

“Spiritual Wisdom,” Ephesians 1:15-23, page 1142

Introduction:

1. We are blessed to be a part of the Beaver Island Christian Church family.
2. I believe the words of the apostle Paul to the believers at Ephesus could and do apply to the believers in this church family.
 - A. “I heard of your faith.”
 - B. “Your love for all of the saints.”
3. I believe praying for each other is also very evident in our church family. This is a great blessing to all of us!
4. It would be good for us to adopt the prayer of the apostle Paul for the believers at Ephesus and apply the same focus to our prayers for each other.
5. Our prayer for each other should include:

I. Receive “the spirit of wisdom,” verse 17.

- A. Spiritual wisdom is much different than earthly wisdom.
 1. *Romans 1:21-22: “...because although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools.”*
 2. *James 3:17: “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”*
- B. The search for knowledge and wisdom is always a lofty goal.
 1. God has given us an amazing brain.
 2. Every question in life has an answer.
 3. The day we stop learning is a sad day in our lives.
 4. There is much to learn; keep searching for wisdom and knowledge.
- C. The result of our search will be greatly influenced by our philosophy of life—spiritual and earthly.
- D. Jesus made this fact very clear in the Sermon on the Mount, *Matthew 5:21-48*, page 935.
 1. *Matthew 5:21: “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder,’ and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you....”*
 2. *Matthew 5:27-28: “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you....”*
 3. *Matthew 5:31-32: “Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you....”*
- E. I find it amazing how a few people can witness the same event and give very different descriptions of that event. They are influenced by their philosophy, etc.

II. “May know...the hope of His calling,” verse 18.

- A. Jesus Christ fully understood His mission here on earth:
 1. Born of the Virgin Mary
 2. Lived a sinless life.
 3. Selected the New Testament disciples.
 4. Taught the truth of the new covenant.
 5. Died on the cross.
 6. Rose from the grave.
 7. Ascended into heaven.
 8. Became our eternal High Priest.
- B. The question before us today: Do we understand the hope of our calling?
 1. Why is God allowing us to live?
 2. Why do we live on Beaver Island?
 3. Why are we a part of this church family?
 5. Why do we have the friends we have?

- C. Pastor Fairbrother, 80-plus years old.
 - 1. Raising three grandchildren.
 - 2. Pastoring small rural church.
 - 3. Knee replacement surgery, seven days wedding.
 - 4. Left church to become staff pastor of large church.
 - 6. Pastor Fairbrother knew “the hope of his calling.”
- D. We never outgrow or outlive the hope (purpose) of our calling!
- F. It is very important that we know why we are alive and the hope of our calling!

III. Realize “*the exceeding greatness of His power to us,*” verse 19.

- A. The power of God lives within us!
 - 1. *Habakkuk 3:19: “The Lord God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills.”*
 - 2. *Ephesians 6:10: “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”*
 - 3. *Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*
- B. It is a good thing when we come to the point of saying, “I can’t!”
 - 1. If our focus is right, and we realize/understand His power in us;
 - 2. If we are willing to turn the situation over to Him;
 - 3. If we allow His power to flow through us and balance our weakness with His strength, nothing will be impossible for us. *Mark 10:27: “But looking at them, Jesus said, ‘With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.’”*
- C. God needs us to be a willing servant.
 - 1. We need to develop the raw resources He has given us.
 - 2. When we have exhausted our resources, He provides everything we need to fulfill our calling.
- D. “Sometimes we feel that evil is winning. Then Easter comes to remind us that there is no grave deep enough, no seal imposing enough, no stone heavy enough, no evil strong enough, to keep Christ in the grave.”—James W. Moore

IV. Acknowledge the greatness of Christ, verse 20-23.

- A. Jesus Christ is in control of all things.
 - 1. *John 1:1-3*, page 1032.
 - 2. *Acts 7:49-50*, page 1069.
- B. You can trust Jesus Christ with your life and possessions.
 - 1. Some things are our responsibility; be faithful!
 - 2. Some things Jesus will gladly take as His responsibility; let Him take control.
- C. The next time we have a letdown in our faith and wonder if the Lord can really handle our situation:
 - 1. Look around; He created it all!
 - 2. Spend a little time reading the Bible, especially the miracles recorded in the New Testament.
 - 3. Acknowledge that you are helpless to change this seemingly impossible situation, and then give it to Jesus.

Conclusion:

- 1. Jesus invites us to trust Him.
 - A. *1 Peter 5:6-7: “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”*
 - B. When you have cast your worries on Him, cut the line.
- 2. “No difficulties in your case can baffle Him...if you will only put yourself absolutely into His hand and let Him have His own way with you.”—H. W. Smith