

1. What is the HOPE of His calling.

WHAT IS.....singular.....there is one hope.

Ephesians 4:4 (NKJV)

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

Your calling involves everything that God has done, is doing, and is going to do regarding your salvation. Paul is simply saying, "I just told you about your calling. I just told you about what God has done for you. Now I want you to understand it deeply in your heart. It involves not only the joy of being blessed with every spiritual blessing. It involves not only the joy of being chosen by Christ before the foundation of the world. It involves being redeemed by His blood. It involves being adopted as His Son. It involves being sealed in Him with His Spirit, but it also involves the hope of

His returning, and everything that is to come after He returns for His church." That is the full payment of which we have the full portion of right now as a promise!."

Throughout bible, the word "hope" always refers to that which is coming, to that which is ahead. One of the greatest problems Christians have is that they don't know the hope of His calling. They don't know the reality of heaven. It's because of this, they constantly strive for material things and are continually caught up in worldly pursuits. They're depressed and discouraged, running the rat race because they don't see the big picture of eternity.

Titus 2:11-13 (NKJV)

11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Whatever comes your way you can stand fast on the truth of what Jesus has accomplished for you in the past, present and future. Knowing these truths in a deeper, more intuitive way, you will be empowered by His Spirit to stand firm on Who He is and how faithful He will be to all of His promises towards you.

Let the eyes of your heart be enlightened to what is the hope of His calling!

2. What are the RICHES of the glory of His inheritance in the saints

Let me read that again.....We need our hearts enlightened to know what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.

Instead of what is, this is what are.....plural....there is an abundance of riches of glory.....of His inheritance. You know, we see inheritance and we begin to wonder what we are getting....

But this is not about our inheritance. It's about Christ's inheritance. The riches of the glory of **His** inheritance. There is an abundance of glory, a wealth of glory of **God's** inheritance in the saints.

An inheritance is what is TO BE received. Have you ever thought about YOU being GOD's inheritance?

Deuteronomy 32:9 (NKJV)

9 For the Lord's portion is His people;
Jacob is the place of His inheritance.

There is an abundance of glory, splendor, in God's people who He will one day fully receive to Himself. God is exalted in His people. His majesty is shown to and through His people. It is through His people that He is made known to the world.

There is an abundance of this glory. Because Jesus is constantly doing phenomenal things in the lives of believers.

Church if we get this.....real enlightenment by the Holy Spirit.....that God Almighty is constantly doing phenomenal things in the lives of believers.....I think it would change our lives and change the world!

You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people.
YOU are His inheritance.....Jesus is coming back for you! Believe it!

Let the eyes of your heart be enlightened to what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints

3. What is the exceeding GREATNESS of His power toward us who believe

We're back to "what is".....singular. There is just one power.....one authority....God. All that is, was, or will be was allowed by Him. If anything else has any power, it's because it was created or allowed by God. He is the origin of power. There is nothing that has power OVER Him.

Remember what Jesus told Pilate as he was getting ready to sentence Him? Jesus told Pilate "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above"

Psalm 62:11 (NKJV)

11 God has spoken once,
Twice I have heard this:
That power belongs to God.

But do you know the EXCEEDING.....GREATNESS....of His power toward you?

You know one would think it might be enough to just know the greatness of His power but Paul says the exceeding greatness of His power.

This is a power that is at a level of greatness that it transcends all other greatness. It means to surpass in throwing beyond anything.

Imagine we have a little contest of who can throw a football the furthest.....EXP.....(God throws past anything)

This is the kind of greatness the power of God is toward us. But it's the kind of power that not just goes far beyond all other power.....it is continually surpassing all other power. Satan can't catch up. He can't keep practicing until he gets as good as God. God's power continues to surpass any other power.

God's power is immeasurable! There will never be a day when it is not sufficient to accomplish what God purposes in us and through us to the praise of His glory!

Ephesians 1:19-21 (NKJV)

19 and what is the **exceeding greatness** of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His **mighty** power 20 which He worked in Christ when He **raised** Him from the dead and seated Him at His **right hand** in the heavenly places, 21 **far above** all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, **not only in this age but also in that which is to come.**

This is the power that God has toward us who believe. The very same power that raised Christ from the dead dwells in you....the Holy Spirit!

Paul does not pray, "Lord, give them power." He prays, "Lord, help their spiritual eyes see, and appropriate the power they already have resident within." The incomprehensible, dynamic power of the resurrected Christ is already in us.

This power that raised Christ from the dead, and seated Him at the right hand of the Father in heaven (the position of power and authority), far above any other power or thing, today and in the future.....that same power is in Christ's followers!

When Paul says power, he is speaking of dynamic power. The Greek word is dynamis (du-na-miss), the same word we get dynamite and dynamic from. This is extreme power, strength, ability. This is the power that is used in performing miracles!

This is the power that overcame hell, death, and the grave.

This is the power that saves the human soul from eternal damnation.

This is the power that is at work IN YOU!

We are not STRUGGLING to win. We've already WON.

All the power we need can be found in CHRIST – don't try to live in your own strength.

NOT help me be strong, but YOU be my strength
Our faith in God releases His divine power in our lives.

You have resurrection power within you!

If the cross is the highest display of God's love, the RESURRECTION is the highest display of God's power.

But do you see it? Are the eyes of your heart enlightened to what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe?

In 2 Kings 6, Elisha was under attack and surrounded by Syrian army, Elisha saw the power of God around him- He was able to see the whole host of horses and chariots of fire all around his house, protecting him. His servants saw nothing of this - except the enemies. And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Ephesians 6:10 says, "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

Philippians 1:6 says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

God's power is sufficient for our every need. None of us has to live a defeated life. But if you do not tap into that power, a defeated life is exactly what you will live.....

There's more than enough power to break the hold of all sinful habits; more than enough to give deliverance from temptation; more than enough to enable the believer to live above circumstances. Paul said that God's power is "toward us who believe".

God's power is made available to us by His indwelling presence. Paul referred to this when he told the Colossians that God's power "works in him mightily".

So the power of God is within the believer because the Spirit of God is within the believer.

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us," (Ephesians 3:20)