

LG | Leader

[Ephesians 1:15-23]

WARM-UP (10 mins)

It is likely that everyone present had a very busy day, maybe even a trying day. Let's take a moment to still our minds and go to the Lord in prayer.

- In your personal devotion with the Lord, what has the Lord revealed to you through His word this past week? If not, what is keeping you from the Lord?
- When you reflect back on Sunday's sermon, what impacted you the most? Anything that stirred your affection towards the Lord?

ILLUMINATE (40 mins)

Open your Bibles to the primary text.

1. Read our primary text. Simply, what is Paul doing in this text? If you could break this text into three parts, what would they be? (You may have to read it again slower, looking for transitions)
Paul is praying for the believers in Ephesus. His prayer is broken up into three primary sections; thanksgiving (vv.15-16), intercession (vv. 17-19), and praise (vv.20-23).
2. In verse 18 Paul prays for the "eyes of their heart to be enlightened." Have you ever thought deeply about this? [Example: Worship Song: "open the eyes of my heart, Lord"] What do you think Paul is saying here?
Enlightenment refers to an understanding of something that has been revealed, also known as illumination (The Doctrine of Illumination). Here, Paul is petitioning God to provide the Holy Spirit so that the Ephesians might understand Scripture and have a fuller knowledge of God and His immeasurable worth.
3. What role does illumination play when one surrenders their life to Jesus? Is illumination something we should pray for today or is it finished upon salvation?
A non-believer does not have the ability to see clearly the things of God (to include Scripture). Their hearts are hardened towards of God. However, upon faith, God's grace enters the life of this new believer, a deposit of the Holy Spirit is made, and this individual is now able to see the beauty of God and His unending love for them (see detailed summary of this in chapter 2:1-10).

4. Verse 18 speaks of a sort of “calling” by God? What do you think this is? Do you recall this occurring in your own salvation story?

God’s “call” is not just a pre-determined choosing, but it is also a continuous pursuit of you to bring His will to completion (Phil 1:6). To be pursued by God is a glorious thing.

5. What example did Paul use here to remind the Ephesians of Jesus’ great power? What verse captures it best?

There are many ways Paul can illustrate the authority and power of Jesus, but Paul goes directly to the resurrection (v.20). Jesus enables believers to approach death with no fear, knowing that He extinguished the “sting” of death by His very death on the cross (1 Corinthians 54-58).

6. Paul emphasizes Christ’s authority over all other rule and authority in v.21-22. Why do you think Paul dwells here for two verses? (consider His audience)

The Ephesians had a fascination with magic, idols, and the occult. Paul was making it clear that God has put all things in subjection to Jesus for time eternal.

7. Who is the head of the church?

Jesus.

PRAY

Use this time to pray specifically. Pray for the needs of others; locally and abroad.