

“THE EYES OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING”, #1

INTRODUCTION

In Eph. 1, Paul makes an interesting statement about the “eyes” of the Ephesians. He stated, *“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.”* (Eph. 1:18-19). Paul begins by referring to their “eyes” of “understanding” and then proceeds to name three things that they need to understand, with each point beginning with word “what.” In Matt. 13:15, Jesus spoke of some who had “closed” their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and understand with their hearts, and be healed. The term, “eyes of your hearts” was a figurative expression, that they might understand. Let’s look at the 3 things Paul stated they needed to understand when the “eyes of their understanding were open.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, Paul said, “What is the hope of his calling.”

A. Paul associates “hope” and “calling” together in this verse.

1. The word “hope” suggests something desirable, and expected—pointing to the future. Rom. 8:24-25
 - a. The hope of Christians is for eternal life—following the resurrection of the dead. Tit. 1:2
 - b. This hope is based upon the fact that Jesus Himself was raised, as a kind of “firstfruits” of the general resurrection to come at the end of the world. 1 Pet. 1:3-4; 1 Cor. 15:20-23
2. The “calling” refers to the **gospel** THEY had obeyed and now had that true hope. Eph. 2:12; 4:4

B. The “calling” by the gospel was to the ultimate “glory” with Jesus Christ. 2 Thess. 2:14

II. 2nd, Paul said, “What the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.”

A. Here, Paul again enjoins 4 important words together, that follow what he said about the “hope” of this calling: **riches, glory, inheritance** and **saints**.

1. The word “riches” is used 4 other times in this Ephesian letter, to allude to the spiritual and moral blessings which the Lord provides. Eph. 1:7; 2:7; 3:8; 3:16 (Read or quote)
2. The word “glory” alludes to the ultimate splendor that shall radiate the rich life we will have in heaven.
3. The word “inheritance” alludes to what has been willed to us by the Lord that He will fulfill in His saints.
4. The word “saints” identifies the people that have been saved, and separated themselves from the general practice of sin. 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:9-11

B. This inheritance, even for one person, is better than ALL the material and physical riches inherited by some in this world. Matt. 16:26

III. 3rd, Paul said, “What is the exceeding greatness of his power.”

A. God’s power is not just “great”, but is described as “exceeding greatness.”

1. The Bible is filled with great wonders and powers of God.
 - a. His creation of the universe, with millions of stars, and all forms of life, is great indeed.
 - b. His sending the ten plagues upon the wicked Egyptians, was a great exhibition of power.

- c. His parting of the waters of the Red Sea, and leading the millions of Israelites into the promised land, was another great manifestation of power.
 - d. Causing Jesus to be born of a virgin, and then raised from the dead, were great acts of power.
 - e. The sending of the Holy Spirit and ushering in the kingdom on the day of Pentecost, was a great exhibition of power.
2. This “power” discussed by Paul in this passage, was in behalf of “usward who believe.” (Eph. 1:19)

B. ALL of what Paul wanted the Ephesians to UNDERSTAND was “the working of his mighty power.” v. 19; cf Phil. 3:20-21

CONCLUSION

I. Remember, all these things Paul wanted the Ephesians, and ALL who are saints, to understand, in order to appreciate the privilege of being saints, not only for a better life here, but for the glorious inheritance as well.

II. Do you have this hope of God’s calling?

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