

MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Sunday, October 2nd – 12-2pm – lunch & childcare provided

INTRODUCE

Well, if you have your Bibles, and I hope you do,

- please grab them and turn to Ephesians chapter 1.
- You can open a phone or a tablet to Ephesians 1,
- or you can use one of the hard-backed black bibles
 - under every single chair.
 - You'll find Ephesians 1 on page **976**.

INTRODUCTION

After teaching on election and predestination last Sunday, I wasn't sure who would show up this week, but...you made it...you are the elect!

ILLUSTRATION: HEADACHES

So, for a number of years I've been getting these migraines with what's called aura,

- so, they're these headaches that just hit me
- with these visual disturbances.
 - It's like flashes of light,
 - and blind spots,
 - and other vision changes.

The way I've described it is like:

- imagine you stare at the sun,
- and then you know you've got that blurry blob thing
 - in your field of vision?

The headaches are like that,

- but the blob doesn't go away,
- and I can't see.

And they really weren't anything more than an inconvenience,

- but one Sunday a few years ago,
- right before preaching,
- one of these headaches came upon me,
 - and my vision got wonky...
 - and I came up here to preach,
 - and I could hardly see my notes.

But as that's happening, I can find myself kind-of seeing.

- Like, if I squint and really focus
- I can just kinda make out what I'm looking at.

So, I managed to make it through that sermon...

- but I got a little freaked out,
- so, I went to have an MRI brain scan...
- just to make sure it wasn't something sketchy.

So, I get the MRI...

- only to wait for two weeks
- to find out what's wrong with my head.

And here's what I read when they came back.

FINDINGS:

- There is no atrophy.
- There is no hemorrhage.
- There is no mass lesion.
- No midline shift is identified.
- There is no infarction or diffusion abnormality.
- No gross bone lesion is identified.
- And the paranasal sinuses are clear.

I have no idea what most of that meant...

but the “no” in front of all those things was reassuring.

But then, right below this, I read the summary of the scan, and here’s what it said:

- Unremarkable brain.

Which I thought was hurtful and unnecessary.

It’s actually the only time I WANT my brain to be called *unremarkable*.

TRANSITION: SIGHT

I bring all this up because...

- every time I get one of these migraines...
- where I lose the ability to see clearly...
- I get a small reminder of how precious the gift of sight is.

It’s certainly not to the extent to what

- some of our friends from the Center for the Blind experience,
- or even some of you who have struggles with diminishing eyesight.

But I get a little taste of it, and it reminds me of how different my life would be without sight.

TRANSITION

And this is what Paul brings up in Ephesians 1.

- Remember last week,
 - he has just given us a 202-word,
 - theologically magnificent,
 - run-on sentence...
 - all about how God saves us.

And in the second half of the chapter,

- it's like he takes a deep breath...
- and pauses on the theology...
- to pray.

He stops theologizing,

- and he prays for the Ephesian Christians,
- and his prayer is for them to have spiritual sight.

You see, Paul knows that just explaining these great mysteries of salvation is not enough.

- It isn't more information they need...
- but rather, they need illumination.
- They need to see!

So, let's get into the text, and I think the things that Paul prays for the Ephesians, are exactly what he would pray for us as well.

Ephesians 1, starting in verse 15:

EPHESIANS 1:15-16

[15] For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, [16] I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,

Now, here comes Paul's prayer for them...look at verse 17

EPHESIANS 1:17-18a

[17] 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, [18] having the eyes of your hearts enlightened

POINT 1

Now, stop right there. This is what Paul is praying for the believer...

- he's praying that the eyes of their hearts would be opened.
 - This is where that 90s worship song comes from, y'all!

Paul wants them to see!

- And how will this sight come?
- Well, the Father gives...
 - through the Holy Spirit
- **the KNOWLEDGE of him.**

So, that's Paul's primary prayer for his people.

That they would **SLIDE KNOW GOD**

- This is the most important thing to Paul.
- He wants these people to KNOW GOD.

EXPLAIN: GREEK

And that's for us, too. We need to KNOW GOD, too!

- But that doesn't mean to just know the facts ABOUT him.
- It's more than that...
- we have to have **the eyes of our hearts opened!**

Now, there are two main words for *knowledge* in Greek. *Eido* and *ginosko*.

- *Eido* refers to knowing facts, or data.
 - I know that Denver is the capital of Colorado.
 - I know that Pteronophobia is the fear of being tickled by feathers.
 - I know that cats are the worst.

See, they're facts! *Eido*.

