

Ephesians

Week 04 – A Heart for Knowing God

Transition: Last week we covered one of the best biblical passages for understanding a believer's new God-given identity in Jesus Christ. The passage begins by informing the people in the church at Ephesus (which applies to all true believers also) that because of their new position in Christ, they have been blessed with "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." Paul quickly follows up this general statement by mentioning several specific blessings that help define a believer's new reality based on what Jesus has done.

Context: This week we are reading the first of Paul's prayers in this letter for the people in the church at Ephesus. In general, when we hear a person's prayer, we hear what is going on inside his or her heart and mind. With this in mind, this passage reveals that Paul was passionate about the people of this church coming to know God in the deepest and most profound of ways. There is nothing more foundational for growing and developing spiritually.

Opening Questions:

- What kinds of things have you prayed for this week? What is the last answer to prayer that you've received?
- Are you satisfied with your own prayer life/prayers? If things are going well for you in this area, please share what you've learned and what you're doing. If not, in what ways would you like to improve?

Scripture/Storying: Ephesians 1:15-23

Discipleship Questions:

- What reason does Paul give for why he's praying for the people in this church (v15-16)? How does this challenge you personally?
- What is Paul's specific request to God for them (17-19)? Restate his prayer in your own words. How would someone know if this prayer was answered?
- Assume that you are a member of this church. Do you have a part to play in answering this request to God? If so, in what way(s)? Depending on your response, what does this mean in your own life?
- What does Paul say to reinforce the utter magnitude of "the immeasurable greatness of his power" (v20-23)? Why is this critical information (knowledge) for building up your faith? What are some ways that applying this truth to your own life changes the way that you look at life?
- In what ways has what we've covered today influenced your thoughts (and actions) about your own prayer life?
- What is the Holy Spirit leading you to do in response to today's discussion?

Prayer time: This week we are praying for KIN (Knoxville Internationals Network), a non-profit that Providence supports. Here is their response when we asked how we could be praying for them..."Be in prayer as Bobbie coordinates a 'Summer English Event' for the Knox-metro area to connect and serve all area ELL programs. Pray that the Lord will continue to guide this summer ministry by stirring our hearts and leading us to serve in ways that are pleasing to Him for His glory."