

Ephesians Part 5...Nov.20th 2016
Chapter 1:15-23

When a company hires a person most of the time it starts with training the person for the job.

I don't think anyone would hire someone and say ok there is your work-station go for it.

For a person to be successful or to know their position they must first be trained or taught.

The same applies to a Christian.

When someone gives their life to the Lord they need to be taught what God expects of them.

So many times instead of teaching we just tell people what God wants and expects.

Every believer needs to have a good understanding what living for Christ is all about and what it involves.

It said one reason people do not volunteer for things is because there is not a clear understanding of what they are asked to do

Most people do not want to make a fool of themselves most people want to do things right.

And they can't if they are working in the dark.

The last thing the Lord wants is a believer working in the dark trying to please God.

God wants us to know what He expects of us.

If a person doesn't understand what God wants then they can never do it.

There is a great principal that flows throughout the N.T.

In the book of Romans there are 11 chapters of theology and then chapter 12 tells you how to apply it to your life.

In Galatians there are four chapters of theology and then in chapter 5 and 6 it tells us how to apply it to our life.

Colossians there is 3 chapters of theology and then in chapter 4 how to apply it to your life.

And we will see this throughout Ephesians as well.

The reason for this is because a person can't apply or live what they do not understand.

The key is not in just hearing our position in Christ it is in knowing our position in Christ and practicing it.

That doesn't happen with an hour service once a week with someone **hammering away at all you do wrong...**

Or pacifying with all that you think you have done right.

It comes from having a real motive to serve the Lord.

The key to living a successful Christian life is understanding who you are in Christ or knowing your position and practicing it.

That alone is the foundation upon which we must operate.

In Ephesians 1 verses 15-23 Paul goes from teacher to intercessor.

He prays that the believer will understand their position in Christ...

That we grab hold of the reality we are one with the eternal God through Christ and that all the blessings of the heaven lies are ours.

He prays that we understand our position in Christ.

And the reason he prays that is because when we know our position, our position should have a major impact on our practice.

He is praying that our practice will equal our position.

Paul wants us to understand our position because he knows that unless we do we are not going to have the right motive to live the life.

When we understand we are a child of the King...

When we understand we are one with Christ...

When we understand The Holy Spirit lives in us and through us...

It should affect our behavior and the way we live our lives.

The successful Christian life is lived when our practice equals our position.

It is important to understand some things about our position and practice...

Christian growth never has anything to do with our position.

When it comes to our position Col. 2:10 says we are complete in Him.

So this means Christian growth is about our practice.

Second Peter 1:4-5 tells us how improve our practice...

It says add to your faith virtue to your virtue knowledge to knowledge patience to patience goodness to goodness brotherly love and to brotherly love kindness.

What this means is we have to get our practice lined up with our position.

- *Our position is who we are in Christ...*
- *Our practice is acting like who we are in Christ.*

Debie and I were in a store last Sunday afternoon and I said to the clerk it sure is quiet in here.

She replied not for long I said what do you mean she said when all the churches get out it will get crazy because church folks are tough to deal with.

The reason for that is due to Christians not lining up their practice with their position.

When a believer understands all they have in Christ and who they are in Christ

That we have an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled and does not fade not away and is reserved for us in heaven and that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heaven lies with Jesus Christ...

It ought to have a major affect on how we live.

In verse 15...Paul starts out by saying to the Ephesians that he had heard two good things about them.

He heard about their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and their love for all the saints.

These two things are the basic aspects of a true Christian.

A true Christian is marked by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

True faith in the Lord Jesus Christ gives evidence of itself in love toward all believers.

1st John 2:9-11 says *if you claim to have saving faith and hate your brother you are liar.*

In John 13 Jesus said...*By this will all men know you are My disciples if you have love one for another.*

Love means sacrificial or selflessness serving others and putting others first.

Notice Paul says love for all saints.

- *All saints refer to no discrimination.*

So it means you love all saints, no discriminating because of color or race or culture or gender or denomination or affiliation.