But the second word in Greek for knowledge is *ginosko*, and that's the word that Paul used in verse 17.

- It refers to a different kind of knowledge.
- It is a personal...
 - felt knowledge.

The Hebrew equivalent to *ginosko* often referred to the sexual intimacy a husband and wife shared together, as in Genesis 4:1a – **Now Adam knew Eve his wife.**

- That doesn't mean they exchanged names and relevant facts...
 - "oh, you grew up in a garden..."
 - Favorite food: fruit...
 - Pet snake...that's interesting."
- No, **Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain**

This is the knowledge that Paul is talking about.

- He wants you to KNOW GOD in a way
 - that is much more than simply facts...
- It is intimate and experiential.
- It's *ginosko*.

When the Holy Spirit enlightens the eyes of our hearts,

- he takes the *eido*, our knowledge ABOUT God,
- and he makes us KNOW him, *ginosko*.

ILLUSTRATION: JOB

It reminds me of the last chapter of the book of Job.

- Job loses everything as God allows Satan to test him.
- And the majority of the book of Job is him wrestling
 - with who God is,
 - and why all this bad has happened to him.

And by the end of the book, God just basically challenges Job with a rebuke concerning God's grandeur and majesty.

And Job says this in reply:

SLIDE JOB 42:5

[5] I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,
but now my eye sees you;

I had HEARD of you...but now I can SEE you!

KNOW GOD SLIDE

APPLICATION

And I think this might be one of the main reasons, for many of us, why we feel spiritually stuck.

Because...

- what we know with our minds,
 - *eido*,
- has never become known in our hearts,
 - *ginosko*.

For every single one of us in this room, this is our primary need:

- To know him.
- To *ginosko* him more and more.

And to know him that way, we need the eyes of our hearts enlightened.

TRANSITION

So, this is what Paul starts with.

- He prays they would KNOW GOD.

And then he continues his prayer...

- with three things
- that are the outworking's
- of knowing God.

Look at verse 18:

EPHESIANS 1:18

[18] having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you,

POINT 2

As you KNOW GOD...

- and have the eyes of your heart enlightened,
- one of the ramifications in your life
- is that you begin to **SLIDE KNOW HOPE**

Our English word *hope* doesn't really communicate what Paul means here.

You see, in English, we use the word *hope* to refer to

- something you want to happen,
- but you just aren't sure it will happen.
 - Will I get that job I want? I hope so.
 - Will I meet that special someone this year? I hope so.
 - Will the Broncos make it to the Super Bowl this year?
 - I hope so...
 - But after that first game...I dunno...

You see, when WE talk about hope, we mean UNCERTAINTY.

But whenever the BIBLE talks about hope, it means CERTAINTY.

- This is one of the worst things about translating
 - Greek into English,
- and there's really no way around it...

But the word *hope* in the Bible means absolute certainty.

- It is the hope we HAVE.
- Biblical hope isn't wishful thinking...
- rather, biblical hope is something that you are sure of,
 - but it just hasn't happened yet.

OUR HOPE

- So, then, what is it that we can hope in?
- What can we be absolutely certain of?

It's what we talked about last week! Our salvation.

- We have the hope of our salvation.
- We are assured of our salvation.

Why?

- Because it's God who chose us!

You see,

- if you are trying to save yourself...
 - you can never be sure.
- But when you KNOW that you are saved
 - by grace alone through faith,
 - it fills you with an absolute certainty.

Hope for believers is not the world's wishful thinking,
but the absolute certainty...
that God will make true what he has promised.

ILLUSTRATION: BAND

Tim Keller uses this illustration:

Imagine you found out that you had a long-lost relative who died,

- but come to find out they left you billions of dollars.
- And all you had to do
- to claim what was yours
- was to go to the bank and sign a piece of paper.

And so, you get in your car to drive to the bank...

- and about a mile away from the bank...
- your car breaks down.

What is your response at that moment?

- Are you angry,
- are you upset,
- do you get out of the car and start cursing at it
- and kicking it?
- *“Why is this happening to me, God?!?”*

NO!

- I don't care how much that car is worth...
- I don't care what stuff you left in the trunk...
- you wouldn't even call a tow truck!

You'd sprint away from it the last mile to the bank...

cause you've got billions coming to you.

Who cares about that car!

Your inheritance is your hope!

It trumps anything you might lose!

TRANSITION

This is what Paul's praying for you.

- That you would KNOW GOD,
- and that will let you KNOW HOPE...
- that transcends your circumstances.

