

# 3

## Epistle to the Ephesians: Prayer for the Saints (1.15-23)

- Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church
- Pastor Paul Goh
- 17 April 2005

### References:

J.B. Phillips, The New Testament in Modern English

J. M. Boice, Ephesians

1. Apostle prays for the church
  - a. He gives thanks for the Christians (thanksgiving)
  - b. He prays without ceasing for them (petitions)
  - c. Concerning this prayer
    - i. This is not the recording of his actual prayer
    - ii. But a summary of his petitions or requests for them
2. Specifically
  - a. To know Him better (v17)
    - i. What Christians settle for
      - (1) Some settle for little knowledge about God
      - (2) Some settle for a mere knowledge about God
    - ii. What Christians should aim for
      - (1) "Knowing God is a matter of personal dealing"
      - (2) "Knowing God is a matter of personal involvement, in mind, will and feeling"
      - (3) "Knowing God is a matter of grace" (J. I. Packer)
      - (4) We know God because He first set his love upon us and elected to know us savingly
  - b. The scope of salvation Christ has achieved for us. He makes 3 requests:
    - i. We might know the hope which he has called us (v18a)
      - (1) A living hope (I Pe. 1.3); a blessed hope (Titus 2.13); a sure hope (Heb. 6.11)
      - (2) God has called us to a hope
        - (a) To be holy and blameless in his sight (v4)
        - (b) To be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ (v5)
        - (c) To be for the praise of his glory (v12)
    - ii. That we might know the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints (v18b)
      - (1) Refers to our inheritance He has given us in salvation (cf. Col. 1.12)
      - (2) First petition emphasizes *hope* and the second petition emphasizes *riches*
    - iii. That we might know his incomparably great power for us who believe (v19)

- (1) This is the same power that raised Christ from the dead (resurrection power)
- (2) And set Christ at God's right hand (ascension power)
- (3) The name of Christ is given the highest honour in heaven - above all rule, authority, might and dominion and in the future world
  - (a) He has absolute rule or dominion
  - (b) Christ is the head of the church, which is His body
  - (c) Christ fills the church as he also fills the universe

### Reflection Questions

- 1. In prayer what do we pray for? What does it tell us of your prayers?
- 2. Why must we pray for CERC and FERC at this crucial time?
- 3. Do you know what is your hope as a Christian?
- 4. What steps can you take to know God?
- 5. Have you experienced the power of God in your life?