

Ephesians II

Ephesians 1:15-23 (4/2010)

In **verse 15** we have **“for this reason.”** It is referring to how we can receive the eight blessings in the previous section and how love can fulfill them. Paul says that he prays for the eight blessings for the Ephesian Church in verse 16. I would like to give you an example. We have quite a bit of poor people in our church. Being poor is inconvenient but it doesn't have absolute impact on the decisions they make. They have the attitude of “if we have it, we have it. If we don't have it, we don't have it.” We don't have a wealthy church member that stands out. Nevertheless, we don't lack to cause any financial hindrance to deter the work of God. That's because of the church members' generosity and the sacrifices they make. We don't have a church budget but we do have a closing at the end of the year. We are amazed at how much the congregation makes financial contribution to the church. I have shared with you that many church members are poor. How is that possible? How can we spend so much in our ministry and yet we don't lack at all? The reason is the eight blessings have melted down in to the life of church members. This is incredible blessing and God has given them all to the glorious church. I would like to encourage all the pastors to pray for eight blessings in the Spirit of God on daily basis so that the members can embody them.

There are some principal prayers Paul prays for with regard to the eight blessings. In **verse 17** we have **“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.”** The first thing Paul prayed for is the revelation and the wisdom on behalf of Ephesian Church. For Paul the revelation is just about everything. Many theologians say that the revelation is dead, but that's not true. It is true that 66 Books in the Bible are special revelation for us. They are also the completion of the revelation. However, the word of God is not fully revealed/disclosed to the believers, so it remains as ordinary logos.

For example, British missionaries who went to Bangladesh for short term mission all drowned. When they had the flood, the leader of the missionary group said, “Let's walk on water like Peter did!” So, they died trying to walk on water. This is a true story. What went wrong? That word was given to Peter as revelation not to the British missionaries. If that word was given to them as revelation, then they would have walked on water. **The word of God should be revealed through pastors during the message time. When that happens through the messages, the response of the hearers would be “Pastor preached to me today!” Many people say that in Zoe Ministry conferences “God spoke to me today.”** What that means is that the revelation came upon them. Charles Finney said that the revelation one receives an hour ago is not genuine. That's a shocking word. The word that is meaningful at that time, in that place, and to those people should be proclaimed.

Revelation is the revelation of God when we give up our ways, our thoughts, and reason and rationality. In Exodus, God says “I am who I am!” There are several interpretations but the key word is “haya” verb which is eternal present. **In order to meet the eternal present God, we must empty ourselves and receive the eternal present.** Therefore, God and I meet in eternal present. God I met 10 minutes ago is a fake. God I met a minute ago is also fake. Only God I meet right at this moment is genuine.

It is almost identical to the doctrine of salvation in Book of John which is “already but not yet.” Salvation is already done but it not yet. It is not yet completed. John 1:12 states “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.” The salvation is receiving God who endlessly draws near. When we encounter God who comes endlessly, we surrender and receive Him. However, if we choose to receive the world, that's the judgment. Meeting God in eternal present is the revelation.

Disciple should not have his/her possession, his ways, his plan, his goal, and his experience. Disciple should live by the provisions of God. **Hellenistic ways are to know before the departure but the Hebraistic ways are to depart before the understanding. When we embrace the word of God and go according to it, then we will understand it later. There is a vast difference between believe, go and understand and understand and go. The way of believe and just go seems ignorant but this is the way of God.** The revelation is opened up to those whose motivation of life is God. It is not opened up to those that are otherwise. The revelation is not spiritual gift. Another word, the revelation is for everyone but it is not for anyone. This goes with “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” in Beatitude.

The wisdom steers the revelation. The wisdom is to hear the voice of God. Without the revelation there is no wisdom. If one hears of the wisdom, he surely has seen the revelation of God. That’s the relationship between revelation and wisdom. They are like the both sides of the coin. Those that stress on the wisdom without any revelation are dangerous. That wisdom can be a fake or it may not be the wisdom of God.