Next one, back to verse 18:

EPHESIANS 1:18b

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,

POINT 3

As you KNOW GOD,

- that lets you KNOW HOPE,
- but next,
- you can **SLIDE KNOW WORTH**

You can know YOUR worth as you have the eyes of your heart opened!

So, who's inheritance are we talking about here?

- Notice the pronoun...
- it isn't OUR inheritance we're talking about right now.
 - That was really the last point.

Our inheritance...

- is the HOPE we have
- that God will bring
- our salvation to completion.

But now, this is **HIS glorious inheritance**.

God's inheritance.

Now that is a bizarre thought. God has an inheritance?

- What in the world could God conceivably be waiting on?

For the God who has everything...

- what is his inheritance...
- that is described as glorious?

Well, the text tells us.

- It's the saints.
- It's you.
- It's me.
 - Because of his choosing,
 - and redeeming,
 - and adopting,
 - and sealing us,
 - we are his possession!
- And now he is waiting to fully gain his inheritance.

The one thing God didn't have

- that he was willing
- to go to the bloody cross of Calvary to obtain
- was you.

This thought is almost too glorious to comprehend!

- But as you KNOW GOD more,
- you will KNOW your immeasurable WORTH!

Paul is saying,

- *"When you SEE how precious you are to God,*
- *that will totally transform your life!"*

ILLUSTRATION

Another Keller illustration:

Harper is still at the fun point in life...

- where the moment I walk in from work,
- she just smiles all big
- and screams, *"Daddy!"*
- and runs to me for a big hug.

Now, I know this won't always be the case, so I'm trying to take it all in.

But when she does it...

- sometimes I look at her,
- and I just get overcome with this fatherly emotion,
- and I'll pick her up
- and spin her around in the air,
- and I'll tickle her,
- and she'll laugh,
- and smile,
- and she puts both hands on my cheeks
- and looks me square in the eye, and says, *"Daddy!"*

It's one of my favorite things in the whole world!

Now, before that moment, Harper knows that I love her, right?

- Nothing has tangibly changed.
 - I still provide for her...
 - I am still committed to her...
 - she still knows that I love her.

But in that moment of joy, she FEELS my love for her in a different way.

It is manifested differently.

APPLICATION

That's what Paul is praying for us to feel.

- That we'd know a sense
 - of the majesty
 - and beauty
 - of God in our hearts
- AND that we'd experience his deep love
 - and value of us...
 - that we'd KNOW WORTH!

If God isn't real to you, this is what you must pray for.

That you would KNOW your WORTH to him!

TRANSITION

One more today.

- As you KNOW GOD,
- you'll KNOW HOPE,
- you'll KNOW WORTH...

and one more. Look at verse 19:

EPHESIANS 1:19-23

[19] and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might [20] that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, [21] 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. [22] And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, [23] which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

POINT 4

On this last one Paul just gets going, and cannot stop... typical Paul

- But as we KNOW GOD more...
 - as the eyes or our hearts are enlightened,
- we will **SLIDE KNOW POWER**

The immeasurable greatness of his power!

God wants us to know the power with which he is working in and around and through us in the world.

And then Paul gets caught up talking about that power,

- because it is the same power
- that God used to raise Christ from the dead.
- It's resurrection power.

Paul says:

- If God brought life out of death with Jesus,
- then he can bring life and healing
- to the mess you've made
- of your heart and your life.

In the midst of ANYTHING you are going through,

- you need to see HIS power at work in you and through you—
- working in every situation for your good,
- and to accomplish God's purposes.

ILLUSTRATION: CHARIOTS OF FIRE

I was reminded of a really great story in 2 Kings chapter 6.

- Israel is at war with the Syrians.
- And the prophet Elisha
 - and one of his servants
- are with the army of Israel.

And 2 Kings 6:15 says this:

SLIDE 2 KINGS 6:15

[15] When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?”

The Syrian army surrounds Israel’s army,

- and the servant sees them, and freaks out...
- because they’re surrounded by a much stronger force.

But look at Elisha’s response. Verse 16:

SLIDE 2 KINGS 6:16

[16] He said, “Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

To which, the servant probs thought...

- “um, I know how to count Elisha!
- Just look around us!”

SLIDE 2 KINGS 6:17

[17] Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Elisha prays that the servant's eyes would be opened...

- and he sees that the forces of the Lord,
 - the angelic horses and chariots of fire!

Now, one very important thing to note.

- When Elisha prayed...
 - God didn't send the armies.
- God didn't send the power in response to Elisha's prayer.
 - The army was already there.
 - The power was already available.
- He just prayed for his servant to see it!

