

The Ah Ha! Moment

Ephesians 1:18

Warren Wiersbe relates an account of newspaper magnet, William Randolph Hearst. One of the wealthiest men of his time, Hearst spent a large fortune collecting art treasures from around the world. One day, he found a description of some valuable paintings he desperately desired to own. He sent his agent abroad to find them and purchase them. After months of searching, the man reported that the treasures had been found... in one of Mr. Hearst's warehouses. Had he known his treasures, he wouldn't have had to search for them. Ephesians teaches us about our riches in Christ. If we know them, we can live the victorious life of those who are in Christ.

Remember that Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesian church from prison. V.15 tells us that he had heard great news about his friends there. He heard about their "**faith in the Lord Jesus**" and their "**love for ALL the saints**." Those are two good measuring sticks for any church. Are we living by "**faith**," following the Lord? Do we have a "**love for ALL the saints**"? Paul prayed continually for these precious believers. He did not "**cease to give thanks**" for them. Paul prayed by name for them before God, "**making mention**," of them in his prayers. He prayed that God, "**the Father of glory**" would give them "**the spirit of wisdom**" and "**revelation of the knowledge of Him**."

There is a phrase in v.18 that is a key to unlock this prayer, "**that you may know**." You might say we already know these things. Well, you may know about these things, but do you have a heart knowledge? Paul prays that "**the eyes of your understanding** [lit. 'heart']" would be "**enlightened**."

Being a teacher I love it when I am teaching and I see in a students that look of "Ah Ha! That's it!" Last year I was teaching in Algebra II about logarithms. One student just sat there with this dazed and confused expression. Finally after I gave several more examples and explained it in about five different ways, I saw that "Ah Ha!" look on his face. It's like someone turned the light on. Isn't that amazing?

The apostle Paul, being the teacher that he was, is praying for that "Ah Ha" to take place in those Ephesian believers. He has just told them about their salvation. "You know these things. You've read these things. I wonder if it's sunk deeply into your heart," Paul says. He can help you to see it, really see it. Once you have understood truth, it motivates you in all that you do in life. If you just know about it but don't understand it, you will have a hard time trying to live it.

God wants us to truly experience Jesus, not just "play church" or go through the religious motions of Christianity! There are three specific concerns that Paul has in Ep 1:18, 19. You can spot these easily by the word "what" at the beginning of each phrase: "**what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe**." We're only going to look at two of them now in verse 18. We will study the third next week. As we study today, let's pray

that God would give us that "Ah Ha!" moment so that we could not only know about these things, but that we could understand them and live them.

I. Know the Hope of our Calling (v.18b).

We all need Hope in this Hopeless World.

A number of years ago, off the coast of Massachusetts, a ship rammed an S-4, submarine. The submarine sank before anyone could escape. The entire crew was trapped. Ships rushed to the scene of the disaster, but there was nothing any of them could do. They were forced to watch and wait. Divers were sent down to evaluate the tragic situation. One man put his helmeted ear against the vessel and listened for any sounds. What he heard was someone tapping in Morse code. Because he knew Morse code he could decipher the message. It was this: **"Is - there - any - hope?"**

All around us, people are asking that question. Circumstances can become dark tunnels of despair. Health problems, financial calamities, unexpected tragedies and uncertainties about life after death cause people to cry out, **"Is there any hope?"**

The good news is that in Christ, we have hope, **"the Hope of His Calling."** Now one thing we need to understand about **"the hope of His calling"** is that when you see the word **"hope"** associated with God and His children, His believers, it is never, ever like the hope that is in this world. In this world when people use the word "hope" they usually mean something that they wish for but is highly uncertain. Never in Scripture do you find, "hope," used that way when it is associated with what God has promised and what God is doing. Instead it almost means the opposite of uncertainty. It means the assurance, the certainty of what God has promised. Paul is saying, "I'm praying that you will have a deep understanding and an assurance of the hope of His calling."

What is **"His calling?"** It is who we are in Christ. The Bible says that He has called us with an **"upward call"** or a high calling (Philippians 3:14), a **"holy calling"** (2 Timothy 1:9), and a **"heavenly calling"** (Hebrews 3:1). It is the calling described in Rom. 8:29-30 which says, **"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."**

God has called us to be **"conformed"** to the image of Christ. This is who we are and who we are becoming in Christ. We are being changed to be like Christ, because He lives in us.

The **"hope of our His calling"** is certain. Rom.11:29 says, **"For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."** What God began in us when He chose us and saved us, He will complete. We are **"sealed for the day of redemption."**

1 Thess.5:24 says, **"He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it."** Phil.1:6 says we can be **"confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."** Because God has called us all our hope is in Him not the world.

