

The Eyes of Our Understanding

Key Verse: “*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.*”
—*Ephesians 1:18*

Selected Scripture:
Ephesians 1:15-23

A MORE ACCURATE TRANSLATION of the first portion of our Key Verse refers to “the eyes of your heart.” (*Revised Version*, et al) The eyes thus mentioned do not relate to natural sight, but to what we see based on a heart full of faith. (II Cor. 5:7) The heart is similarly spoken of in relation to spiritual perception: “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him—these things God has revealed to us through

the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.”—I Cor. 2:9,10, *English Standard Version*

Paul teaches that it is only through heart enlightenment by the Holy Spirit that we begin to see the depths of God’s love to those he calls. “Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when God chose you. Not many of you were considered wise by human standards. Not many of you were powerful. Not many of you belonged to important families. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. He chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the

things of this world that are common and looked down on. He chose what is not considered to be important to do away with things considered important. So no one can brag to God.”—I Cor. 1:26-29, *New International Readers Version*

Paul’s main point in our Key Verse is that our present enlightenment is for the purpose of leading us to future glory. In another place the apostle states: “All who follow the leading of God’s Spirit are God’s own sons. Nor are you meant to relapse into the old slavish attitude of fear—you have been adopted into the very family circle of God and you can say with a full heart, Father, my Father. The Spirit ... endorses our inward conviction that we really are the children of God. Think what that means. If we are his children we share his treasures, and all that Christ claims as his will belong to all of us as well! Yes, if we share in his suffering we shall certainly share in his glory.”—Rom. 8:14-17, *JB Phillips New Testament*

In our previous lesson Paul preached of the spiritual blessings we have in Christ. Today’s lesson teaches us that these blessings are seen through eyes of faith and hearts attuned to God. Additionally, we understand that the hope of our calling is limited to those of a humble nature, and that the sufferings of Christ in this lifetime will lead to a future glory, in joint heirship with Christ.

In today’s lesson we have added another essential principle. Because Paul heard of the Ephesian church’s faith in Jesus and love toward all the saints, he says, “I have not stopped thanking God for you. I always remember you in my prayers.” (Eph. 1:16, *NIRV*) Selfless love for those within the body of Christ is a command which Jesus himself declared: “This is my commandment: that you love each other as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this—that a man should lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I tell you to do.”—John 15:12-14, *Phillips* ■