

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, March 28, 2010

Passage: Ephesians 1:15-23

Memory Passage: Ephesians 1:22-23

TODAY: From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

This is the week before what has traditionally been called “Holy Week.” It begins with Palm Sunday and ends at Easter. This week and next, we will be looking at two sections from Ephesians (1:15-23; 2:1-9). My prayer for you during this week is that you might reflect on where our hope lies and in whom our hope lays. Palm Sunday was to mark Christ’s Triumphal entry as king into Jerusalem. So we look back at what Christ accomplished for us and what He will bring to pass in His second coming.

- (a) **Read Ephesians 1:15.** Verse 15 begins with the phrase “for this reason.” Go back and read verses 3-14. Summarize in a sentence or two what these verses were about. How do they affect how we read these next few verses?
- (b) What two things does Paul mention that he had heard about the Ephesians? What relationship do these two statements have with the words of Christ in Matthew 22:36-40?
- (c) Paul had heard about their faith and their love. What would someone say about you? Does your faith and love exemplify your life? What do people say about our church? Do you have limits on what God can ask of you? Why? Do you have limits on how much, how long, how deep you love others? Why?
- (d) *Family:* Read Ephesians 1:15 and Matthew 22:36-40. What are the two greatest commandments? What are the two things that Paul has heard about the Ephesians? What would people say about you? Would these two things be good descriptions?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Ephesians 1:16-18a.** How often does this verse imply that Paul is praying for the Ephesians (1 Thess. 5:16)? What kind of prayers is he praying?

- (b) Do you pray for others with thankfulness and constancy? Why/Why not? How would praying prayers of gratitude shape the way we think and act toward others? How important do you think this kind of prayer is (Eph. 5:19-20; Phil. 4:6; 1 Thess. 5:18)?
- (c) Who are Paul’s prayers addressed to? What in particular is he praying for them in verse 17? Note that Paul does not ask God to bestow some new blessing, but that they would have eyes to see the knowledge already given to them (1:9-10).
- (d) What does Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians imply about how we are to develop in knowledge of Christ? Is it that we are to gain more knowledge? Deeper knowledge? More intimate knowledge? (Col. 2:2; 3:10) Read Col. 1:9-10. What should our growth in this result in?

(e) *Family:* Read Ephesians 1:16-18a. How much is Paul praying for the Ephesians? How much do you pray for others? What is Paul praying for the Ephesians? What does this mean? Pray this prayer for each other.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Ephesians 1:18-19.** What are the three things that Paul wants the Spirit to let them know? Do you think that this is the first time they had ever heard of these things? What are some other ways that we “know” things besides just knowing about something?

- (b) How would this kind of knowledge of each of these things affect the way we live our lives? How would we see the world differently? What would we value? How would we respond to trials?
- (c) What practice does Paul think will bring about this kind of knowledge (verse 16)? Do you place this kind of importance in prayer? Why or why not? What is your prayer life like? Begin today and for the rest of the week to pray this prayer of Paul’s for yourself and others. Reflect upon what each phrase actually means and entails for us.
- (d) *Family:* Read Ephesians 1:18-19. What three things does Paul pray that the Ephesians may know? Is this knowing different from other kinds of knowing? How is knowing that answer on a test different from knowing you dad? This latter kind of knowing is the kind that Paul wants us to have of these three things.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Ephesians 1:20-23.** The end of verse 19, speaks of us knowing “the immeasurable greatness of God’s power toward us...according to the working of His great might.” These verses show us the nature of that power in the work of

Christ. In what four ways does Paul say that the power of God was manifested in Christ? Why is it important for us to have this example of the power of God?

(b) In what way does God's raising of Christ show God's power, or over what does God exercise power (Romans 8:2, 10-11)? What does this mean for us as believers? What does Christ's victory over death mean for us?

(c) What is God shown to have power over in seating Christ at his right hand...etc? What hope does this give us in our own lives (Matthew 28:18-20)?

(d) What does it mean that God has put everything under "his feet" (Psalm 8:5-8)? And finally, how is Christ connected to the church? What role does He play? When you think of Christ, reflect upon these four ways that Christ has been exalted and God's power has been worked. How do these things help sustain you in your walk with God?

(e) *Family*: Read Ephesians 1:20-23. What four ways has God's great might worked in Christ? What does Christ have authority over? Is there anyone greater than Him? How does Christ relate to the church? Have you ever thought that the King of all things shares Himself with Christians? What is so amazing about that?

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Matthew 21:1-11.** We will end the week looking at the Triumphal Entry of Christ. How was Christ received in this passage? How did the crowd receive Him? It is important to understand that riding on a donkey was the preferred vehicle for kings in Israel? Because of the rocky and treacherous roads donkeys have a surer footing than horses.

(b) How does this picture of Christ compare to the picture we have in Ephesians 1:20-23? Often, we have in scripture shadows of things that will or have come to light. When will Christ make His ultimate triumphal entry (Revelation 20:11-14)?

(c) How will His second entry be different from the first? According to Ephesians 1:20-23, what power does He have right now? So, what will His second coming achieve?

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. What has stuck with you the most this week? What is the status of your prayer life? To what extent do you "know" the three things in Ephesians 1:18-19? How is God wanting to stretch your faith in Him? How is God wanting to strengthen your love for others?

DATE: March 28, 2010

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The Great Work in Christ
"and He put all things under His feet.."