

Title: Hope, Riches, and Power...In Christ Alone

Passage: Ephesians 1:15-23

Context:

Ephesians 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

- “Us in Christ” = how God sees us, covered in Christ’s righteousness
 - More Biblical references of “you in Christ” than “Christ in you”
 - Got Questions: What does it mean to be in Christ? (<https://www.gotquestions.org/in-Christ.html>)
- Verses 3-14: spiritual blessings we have in Christ through His grace
- Verses 15-23: intercessory prayer
 - Reflect genuine concerns for believers
- Caution: one may be well-taught and have good knowledge alone but yet not experience those truths

John 5:39-40 (Jesus charge against Pharisees)

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.

Passage: Ephesians 1:15-23

Introduction

How are your prayers?

Matthew 6:7 (shallow?)

And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

A deep understanding of the Gospel will result in a deeper, genuine love for God.

Psalms 138:2

I bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness,
for you have exalted above all things
your name and your word.

Exposition of Passage:

Ephesians 1:15-16

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,

- Paul’s two reasons for thanksgiving
 - Your faith in the Lord Jesus
 - Your love toward all the saints
 - these go hand in hand
- Faith in Christ is reflected in our love for others. Our love for others reflect our faith in Christ.

John 13:35

By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Romans 12:9-10

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

Ephesians 1:17

that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

- distinction between “head” knowledge and “heart”
- “Knowledge of him” = deepest expressive kind of knowledge = personal, intimate knowledge through experience
 - Analogy: marriage relationship
- Distinction: unbelievers may have “knowledge” of God but that is shallow.
 - Merely knowledge of information

James 2:19

You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!

Ephesians 1:18-19

having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

- Prays for three things:
 1. know the hope to which he has called you
 2. Know the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints
 3. Know the immeasurable greatness of God's power

I. Hope to which God has called you

- “Hope” = a sure certainty (not wishful thinking)

Hebrews 6:11

And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end

1 Peter 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Titus 2:13

waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

II. Riches of your inheritance

- inheritance of spiritual blessings (see Ephesians 1:3-14)

III. Immeasurable greatness of God's power

- Question: Do you experience the power of God?

Obstacles that prevent us from experiencing God's power

- The world
- The flesh (also see Romans 7)
- The devil

Ephesians 2:1-2

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this *world*, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience

1 Peter 5:8

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

James 4:7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

God's power described:

Four different Greek words used in verse 19, which amplify the description of God's power

- Greatness
- Working (energy)
- Strength
- Might

Ephesians 1:20

that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

“when he raised him from the dead“

- Broke the fear of death

1 Corinthians 15:55-57

“O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

“seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places”

- Jesus' continual intercession for His saints
- There is never a moment Jesus hasn't stopped praying for you!

Romans 8:34

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

“And seated Him in the heavenly places”

- Jesus exalted above all

Ephesians 1:21-23

far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

“Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion”

- Jesus is above all things

Colossians 2:15

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

1 John 4:4

Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

“Not only in this age but also in the one to come.”

- God’s power and control over all of history, including yours