

Ephesians 1:15-23

Introduction

I. Analogy: Life is a journey

What do you treasure in life? What goals are you focused on as you walk this journey?

It doesn't take long to find out what a person really treasures

= how they spend their time, what they're excited about, willing to sacrifice for

II. Paul's Prayer: That our eyes would be opened to the best treasures of all

That we would come to understand and appreciate them more and more.

The Passage

I. The basic prayer: spiritual enlightenment to great spiritual treasures (v. 17-18)

v. 17: Spirit/spirit: wisdom and "revelation"

= spiritual vision to see spiritual treasures, understand them

v. 18: eyes of our hearts be enlightened (not physical eyes but spiritual eyes)

II. "For this reason" (v. 15-16)

A. Paul is looking back to what he's said in v. 3-14

= "every spiritual blessing IN CHRIST"

-Chosen/predestined before the creation of world

-to be holy and blameless in his sight

-to be adopted as his sons

-to be for the praise of his glory

-forgiveness of sin through Christ's blood

-given the promised Holy Spirit

B. In light of what God has done, Paul is thanking God and praying that God would open their eyes more and more to his many blessings (spiritual treasures)

III. The ultimate treasure is God Himself (v. 17)

Paul's prayer is that God would reveal the greatest treasure of all: Himself

A. What does this mean: to know God better?

1. Paul refers to God as the "Glorious Father"

-Glory = splendor, radiance, weightiness,

-John Piper: glory is "the beauty and greatness of God's manifold perfections."

2. Paul's prayer is that we might grow in our understanding and appreciation of how glorious, beautiful, wonderful, valuable God is

3. Analogy: Yosemite Valley is such a glorious place and I could have a desire for a friend to come to know Yosemite, in all its glory, better

B. Our lives fall far short of that prayer

1. Knowing God more deeply is rarely the intentional goal of our days

--pie chart: the goal is self-fulfillment

2. That's why we need this prayer: we need God to reveal more of himself

IV. Three more spiritual treasures (v. 18-19)

A. "The hope to which he has called you"

1. = eternal life in the new heavens and the new earth when Christ returns
"Hope" = a confident expectation of that future reality
2. The hope of "glory" (Colossians 1)
 - a. We will be in a glorious place: new heavens and new earth
 - b. We will be with the most glorious person: our God and Savior
 - c. We will be glorious people
 - .1: glorious resurrection bodies
 - .2: glorious internal character (all the fruit of the Spirit in perfection)We will rule over this place with Christ: adventure, celebration, laughter, joy
3. Paul's prayer is that we'd come to understand and appreciate eternal life more and more so that would become the treasure our eyes are fixed on in this life
4. This would radically change how we live
Randy Alcorn analogy: a flight to Europe
We would invest our time, energy, and resources in things of eternal significance
5. Two times when it's easy to lose sight of the hope of his calling
 - a. Times of suffering and persecution
 - b. Times of comfort and successWe get distracted from the future hope and focus on the present

B. "The riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints"

1. We are God's inheritance, God's possession
 - a. He purchased us with the blood of his Son
 - b. He took residence in us by His Spirit
2. The glorious riches = the privileges/riches we have as a result of being God's possession/inheritance
3. Analogy: Annie
Before: she was poor, anonymous
After: she learned what it meant to be Daddy Warbucks' little girl
= mansion, helicopters, etc
4. Our riches are spiritual in nature (v. 3-14)
Adoption, forgiveness, etc
5. Two times we forget the riches
 - a. Times of suffering and persecution
 - b. Times of comfort where there are other riches that distract our attention
6. So many of us still live like orphans, unable to appreciate the spiritual riches we've received as a result of being God's inheritance

C. "His incomparably great power for us who believe"

1. Important reminder: Christian life is not just about believing certain things to be true but never experiencing power. For Paul, the Christian life involved power.
2. The demonstration of God's power (v. 19-23)
 - a. He raised Christ from the dead
 - b. He gave him authority over every possible power

- c. He gave him sovereignty over everything
- d. He gave this sovereign Lord to the church as its head
 - So, all his authority is exercised for our good—nothing happens outside the authority of Christ: the one who died for us!
- 3. The use of God's power in our lives
 - a. Not usually power to change our circumstances, get us rich, physically heal
 - b. Usually power to transform (produce fruit of Spirit), power to persevere

Conclusion

I. See Matthew 6:19-23

II. The Christian life is not foremost about morality; it's about worship

-it's about what our hearts most treasure

-so, what we desperately need is for God to transform our hearts so that we treasure the things that are most worthy of being treasured

-So many Christians go through life trying to believe and obey appropriately, but deep down their hearts treasure other things more than the gospel.

-So we need God to do his work in our hearts.

III. Let's pray Paul's prayer for ourselves and our friends this week

Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?

2. Describe an experience or a season in life when God opened the eyes of your heart to one or more of the spiritual treasures Paul mentions in his prayer.

3. How does reading and studying Paul's prayer for the Ephesians impact or change the way you view your own prayer life?

4. Discuss the statement made on Sunday: "The Christian life is not primarily about morally. It's primarily about worship; it's about what our hearts treasure most." Do you agree or not, and why?