Paul is emphasizing the importance of revelation to the Ephesian Church. Why? Because the church must follow the command of the King who is God and it must know the will, plan, and intention of God. If the church does not know the will of God, it cannot do anything. It should just be still. Church must respond to the King, His word, His will and His plan. That’s why the revelation is so important in the church. **If the word of God, logos, does not come as revelation, then it does not come with the authority of word to change the life of hearers.** The restoration of the authority of God for us means the proclamation of the word according to what He speaks to us. When I hear the sermons of those who are in the spiritual gift movement, I notice that they mess up in their messages. They don’t address the meaning of the text most of the time. They jump from here to there and that’s not the revelation. **When we preach according to the revelation of God, the flow of the message is clear. There are clear introduction, main body, and conclusion.** They are coherent. Revelational preaching is not always the expository preaching, but most of the time it would be. We should also clearly teach our church members what the revelation of God is as we understand the will of God through the revelation.

Let’s look at **verse 18**. It states, **“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what the hope of His calling is.”** The second prayer of Apostle Paul is that he would like for the Ephesian brothers to see the hope of their calling after their eyes are opened up to the revelation. **When we look at the whole Bible, there are three types of calling.**

When we first repent before the Lord and meet Him, God calls us, “You are My child.” **All the believers should repent and confirm their status as a child of God. That’s the first type of calling.** That’s where they begin their growth as holy and blameless people of God. If you are not a child of God, you can’t worship God. **In order for the believers to worship God and begin their faith life, they must confirm their calling of God. This is the first calling.**

Those that have been called to be the children of God, they should confirm their calling of church. Believers are transient in this generation. They move to another church when they don’t like their church. They search for the right pastor that they like and move to his church. The reason they move the church is because they have not confirmed their calling to the church. When the new members come to the church, pastors should confirm their calling to their church or not.

How do we confirm the calling to the church? In order for the Spirit of God to seize the church, it must have the spiritual system from God. **This spiritual system is based on the principles we find in Ephesians 4:11.** The spirit of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor/teacher basically

make up the system in the church. Those that are willing to come into this system and go through the training have the calling to our church. They should confirm their calling.

God has given us many visions. Those that respond and sacrifice for our visions have the confirmation of calling to our church. In another word, **those that do not commit to the vision our church, they don't have the calling to our church.**

Another clear indication of the calling to our church is evidenced by the willingness to die for the messages that are proclaimed on Sundays. Those that do not obey the words of God and live their faith life do not have the calling to the church. 99.9% of our church members are willing to die for the words that I proclaim and they live it out in the following week. **They work on their spirituality, have the cell group meetings, share the messages, and live according to the word that is proclaimed on Sundays.** As a result, we don't have any Bible study curriculum and everyone follows the word swiftly including the Sunday school. Directors and Sunday school teachers summarize my messages suitable to the children and preach them. Pastors should install such system to confirm the calling to the church. Both pastor and new member should confirm the calling to the church. **It is not about individual pastor's influence in the church but the calling is for the whole system of the church. New member should have such confirmation "this is the church God is calling me to and I will die for it."** We all should have this confirmation. Church should be able ask anything from those that have the calling to the church. When the church says, "Go as a missionary," then one should go. When the church says, "Give offering," then one should give. One that has the calling of Jesus should confirm his calling to the church. Why aren't the church members blessed? That's because they do not have the confirmation of the calling to the church. Blessing is not the money God gives to us. **God blesses people through the church according to their commitment and sacrifice for the vision of church.** Church members receive their blessings through the ministry of the church and through the congregation. The blessings are divided in the church. The confirmation of being a child of God takes care of the basic needs in life. However, being entrusted with many things and much blessings are a different story. God has given them to establish the church, so it is given to those who have clear calling to the church, commitment to the visions and the system of the church.

Third, those that have the calling to the church have the call to the missions. The community of church commissions the missionaries just like the early church laid the hands on Paul and Barnabas after the approval and commissioned them to Antioch while they were praying. It is impossible for one who doesn't have the calling of the church to serve as a missionary. If one does have the calling of the church, then he/she can be used as either a minister or a missionary according to the will of God through the church. **If he does not have the calling of the church, then he does not have the calling of the mission. When the church supports him and acknowledges him as a missionary, the whole community prays for him and the missions work.** On the other hand, if the church does not bless his ministry/missions work and he goes alone to the mission field, he will encounter much difficulties.