2 Peter 1:10 says, **"Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;"**

So Paul sees that one of the things they need to fully understand and to deeply realize is the hope of their calling. He had just told them what their calling involved. Now they need to understand the hope of their calling. It is all wrapped up in the destiny and the glory of the believer that is coming in the upcoming kingdom. We need a deeper understanding of our calling.

One reason we need to understand the hope of our calling is that in Eph. 4:1 Paul says, **"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called."** How can we walk worth of His calling unless we understand the hope of His calling?

I love the old hymn, **"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus name... His oath, His covenant, His blood, Support me in the whelming flood; When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay..."**

When you begin to understand what is the hope of your calling, the assurance of it, when you begin to realize that now we only have the earnest of that calling, that one day we'll have the full payment, then whatever comes your way you can stand on what God has done in your life.

II. Know the Riches of His Inheritance (v.18c).

A. He is our Inheritance and we are His Inheritance.

Note the phrase **"His inheritance in the saints."** Notice that it doesn't say "our inheritance," but **"His inheritance."**

This inheritance goes two ways. Back up in V.11 Paul made it very clear that we have an **"inheritance."** Our inheritance was predetermined in eternity and v.14 says that the Holy Spirit is the **"guarantee"** or the down payment on that inheritance today! So Paul says in Romans 8:16-17, **"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."**

Paul saw it as his mission to let these Ephesian believers know that they have a part in **"His inheritance."** In Acts 26:18 when Paul is giving his testimony before King Agrippa he recalls how God called him on that road to Damascus and said that He was sending Paul to the Gentiles, **"to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me."**

That was the ministry of Paul that God had given to him. Here he is carrying out that ministry from prison, and he says to the Ephesians there, the Gentile believers, "I'm praying that your eyes might be opened, that you have a deep understanding of the riches of His inheritance in His saints."

I think of the man who came from Campus Crusade one time. He drew a line all the way across several blackboards that were put together. He drew a huge line, and he said, "That represents eternity. I don't have enough chalk to draw it far enough because it would never end." In the middle of that line he put a dot, and he said, "Listen, God wants us to live for the line, not for the dot because that dot is so small compared to eternity."

What is the difference between living for the dot and living for the line? Those who live for the dot wake up each morning, go out and worry and fret and beat themselves to death to make another dollar so they can buy things that they think will make them happy. They're living for the dot. They're not living for the line. They don't understand the riches of His glory in His inheritance that's in the saints.

When you live for the line, for eternity, it'll make you get up each morning realizing that whatever you do that day has eternal impact. We can live the blessed life of a child of God. And every victory that we have in this world, is nothing more than God saying, "That's just a deposit. Enjoy my earnest today because I've got something coming that's full payment that eye has never seen nor ear heard." It'll motivate your walk like nothing else in the world. You should not be hoping in Jesus just for now. You ought to be looking for what's coming.

B. We will be glorified in Him and He will be glorified in Us.

However, this verse also teaches us that God considers us to be part of His "**riches**." Not only is He our inheritance, but we're His inheritance. That's a true statement. He considers us "**His inheritance**" because of what He has invested in us.

In a very real sense, God has too much invested in us to forsake us! Jesus paid the price for us with His own blood.

God deals with us on the basis of our future not our past. God looked at cowardly Gideon who was hiding from his enemies and said, "**The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!**" God looked at Josiah, the eight year old king from a wicked family and found a man who would lead a great revival. He looked at Simon, the inconsistent fisherman and called Him, Peter, the Rock. He looks at you and me and sees a glorious treasure.

In effect it as though the Lord is saying to us, "**I want you to see yourselves the way I see you. I want you to realize how much I love you and how much I value you. If you could see yourself from my point of view, you'd live differently.**"

Remember that phrase from v.18, Paul prayed that the "**eyes**" of our hearts would be "**enlightened**?" This passage is like a trip to the holy optometrist. He is

fitting us with spiritual corrective lenses to see ourselves and His work in us properly.

Did you notice that all three of these things that Paul prays for us to know are all wrapped up in Jesus Christ? Did you notice the word, “His,” in each one? **“what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe.”**

Everything we are, everything we have, and everything we do finds its meaning, its purpose and its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. He is All in all, everything I am, I have and I do are in Christ.

Did you have an “Ah Ha!” moment yet today? Maybe God has spoken to your heart today about your need to trust Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Maybe you’ve been living for the dot and not the line, and today it dawned on you, “Ah Ha!” It’s Jesus Christ that matters, and nothing else. Would you respond to His invitation, His calling, today?