

## ***Transformed by Receiving the Spirit of Revelation (Eph. 1:15-23)***

*<sup>16</sup> I do not cease...making mention of you in my prayers: <sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know (experience) what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches (wealth) of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe... (Eph. 1:16-19)*

### **I. UNDERSTANDING THIS PRAYER**

- A. This is one of the most important prayers in Scripture. It focuses on God imparting the spirit of glory to us. This prayer gives us Paul's "road map for discipleship" to apply in our ministry to others. Paul outlines what our heart needs to be fully alive and how we are best motivated.
- B. We pray this for our own heart as well as for others, both believers and unbelievers (family, friends, ministries, cities, nations, government leaders and especially our enemies).
- C. Paul prayed a general prayer that people receive revelation of the knowledge of God (what God and His kingdom are like). Then, he prayed that they experience 3 specific dimensions of God's glory that would cause them to persevere in godliness. The sequence here is important to notice.
  - 1. We pray to understand God's calling for our life, both in this age and the age-to-come. We must have a clear vision for what our destiny is and what we are to do.
  - 2 We pray to know who we are to God as His treasured inheritance.
  - 3. We pray to experience God's power in our heart, ministry and life.

### **II. WALKING IN CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S CALLING FOR OUR LIFE**

*<sup>18</sup> That you may know what is the hope (assurance/confidence) of His calling... (Eph. 1:18)*

- A. One of the fundamental longings of the human heart is to participate in that which has deep and lasting significance and relevance. We are restless and agitated in our spirit until we answer this longing. We can only fulfill this longing in relationship with God.
- B. We must have a clear vision for our life by knowing what we are to do in our partnership with God. God answers our longing for significance by giving each of us a unique calling or assignment. This is a vast subject that includes our inward life as well as our outward ministry. It has both individual and corporate dimensions for this age and the age-to-come (2 Thes. 1:11).
- C. The hope or confidence about our calling is an anchor in our soul. Having hope or confidence that what we do is important to God gives us a sense of destiny before God and makes us steady.

*<sup>19</sup> This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast... (Heb. 6:19)*

- D. [Seeing ourselves in God's drama changes us. Josiah](#) (1 Kg. 13:2 nearly 300 years before 2 Kg. 23:15-20), [Cyrus](#) (Isa. 44:28-45:8), [Alexander the Great](#) (Dan. 8:5-8), [David, Paul, and the apostles saw themselves in God's plans](#) (1 Chr. 28:4; Mt. 19:28; Acts 13:47; Isa. 49:6).
- E. If we have nothing to die for (to give all for) then we have nothing to live for, thus, we live bored. The principle of wholeheartedness is seen in part with unbelievers (business, arts, athletics, Communism, terrorists). False teaching on grace offers insurance while continuing in sin and passivity without imparting urgency or power to live in wholeheartedness. The very design of our spirit requires our wholeheartedness if we are to consistently feel strong and joyful.
- F. We live different when we see ourselves in God's story by seeing our purpose. The turning point comes when we understand that we also can go deep in God as others have. We then begin to cry out to God, "Why not me? I want to go deep in God like others from history."  
<sup>18</sup> *Where there is no revelation (vision), the people cast off restraint (discipline). (Prov. 29:18)*
- G. [One of the key functions of a spiritual father or mother is](#) to help others [see who they are and what their purpose is](#). It is damaging to live disconnected to God's purpose. We live spiritually aimless. This has severe consequences that cause us great loss in this age and in the age-to-come. Much compromise and spiritual passivity can be traced back to lacking a sense of purpose.
- H. Our primary calling is to be a disciple of Jesus that says and does what He said and did (Sermon on the Mount lifestyle) without regard for how much honor or money we receive nor the impact we make. Our secondary calling relates to our position or function in a ministry organization.  
<sup>27</sup> *God has chosen the (so-called) foolish things of the world (Mt. 5-7 lifestyle) to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the (so-called) weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty...<sup>29</sup> that no flesh should glory in His presence. (1 Cor. 1:27-29)*
- I. We live differently when we have confidence that our small, weak and seemingly insignificant choices and activities are important to God. This makes our heart us feel powerful.  
<sup>17</sup> *You were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities. (Lk. 19:17)*  
<sup>21</sup> *You were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. (Mt. 25:21)*
- J. We must have confidence that our calling to so-called weakness (1 Cor. 1:27) as a disciple is very valuable to God. This revelation equips our heart to rejoice in the "weak and small things" of the Kingdom instead of despising them. Only with this perspective can we live wholehearted.
- K. Jesus as God's "ideal servant Israel" knew that His life in servanthood and meekness appeared to accomplish nothing on the world stage. Yet, He knew His reward would come after His death. Jesus delighted in doing God's will though it appeared weak (Jn. 4:34; Heb. 10:7; Ps. 40:8).  
<sup>3</sup> *He (Father) said to me (Jesus), "You are My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified." <sup>4</sup> Then I said, 'I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and in vain; yet surely My just reward is with the LORD, and My work with my God.'" (Isa. 49:3-4)*

- L. Many Christians lose this vision over time. They become like a ship lost at sea that is aimlessly adrift. The significance of our life is only clear when our understanding is enlightened. We pray much to receive the spirit of revelation that lifts the “fog of darkness” off our heart. Why? That we might have confidence that the small things we do in obedience are esteemed by Him.