The church members should have hope of these three callings. Pastors should see to it that the church has a measure for the callings. What is the purpose of the calling? Through these three callings God will lead you to triumph. **Colossians 3:15** states **"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."** Peace is shalom which means victory. God leads you to victory with the calling of Jesus, the calling of church, and the calling of mission. That's what Paul prayed for.

God raises up the church members that come into the spiritual system to be the leaders, ministers and missionaries in our church. They commit to the visions with everything they have. They are willing to die for the truth that is proclaimed through me. They realize who they will be when the

time comes within the spiritual system. They all have the hope of calling of God and they set a goal like **“I will be a missionary. I will be a minister of church and so on.”** They still need the confirmation from the church. This propels the church members to live a powerful faith life. This is the principle through which they receive the blessings. We can't share the authority of blessings with those that do not have the calling to the church.

What is the rich of glory of inheritance in the saint? “God became my inheritance.” We talked about that earlier. There are some key words in Book of Ephesians and one of them is **“rich.”** We also have it in chapter two **verse 7 “riches of His grace.”** Paul talks about glory in his letters three times. **“Praise of glory”** is one of them.

In **Romans chapter eight**, Paul talks about **“freedom of glory.”** It means that if one sees the glory of God, he now has freedom from the bondage of darkness. When one is in the darkness, he falls down and there is no freedom. However, when one is seized by the light like in **John 8:32 “the truth will set you free,”** one is set free. Not only power needs the strength but also the speed. One will sink unless he fastens his faith life by fixing his eyes on Jesus. When the glory of God comes, there is freedom which is the speed. The speed comes from this freedom. The Korean churches cannot do anything right now because they are bound by the spirit of legalism. Legalism is living and doing things according to the self. When the church is bound by the legalism, it is basically saying that I will receive so much because I labored so much. The legalism does not lead to the heir. The characteristic of legalism is that the way of worldliness invades and takes over a large portion of the life of believers. Why? Because one earns as much as he labors in the world. **The Ephesian Church is not about living by one's efforts but it is about enjoying the riches in the church.** When the freedom of the glory comes, people will also have the riches of glory. I had an opportunity to visit Alps. There were snows in the summer, lakes, and the lambs running around. I took a train to 3,000 meters up in altitude and I could not see the beautiful sight because it was dark. Just like the beauty of the world is revealed when the glory of God comes, the riches are revealed through God in the church. The churches that have the riches will pursue great things in the life of believers. In short, God has not called us to the matter of eating and drinking but for the great life. When the glory comes, the church becomes rich.

Paul prays for riches of glory of Kingdom of God “don't you pray for little things. Your calling for the glorious church is a great calling. God is entrusting the whole universe.” Believe it! The Zoe Ministry Network began with the vision of the glory of the greatness of God that He is the Lord of all things. We are about the church that can enjoy the riches of Kingdom of God. **We should enjoy what God gives to us instead of receiving the wage like the workers who do not have the freedom of glory.** God will give anything we ask for. “Seek anything. It will be given.” We have the principle of receiving 100%.

Paul says in **verse 19, “And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.”** Paul prays for the power of God to work through our faith. The strength of His might! God is Almighty! Faith does not work in the human level when we look at the Bible. **We see the faith of Abraham in Romans 4 that he believed God can resurrect the dead and create out of nothing.** The despair and frustrations that we experienced in our ministries have become part of our being as unbelief. We need to break away from unbelief. There used to be a little cage or fence that people use to put around the little chicks so keep them in. After a while they remove it and they still stay within the old boundary. The reason is they already tried so hard to break out of the fence and they found out that they could not. They started thinking “this is how we are supposed to live,” and they are appeased. When we encounter a situation, we should ask “is this will of God or not?” Never doubt the Almighty God! We should not hesitate at all whether it is a demon, problem, healing or anything. The church of God should never suffer lack. **Joshua prayed “Sun, stop,” and the whole solar system stopped. Believe you have the authority to do what**