A true Christian doesn't pick and choose the world does that.

If a true Christian doesn't love one another they are *nothing but a sounding brass and tinkling symbol.*

You can't love the Lord Jesus without loving who He loves.

True salvation goes from the head to the heart and the heart to the hand and then reaches out to touch other people.

Paul is thankful to God about their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the love they have toward others.

In other words their practice lines up with their position.

Verse 16...*I do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers...*

Verse 17...after Paul commends them he begins his prayer...

He prays the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

Notice he prays God will give to them **the spirit of wisdom.**

Paul is not talking about the Holy Spirit here and he is not talking about a human spirit.

We already have both.

We have a human spirit and Paul has already said we have the Holy Spirit when we gave our life to Christ.

Spirit here refers to an attitude or a disposition, a frame of mind...

He is talking about a frame of mind that is connected to divine wisdom and divine revelation so that it gives us the knowledge of what it means to be in Christ.

He is praying that God will grant an attitude that will allow them to comprehend what they have in Christ.

Another way to say it is he prays they will have the frame of mind to see what is at their disposal as a child of God.

Why? Because when we get a grip on that on all that is at our disposal through Christ...

- We will trust Him in difficult times.
- We will lean on Him in turbulent times.
- We will know His grace is sufficient.
- We will not be searching and praying for what we already have.

Paul prays this because he knows the human mind cannot conceive or believe the riches of our position in Christ.

He prays that God will grant the understanding of what we have in Christ.

He prays that we would have the divine mind that we would be able to set our affections on things above and not the resources of the world.

He prays because he knows it is not enough to just tell us what we have in Christ but that we would understand it and apply it.

He prays in verse 18 for them have understanding in the greatness of God's plan.

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.

The eyes of understanding refers to the mind the place where the will acts in response to the truth.

He is praying for the mind to be enlightened he prays for the light to go into the mind so they can see what is theirs in Christ.

He goes on to say that they may know what is the hope of their calling.

The hope of their calling means understanding what God has called them to do or what their place is.

The hope of our calling refers to our purpose where we fit in, in His plan.

It also means when things in our life become unbearable and you don't know what's next...

You will have no fear because you are secure in the eternal hope of your calling.

You are here for a purpose and whatever comes good God will use it...

Whatever bad comes God will use it.

It's all in the plan.

Verse 18 he continues and says *I also want you to know what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.*

He is saying God I don't want them to just know the inheritance I want them to know how rich the inheritance is.

How far reaching and vast our resources are in Christ.

Verse 19...He speaks of the greatness of Christ's power.

And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of His mighty power.

This is talking about the power that is available to us as a Christian.

- Power to tell the world about Jesus Christ.
- Power to change our lives...
- Power to break habits and addictions...
- Power to conquer sin...
- Power to overcome temptation...
- Power to do God's will...
- Power to work for God...

In verse 20 Paul describes that power...

Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

Its resurrection power and ascension power the power that lifted Jesus from the grave and took Him to heaven.

- Power so great the grave couldn't hold Him...
- Power so great death couldn't hold Him...
- Power so great satan couldn't stop Him.

Paul is telling us the very same power that took Jesus through the grave and to the throne of God is working on our behalf so we can be all that Christ would have us be.

We need to understand that and believe that and rely on that power.

Verse 21 Paul wants us to understand the greatness of Jesus Christ.

Christ as a person is far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that age which is to come.

Verse 22...*And He put all things under His feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the church.*

Verse 23...*Which is His body the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

The last part of his prayer is that people would understand how great Jesus Christ is.

There is no rule no authority no other power and no other name that is over Jesus Christ.

Nothing can hinder Him because no one surpasses Him in power.

He is not just above He is *far above* all rule and authority.

Nothing can match the greatness and the power of Jesus.

He is the source of life and gives us the resources for life.

And Paul prays that we would get a hold on that and understand our position is in Christ and make it our practice.