<sup>12</sup> *Epaphras...always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete (instead of despising or neglecting) in all the will of God. (Col. 4:12)*

<sup>9</sup> *We do not cease to pray...that you be filled with the knowledge of His will... (Col. 1:9)*

- M. Our culture is entrenched in lies concerning what is successful and important. The message is that the rich, famous and influential are the most successful. History is filled with rich and famous people (in business, athletics and the media) that lived with much despair and emptiness. Thoreau said, “The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.”

### III. THE GLORY OF BEING GOD’S INHERITANCE: KNOWING WHO WE ARE IN GOD

<sup>17</sup> *The Father...may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation...that you may know (experience)...  
<sup>18</sup> *what are the riches (wealth) of the glory of His inheritance in the saints... (Eph. 1:17-18)**

- A. We must know the “why” behind the “what we do.” Jesus wants a Bride as His inheritance. We are the reward that God gave to Jesus because we are what Jesus most desires. This reveals His passion for us. We are the prize of all the ages that the Father gave the Son. The revelation of who we are in God’s heart is the core truth of our spiritual identity that reveals our true value, dignity and honor. (This is the Bridal paradigm or the Song of Solomon message).

<sup>10</sup> *I am my Beloved's and His desire is toward me. (Song 7:10)*

- B. God chose weak human beings as His treasured inheritance, therefore, He is not surprised by our failure. At a time that Israel was failing, God declared that she was His inheritance.

<sup>9</sup> *The LORD's portion is His people; Jacob (Israel) is the place of His inheritance. (Deut. 32:9)*

- C. Those who sincerely seek to obey Jesus need not fear that they will be disqualified from their calling because of weakness. Our most sincere efforts to love God are flawed. Yet, we are lovely to God even in our weakness. He is tender and affectionate toward us in our weakness.

<sup>5</sup> *I am dark (of heart), but lovely (to God). (Song 1:5)*

### IV. EXPERIENCING GOD’S POWER IN OUR LIFE AND MINISTRY

<sup>17</sup> *That the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation...that you may know (experience)...  
<sup>19</sup> *what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe... (Eph. 1:17-19)**

- A. We pray for a breakthrough of power for our heart that we may live out our calling and identity in God with a tenderized heart as we overcome that which weighs our heart down (Eph. 3:16). The Spirit will cause us to love the things we used to hate and to hate the things we once loved.

- B. Experiencing God's power (tenderized heart, open doors, direction, protection and provision) confirms and renews our sense of calling and identity as God's inheritance.
- C. We need power in ministry so that we can bring others to their calling and identity in God.

## V. THE SPIRIT OF REVELATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

*<sup>17</sup> That the...Father of glory may give the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding (heart) being enlightened... (Eph. 1:17-18)*

A. The glory the Father possesses is the glory He will impart according to our hunger for it. The Holy Spirit releases the spirit of revelation by supernaturally "opening the eyes of our heart."

B. Satan's main strategy is to "blind the eyes of our heart" with darkness (depression, despair, addiction, condemnation, boredom, hopelessness, and aimlessness, etc.).

*<sup>4</sup> Whose minds the god of this age (Satan) has blinded...lest the light of the glory of Christ ...should shine...6 in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God... (2 Cor. 4:4-6)*

*<sup>10</sup> The accuser of the brethren (Satan) ...accused them before God day and night. (Rev. 12:10)*

C. Our greatest spiritual need is for revelation (light) that overpowers Satan's attack against us. Thus, Paul prayed that they receive the spirit of revelation to overcome the spirit of blindness.

*<sup>4</sup> In Him was life (Zoe: God's life), and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness (heart), and the darkness did not comprehend (overpower) it. (Jn. 1:4-5)*

D. Biblical truth is more than just right ideas. It is right ideas that have divine power on them. Our mind cannot understand nor feel their power without the Spirit's activity in us (1 Cor. 2:14). The best eyes are useless when a person is in a dark room.

*<sup>14</sup> The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (understood). (1 Cor. 2:14)*

E. We must have confidence that our calling to weakness (1 Cor. 1:27) as a disciple is valuable to God. The spirit of revelation helps us see the truth and thus equips our heart to live wholehearted with God. It produces powerful effects in us that include strength for holiness and happiness.

F. The Greek word "knowledge" (epignosis) refers to experiential knowledge which is much more than information about God. This is a prayer to experience active intimacy with God.

G. How then shall we live? We must live in agreement with God's light to receive more of it. We can only receive more revelation from the Holy Spirit as we make ourselves accessible to Him. We seek more light from His Word and prayer as we war against all that grieves Him.

*<sup>9</sup> For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light. (Ps. 36:9)*