Joshua did. If it is a will of God, then whatever the circumstance is we do it. We do not minister with what we do but with what God gives to us. We gotta believe in the power of God and this is what church is all about. Mark says in **Mark 11:22**, “Have faith in God!” **We can move the mountain into the sea by the faith we have in God. Our attitude in heart should be “I will do according to Your level. I will serve according to Your will.”** Paul prayed for the Father of glory to give the wisdom and revelation in the hearts of believers so they can have the knowledge of Him and to open their eyes. Paul further prayed that God would also clarify the three callings to the believer, teach them about the inheritance of riches of glory, and His mighty power.

Now what happens to the Ephesian Church with everything Paul prays for them? Paul says in **verse 20**, “**Which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.**” The great power of God is raising up the dead like He raised up Christ from the dead. As a result the Almighty God raised up Christ and He became the head of the church. That’s why we should never lose hope. Nothing in this world can kill us because Jesus Christ is the head of the church.

God seated Jesus at His right hand. It means a complete victory. When kings fought the battles a long time ago, the loser is knelt before the victor who sits on his throne and decides the fate of the defeated king with his thumb. Church won the complete victory. That’s the reason the authority of Hades cannot withstand the church. Jesus says in **Luke 10:19**, “**Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.**” Paul says in **Colossians 2:15**, “**Jesus disarmed the rulers and authorities.**” **1 John 5:18** “**The evil one does not touch him (who is born of God).**” This is our authority. Don’t mess with the true church because it has the complete victory of God.

In **verse 21** Paul says, “**Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.**” Jesus is the head who is far above all rule, authority, power and dominion. Just like **Revelation 1:5** Jesus is the “ruler of the kings of the world.” Paul says in **Philippians 2:10**, “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth and under the earth.” This demonstrates how important it is that we do things according to His will and plan. God conquered and unified the systems in the world including raising the dead, authority, power, dominion and everything Satan rules in. Jesus leads the politics, economy, society and culture through the church. We should follow our head who is Jesus Christ just like the body follows what the brain says. The cells that do not respond to the commands of the brain are called cancer. The church dies as much as presence of the cancer cells in the body. Believers are blessed when they live with God who is the King and obey Him completely.

In **verse 22** Paul says, “**And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church.**” Christ, church, and all things have a vertical relationship and that’s how God is running the universe. The church has the authority to rule over all things. **It is not God’s will for the churches to get hurt by the world, despair and drown in the world.** We should have the attitude that if we don’t make it in the world because we live according to God, then we will just die. If we fail in the world because we live by the will of God and His plan, let us have the faith “we will just live in the church.” We should never compromise with the world and we never bow low to the world. Why? Because God runs the world with Jesus Christ – church – the all things relationship, so the world cannot dare to go against us.

Paul says in **verse 23**, “**Which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.**” We can have two interpretations when we look at the Greek words. **First, the church fills the world with what Jesus Christ fills the church. As much as the each believer is not filled, the church is reproached. If we are filled to 100%, then we can fill the world 100%.**

Second, the church fills the world by the swift obedience to the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone should be willing to lay down his holy and blameless life because God has given him the glory of the only Son. Let everyone be filled with Jesus to fill the world. That's the type of church we strive for; the strong church that can change the world. I became a pastor when I saw the glory of the glorious church. **"Church that bursts the heart"** That's the catchphrase of our church. **We want to become a church that fills our hearts with excitement and fervor.** May the glorious church of Ephesus be realized in your church!

I saw that church 18 years ago. **Church that bursts the hearts of believers with excitement and fervor. Church that Jesus looks forward to so much. Church that prepares for the end time. Church that can completely reveal the power of Jesus Christ. Church that acknowledges the living God.** I believe that this glorious church of Ephesus will come to Zoe Ministry Network. It is a matter of when. I believe we should all place our hope in God and fall down in prayer that the Holy Spirit will seize our church and turn it into the glorious church one step at a time.