Oh church,

- the question is not,
 - "Has God sent his power?"
- The question is,
 - "Have you seen it?"

You don't need to pray FOR his power...

you need to pray that he'd open your eyes to see that it's already there!

KNOW POWER SLIDE

APPLICATION: SIN

Now, there are so many ways his power can manifest in our lives. But let me just give one point of application: our sin.

Listen to me on this:

- Jesus' blood not only releases us from the penalty of our sin,
- it also releases us from its power.

I hear this kind of thing all the time...

- *"well pastor, I just don't think I can beat this sin.*
- *I think this is just my cross to bear.*
- *I'm glad that I'm forgiven,*
- *but I just can't get past this one sin."*

And to that, Paul would scream, 'NO!'

- Jesus didn't die to only release you from the penalty of your sin.
- Jesus dies to release you from the power of your sin!

And when you become a Christian, you get that power.

And through the Holy Spirit, he can empower you to overcome your sin.

- That's why Jesus will often say to people...
 - *"go and sin no more."*
- That's not a fool's hope!
- He really means it!

Church, the problem is not that your sins are too strong...

- it's a sight problem...
- it's a knowing problem...
- it's that your love for Jesus is so weak.

The only way you will bring your sin into captivity...
is when your love for God is increased.

You say,

- *“well, how does that happen?”*
- *How do I grow in love for Jesus?”*

The answer is simple...LOOK AT HIM!

- Look at Jesus,
- see him lifted up,
- see him bleed for you,
- see the greatness of the sacrifice that he gave for you,
- see how great a price he paid to redeem you!
- And then see how powerful God is...
 - to bring him back from the grave!

Does that sound too simple? Just LOOK AT JESUS.

- Is it really that simple? It is.
- It may be simple, but it is not easy...
- The answer isn't COMPLEX...
- But it is DIFFICULT...

Only then will you SEE HIM with the EYES OF YOUR HEART:

- KNOW GOD
- KNOW the certainty of your HOPE,
- KNOW your great WORTH to,
- and KNOW his POWER at work in you!

EPHESIANS SLIDE WITH PADS

CONCLUSION

So, listen, y'all, if you've been around here for a minute, you know this about me...

- Man, I am serious about the Bible.
- I am serious about theology.
- I am serious about doctrine.
- I am serious about *eido*, right?

Goodness, I've given you charts in like 2 of my last 3 sermons! Charts!

I want you to keep growing in your knowledge ABOUT God!

But then hear me...

- I've seen and experienced some stuff
- in my Christian journey that I just can't unsee!
 - Things more than doctrine.
 - Things more than theology.
 - Things more than *eido*.

I've seen addictions broken...

I've seen people healed...

I've seen marriages restored...

I've seen people WAY far from God be wooed into his presence!

And so, this is my prayer for me...

and this is what I pray for you.

- I want to taste and see more!
- I want to know him more!
- And I want that for you, too!

So, yes and amen, to faithful study and development of my mind.

- And yet, I'm also asking for breakthrough.
 - I'm desperate to KNOW my HOPE,
 - I'm desperate to KNOW my WORTH,
 - And I'm desperate to KNOW the POWER of God.

I wanna see that.

And I want you to, as well.

So, I am pleading with the Holy Spirit to break through...

- and do something that just blows our minds...
- like just melt the hardness or coldness in our hearts,
- and wreck us.

Y'all, I want that!

- I want us to have a front row seat
- to the power of God
- moving in unexplainable ways in this place.

That's what Paul is praying for the Ephesians.

And that's what I'm begging for God to do with us in this church, y'all.

- It's time to stop settling for blurred sight.
- It's time to stop squinting just enough
 - to make out what's in front of us.
- It's time to have the eyes of our hearts opened.

I pray that where we might be blind now, would be made sight this morning.

"God, I wanna see! Open my eyes!"

Let's pray...

RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – fathomchurch.org/give
- PRAYER - fathomchurch.org/prayer
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

RESOURCES USED:

- Bruce, F.F. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians.
- Chandler, Matt. *The Hope to Which We Have Been Called.*
- Greear, J.D. *Prayer For Clarity.*
- Greear, J.D. *Open Up Our Eyes.*
- Hoehner, Harold W. Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary.
- Keller, Tim. *The Freedom of Hope.*
- Martin, Joby. *Grace.*
- O'Brien, Peter T. The Pillar New Testament Commentary. The Letter to the Ephesians.