

### Scripture Text

Ephesians 1:15-23

### Context

This is right after Paul's exaltation of how God has sovereignly and gloriously saved and blessed His people in Jesus Christ. "For this reason" (the opening words of the passage), this is a prayer and thanksgiving that Paul is making for them that they may know the implications of this salvation, the divine resources available for them, and the great destiny He has given them as the Body of Christ.

### Observation and Meaning

- Paul is thankful for the things he has heard about the believers as a result of God's work. What are these things, and why are they significant?
- Paul prays that God may give the believers the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. List the things that the Spirit would do for them. Why are these things necessary prayer requests for believers who already believe?
- What do the "riches of his glorious inheritance" (in verse 18) refer to?
- What does the "power" (in verse 19) do for believers, and how is this related to what Christ has done?
- How has God revealed His glory through Jesus in this passage?
- What does it mean that Christ is the head of the Church which is the fullness of Him who fills all in all? How does this look like practically in Ephesians 4:10-16?

### Big Idea

We are to pray confidently under the sovereignty of God because He has given the Church divine resources to fulfil His purpose.

### Connecting to the whole Bible's Story line

God's redemption of the fallen world is fulfilled through His chosen people in Christ. He has given all authority and dominion to the risen Christ, who reigns as the head of the Church. His presence now dwells in His people through His Spirit, who empowers them to fulfil His purpose of uniting all things to Himself.

### Sermon Outline

- We pray and rejoice for the faith that bears fruit of love in the church
- We pray and rejoice for God's Spirit who reveals to us the hope, riches and power we have
- We pray and rejoice for Christ's supremacy over all things

### Application

- What do our prayers and desires tell us about our hearts and our daily need for His grace?
- Paul knows that God is completely sovereign, and therefore he prays unceasingly. How does our understanding of who God is affect our prayer life?
- How does knowing the divine hope, riches and power we have in Christ change the way we live our lives now?
- How should we actively play our parts in the life of the church as members of Christ's body?

## Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

### Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger story line of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

### Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (e.g. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

- Who is writing and to whom?
- What is the situation of the author and of the readers?
- Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?
- Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

### Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.