

TITLE AND NUMBER: 82. Thanksgiving and prayer



REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): Ephesians 1: 15-23

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

What does this Bible passage tell us?

This letter to the Ephesians was written by Paul who was in prison because of his faith in Jesus. At first, Paul had fiercely persecuted Christians. But after his encounter with Jesus, God sent him to Ephesus to help and encourage people there. In this letter, Paul is giving thanks to God for the Ephesians. What a turnaround!

Paul speaks of "the promise of the Holy Spirit to those who believe" (v13). He is clearly excited about their faith and how they love all the 'saints' - anyone who is a believer.

The great news is that God wants us to have His Holy Spirit in us and be guided by Him so that we can make the right decisions and know Him even more. We can experience God's power working in our lives, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead! (v19b-20)

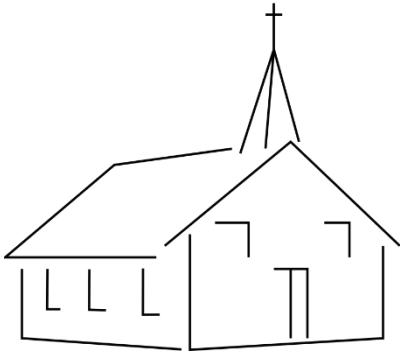
In response, we can show the character of Jesus to others by the way we live. This power that Paul speaks of is for the church - that's us. What an amazing thought! We can begin to know what God's heart is for the whole world: for us to be restored to a relationship with Him.

Wherever we are, God can do anything through us if, being led by the Holy Spirit, we give ourselves wholeheartedly to build His Kingdom. Being in prison is no hindrance to Him but rather an exciting opportunity for God to use us. Be encouraged! God is with you and He can "do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us." (Ephesians 3:20)

Reflections:

- What excites you about your relationship with God?
- Are you asking God for opportunities to bless others? What might these opportunities be?
- Keep praying and thanking God for those people who are supporting you. If you feel that you need more support, you can call *Prayer Line* or talk to a Chaplain.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

