

EPHESIANS

Bible Study 1:15-23

Questions will be posed and space will be allowed for a written response. Make every effort to answer the questions before looking below for the answer. **The answers will be in bold print at the end of the “questions” section.**

Thanksgiving and Prayer – 1:15-23

Verses 15-23 deal with thanksgiving and prayer. These verses are really only one sentence, one complete thought. These verses apply to what was said in verses 3-14. Verses 3-14 speak about what our election in Christ in eternity mean for us. Verses 15-23 direct our attention to sanctification, to our everlasting hope in heaven, and never lose sight of Christ.

1. See how many times you can find Him (Christ) referred to in verses 15-23.
2. What moved Paul to pray for the Ephesian Christians? (vv. 15-16)
3. What four things does Paul specifically pray that the Ephesians will come to know? (vv. 17-19)
4. How do you feel when someone tells you that they are praying for you?
5. What did God’s power accomplish? (vv. 20-23)
6. How does that make you feel knowing that all that power is at hand for your use in your Christian life? Ponder how this impacts or could impact your life.
7. What verse/phrase in verses 15-23 was your favorite? Why?

Some Answers to the above Questions:

1. A reference to Jesus or Christ in the following verses

- V – 15**
- V – 17**
- V – 20 (2)**
- V – 22 (2)**
- V – 23 (2)**

2. Paul was filled with God’s love in his life and...

V. 15 Paul had heard about their strong faith and love for all the saints. This did come to pass and they were known for their love for each other.

V. 16 so he gave thanks and continued to remember them in his prayers. Literally “making remembrance,” this is more than “remembering” as a mere mental recollection. Paul speaks the addressees’ names and circumstances before the Lord to “remind” him of his gifts and promises to them. (CC)

3. Paul prayed that the Ephesians would...

V – 17 – That God would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so they would know God better. Knowing Christ is more than just knowing about Him. It is being in close personal relationship with Christ. Knowing Christ is looking like Christ, saying what Christ would say, doing what Christ would do. It is similar to a couple who has been married for many years and can actually finish one another's sentences, know just what the other is thinking, and get the same idea at the same time. Jesus knew the Father on such a basis because he and the Father were in constant communion. (LL)

V – 18 – Having the eyes of hearts be enlightened meant...

The heart according to the biblical view is the central seat and organ of personal life, not only of feeling and experience but also of mind and will, and comes into consideration here according to its aspect of understanding. (Stoekhardt)

Such enlightenment from the Word will help the Ephesians to recognize and appreciate three great blessings from the Father: (1) the hope to which he has called them, (2) the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and (3) his incomparably great power for those who believe. (PBC)

V – 18 – Paul prayed that they would know Christian hope which is not magic. It is real faith that sees heaven in the future with all its glories. In this sense Christians live in the now, having been in the future already

V – 19 – Paul prays for power for their lives. Paul piles term upon term to emphasize that the extraordinary divine force that is available to the Ephesians and to us. Paul uses four nearly synonymous terms for "power" in this single verse:

"Great Power"

Our English word "dynamite" comes from this Greek word. It suggests the ability to accomplish something. God is able to bring about all these great things in the lives of the Ephesians.

"working"

This is active power through His Spirit in His creation to carry out His purpose, particularly for the rescue of his elect in Christ (Lk 1:51). It is instructive to note that Paul can write this while remaining a prisoner! (CC)

"Power"

This is the basis of the strength to which the Christian community is summoned. The community is in Christ. This place is in some sense invested with the omnipotence which is Christ's. Thence the members are summoned to be strong. (Kittel)

"Mighty Strength"

It is largely similar "Great Power. In case of "Mighty Strength" there is more emphasis on the actual power which one possesses. (Kittel)

4. Answers will vary

5. God's power...

V – 20 – Raised Christ from death...

- V – 20 – Seated Him at the right hand of God in heaven....**
- V – 21 – Christ is above all rule...**
- V – 22 – Placed everything under His feet...**
- V – 22 – Appointed Him head over everything...**
- V – 23 – Fills everything in every way...**