



Ephesians

Part 9

Ephesians 1:15-23
Week of May 2, 2021

Before Connect Group

- Ephesians 1:15-23
- Watch the sermon by going to <http://switzerlandcommunitychurch.org>

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

Ephesians 1:15-23, ESV

Sermon Notes

There is no power of death or sin that has any real chance at victory against the Spirit that is in you.

This week we are focusing on this third point of Paul's prayer. As you remember he is praying over Christians. The first thing he prayed was that we would know the hope to which he has called you. The second that we would know what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints. This week it seems that Paul reaches a high point. He prays over us that we would know what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe (vs. 19). This entire prayer fits into the category of "central", but the reason I say that this is a pinnacle of sorts is because the opening words of this book are a beautiful description of the immeasurable greatness of God's power.

- He has blessed you with all Spiritual blessings in Christ (vs. 3)
- He has chosen you (vs. 4)
- He has adopted you (vs. 5)
- He has redeemed you
- He has sealed you with the Holy Spirit.

As he continues on from vs. 19 he begins to describe the outworking of that power through Christ's victory, and how that same victory is worked in you in chapter 2.

As we enter this next section, we need to consider two main things.

- First, the power of God in general
- Second, this power toward you

The Immeasurable Greatness of the Power of God

- Paul is using specific words to describe the things he is praying for as incredibly powerful. They are meant to help us understand more of the beautiful depth of the Gospel in our daily lives.
- When we think about the power of God we begin to survey the acts of God throughout the Scriptures. We say things like, "God is almighty", "There are no other god's like Him on the earth." These appear over and over again in Scripture, because the power of God is the foundation for Worship.
- Kings displayed great acts of power to sustain the loyalty of their subjects.
- The god's displayed power most often attributed through military victory, or what you might call "conquering power", and drew worship unto themselves. However, in regards to conquering power, God himself was deserving of all praise.
- *Psalm 21:8-13 Your hand will find out all your enemies; your right hand will find out those who hate you. You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear. The LORD will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire will consume them. You will destroy their descendants from the earth, and their offspring from among the children of man. Though they plan evil against you, though they devise mischief, they will not succeed. For you will put them to flight; you will aim at their faces with your bows. Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength! We will sing and praise your power.*
- As we think back in Scripture this seems to be how God displays His power to his people in the book of Exodus.
- He sends Moses to deliver His people from the most powerful nation on earth (which means they had the most powerful gods) at the time, which was Egypt. God tells Pharaoh to "let my people go"
- *Exodus. 8:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the*

LORD, "Let my people go, that they may serve me.

- You know the story. God sent plagues, Pharaoh couldn't make up his mind, finally the 10th plague (the death of the 1st born) the Israelites are allowed to go, but then Pharaoh decides to go after them because no one is greater than the gods of Egypt, then God swallows up the mighty Egyptian army in the Red Sea.

His Power: He is Stronger Than All Others

- God defeated the Egyptian army and provided victory for His people.
- This is the normal approach and worship of the gods of the earth at the time.
- When nations went to battle, they understood it as the gods battling.
- This is why most of the Exodus sets up the battle between God and Pharaoh, who was considered a god.
- In this victory, God deserves to be worshipped and served according to common standards.

His Great Power: There Are No Others In His Category

- God not only defeated the Egyptians and delivered His people, but the text describes God as the God of Egypt also, not just after he wins in battle, but before.
- *Exodus 9:13-16 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, "Let my people go, that they may serve me. For this time I will send all my plagues on you yourself, and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth. For by now I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.*
- God allowed the great success of Egypt over all the earth, so that He could have a greater display of power to the whole earth.
- The greater the dominance of power, the more hopeless the perceived outcome, the oppressive the situation. All for the display of God's Great Power on the earth!
- This is the full truth of the Exodus, this is the full truth of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, this is still the full truth in your life. And it worked!!!
- *1 Samuel 4:5-8 As soon as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" And when they learned that the ark of the LORD had come to the camp, the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "A god has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness.*
- Even centuries later, they knew of the Great power of God!

His Immeasurable Great Power:

- I had to really spend some time here... The Scriptures truly do speak not only to the Great Power of God, but they speak of His over abounding, way past the line type of power. This is power that is unchallengeable and would be described only as a Glory that could not be fully declared or displayed without its full presence.
- This is the power that not only deserves our devotion, but draws us into inexplicable worship.

- You see, I think this was what happened as the Israelites came out of Egypt. There was enough for the Israelites to worship God through what they had experienced in their miraculous deliverance. However, God's power is immeasurable in greatness. It was at this time that Moses wrote the opening Chapter of Genesis.
- *Genesis 1:1-5 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*
- *Genesis 1:26-31 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*
- This is not only a Powerful God who might be confused to be on the same level as anything else. He is the only God who out of nothing created everything.
- This is all great. I can now say that I am more impressed with God. Good. But Paul says in this prayer that he wants you to know that this is the very power that has been worked toward you who believe.
- This immeasurable great power is not just something God has done, it is who God is. There is no greater display of this power than in the person and work of Jesus Christ!

Toward Those Who Believe

- We are good hearing this as a story. We can acknowledge that this is the power that Israel felt in the Exodus. But we struggle to cross this bridge with Paul. This Power is toward us!
- In Christ, the enemy has been conquered. Most people hear this in the Gospel and celebration!
- The power of the victory of Christ is at the foundation of our worship.
- *1 Corinthians 15:55 "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"*
- Being true to His character, God did not come to conquer Rome or some other earthly kingdom. In Christ, he came to overwhelmingly conquer the one behind all evil, the enemy: Sin and Death!
- Christ is set "high above" given unchallenged power, authority, and dominion. The tone of verses 20-23 are that of "Immeasurable"! There is a finality, an overwhelming, an overkill if you will the full victory that is our reality in Christ. "Far above" vs 21
- Many Christians will acknowledge God's power up to this point. We come to him and repent and thank Him for our salvation. However, we often forget that this Gospel power is at work in us every day.
- In Paul's prayer, he is not questioning whether or not you have come to believe in Christ,

Rather, he is praying that you would daily come to know the immeasurable great power of God toward you!

- His immeasurable great power is most displayed in his ongoing work in you.
- His victory is proclaimed in you every day...
- That is not just some anecdote to encourage you today.
- I say this with the full weight of the Exodus narrative, the full weight of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ!
- One of the great disconnects of our faith is that God's power is good for eternity with Him, but has little care for showing up in my life today.
- *2 Corinthians 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*
- Jesus came to work victory in you. He did not fight just enough to win. He conquered with immeasurable power.
- There is no power of death or sin that has any real chance at victory against the Spirit that is in you.
 - Your porn addiction that you just determined will never be broken... You have forgotten the immeasurable great power of Christ!
 - Your marriage that you have determined is unmendable... You have forgotten the immeasurable great power of Christ!
 - Your shame that you have just made a part of your life... You have forgotten the immeasurable great power of Christ!
 - Your past that seems to disqualify you from truly living for Christ... You have forgotten the immeasurable great power of Christ!
 - The damage done to you that made you live in fear as a victim... You have forgotten the immeasurable great power of Christ!
 - The logical justification you have used to allow "small" sins to exist in your life... You have forgotten the immeasurable great power of Christ!
- Christ did not barely win and should be worshipped. Christ is the unchallenged, unmatched, they never had a chance Glory of God that lives in you!

This morning I plead with the Lord that the Spirit in us would not let us forget at any point the immeasurable great power that God has and is working in us.

Connect Group Discussion Questions

- What hope do you see in the power of Jesus Christ being greater than any challenger that may attempt to face Him?
- In what way did God demonstrate His superiority over the Egyptian Pharaoh? What did God's demonstration in the plagues tell Egypt and the world about the power of God?
- Why do we sometimes struggle with understanding that Christ's victory reigns over all people but still continue to fall into the traps of our sins and temptations?
- How does Christ's victory over death give us hope for our current struggles?
- What does the immeasurable greatness of the power of God speak to the struggles we face? How does this empower us to resist temptation?

Challenge For The Week

Jesus Christ is unmatched and unparalleled in his greatness and power. Nothing is able to overpower or even come close to his immense and great power.

- Where are you withholding from God? What sins are you wrestling with that God can give you the strength to overcome?
- Who can you be praying for to experience the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ? Schedule a time to be in prayer for them that they could know the Lord.