

- There are many necessary and worthwhile endeavors that can compete for our time and energy, but prayer is one of the most important things that can engage our attention and effort:
- One's commitment to prayer reflects one's understanding to the true nature of the battle:
 

**(Eph 6:12)** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. (NASB)

## 1:15-23

- This section (1:15-23) is the only appropriate way to respond to the transcendent truths of 1:1-14 – pray and ask that God would enable His people to somehow grasp the fullness of these things:
- We were given a glimpse into the eternal past (1:4) where God formed (created) His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus (cf. 3:11), and a glimpse into the future (1:9-10) to the consummation of the eternal purpose:
- What follows is the execution of that purpose and the power of its execution:

## 1:15-23

- This passage forms a bridge between the introductory eulogy and the following sections which deal with:
  - 1) The power of God in raising individuals from spiritual death (2:1-10)
  - 2) The uniting Jews and Gentiles spiritually in one body, the church (2:11-22)

**Illumine the Eyes of the Heart:**

**I. Praise for the Blessings Received (1:3-14)**

**II. Prayer for the Realization of the Blessings (1:15-2:22)**

- I. The Exaltation of the Glory of the Grace of God and His Plan of Salvation in and through Christ (1:3-14)**
- II. The Enablement to Understand the Greatness of God and His Plan of Salvation in the sphere of Christ (1:15-23)**
- A. The Occasion for the Prayer (Διὰ τοῦτο) (1:15a)**
- 1. The Out Growth of the Eulogy:**
- a) As seen in the *emphatic-ness* of the expression (Διὰ τοῦτο)
- b) As seen in the references to all Believers (εἰς ἡμᾶς... τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ) (1:19, 23)
- c) As seen in the appellation for God (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) (cf. 1:3)

- I. The Exaltation of the Glory of the Grace of God and His Plan of Salvation in and through Christ (1:3-14)**
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- 1. The Outgrowth of the Eulogy:**
- 2. The Obligatory Response (καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀκούσατε...):**
- This continues the "you also having heard" (καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀκούσαντες) of v. 13:
  - Because the recipients (on their part) believed the gospel, Paul (on his part) feels that he must respond with thanksgiving and prayer:

- I. The Exaltation of the Glory of the Grace of God and His Plan of Salvation in and through Christ (1:3-14)**
- II. The Enablement to Understand the Greatness of God and His Plan of Salvation in the sphere of Christ (1:15-23)**
- A. The Occasion for the Prayer (Διὰ τοῦτο) (1:15a)**
- B. The Substance of the Prayer (1:16-23)**
- 1. Praise (οὐ παύομαι εὐχαριστῶν) (1:16a)**
- The word had the earlier meaning of doing good toward another:
  - This meaning then developed into "to return a favor":
  - Then finally into the idea of being grateful:

**1. Praise (1:16a)**

- The word for "giving thanks" is found 26x in Paul's writings:
- The apostle Paul feels a deep sympathy in that he rejoices and is grateful for the progress of these believers:
- The apostle Paul was not unmindful of the moral and spiritual deficiencies, but he was the kind of man who was able to recognize the good work of God in them:
- This reveals in Paul a bright and joyous state of mind that constantly recognizes God's goodness in the past and looks forward with expectancy to a larger manifestation of it in the future:

I. The Exaltation of the Glory of the Grace of God and His Plan of Salvation in and through Christ (1:3-14)

II. The Enablement to Understand the Greatness of God and His Plan of Salvation in the sphere of Christ (1:15-23)

A. The Occasion for the Prayer (Διὰ τοῦτο) (1:15a)

B. The Substance of the Prayer (1:16-23)

1. Praise (οὐ παύομαι εὐχαριστῶν) (1:16a)

2. Petition (μνησθῆναι ποιούμενος ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν) (1:16b-23)

- I cease not giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God...

- "I cease not while giving thanks for you to make mention" (Abbott, 26)

## 2. Petition (1:16b-23)

a) *The Object of the Petition (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ πατὴρ τῆς δόξης)* (1:17a)

- Paul knew who he was praying to:

- His approach to God was not thoughtless, irreverent:

- The one to whom glory belongs or who is characterized by glory:

- God who is all glorious and the source of all glory is perfectly qualified to answer the apostle's wide ranging petition out of His boundless resources:

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a) *The Object of the Petition (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ πατὴρ τῆς δόξης)* (1:17a)

b) *The Intention of the Petition (1:17-18a)*

- That He might grant you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him (ἵνα... δώῃ ὑμῖν πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψῃ ἐν ἐπιγνώσει αὐτοῦ):

- Paul repeatedly prays for the power to comprehend (Eph 3:18; Phil 1:9-10; Col 1:9-10)

- Note that the apostle Paul's prayer is restricted here "in Him"; he is not praying that they be made intelligent students of truth generally:

- Granting the illuminating of the eyes of your heart (πεφωτισμένους τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς καρδίας εἰς τὸ εἰδέναι ὑμᾶς):

- The heart (τῆς καρδίας) is not merely the seat of emotion, but of thought and moral perception:

- The divine secret needs divine unveiling:

## 2. Petition (1:16b-23)

a) *The Object of the Petition (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ πατὴρ τῆς δόξης)* (1:17a)

b) *The Intention of the Petition (1:17-18a)*

c) *The Elaboration of the Petition (τίς... τίς... τί)* (1:18b-23)

- Notice that it is God's calling, God's inheritance, and God's power, but more specifically it is the hope of His calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance, and the greatness of His power:

- A three-fold knowledge, embracing all eternity: past, future, and present:

- The indefinite pronoun not only focuses upon the object but it also expresses the quality of that object:

c) *The Elaboration of the Petition (1:18b-23)*

(1) "What is the hope of His calling" (τίς ἐστὶν ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς κλήσεως αὐτοῦ) (1:18b)

- Brings to mind the words used in the eulogy, "choice," "predestination," and "obtained":

- This call finds its source in God's choice of His people in Christ before the world came into being (4:4):

- It is His calling in the fullest sense that we need to understand (note "hope of the calling" ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς κλήσεως):

- The hope which belongs to or is implied in our calling:

- The call is effectual and therefore guarantees the hope of the believer:

c) *The Elaboration of the Petition (1:18b-23)*

(1) "What is the hope of His calling" (1:18b)

(2) "What are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (τίς ὁ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τῆς κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ἀγίοις) (1:18b)

- This too we must know the glory of the eternal future:

- Not our inheritance but His inheritance: the Lord's people are His portion:

c) *The Elaboration of the Petition (1:18b-23)*

(1) "What is the hope of His calling" (1:18b)

(2) "What are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (1:18b)

(3) "What is the surpassing greatness of His power unto us who believe" (τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ εἰς ἡμᾶς πιστεύοντας κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ) (1:19-23)

(3) "What is the surpassing greatness of His power unto us who believe" (1:19-23)

(a) *The Measure of God's Power (1:19b)*

- This term means "exceed," "surpass," or "transcend":

- The greatness of this power is not to be measured:

- The enormous power of God:

**(3) “What is the surpassing greatness of His power unto us who believe” (1:19-23)**

*(a) The Measure of God’s Power (1:19b)*

*(b) The Supreme Demonstration of God’s Power (1:20-23)*

**(i) Jesus Christ’s Resurrection and Exaltation (1:20-21)**

- In the Greek text there are two participles (“raised” ἐγείρας and “seated” καθίσας) modifying one finite verb “brought about” ἐνήργησεν:

- This is describing two stage of one epoch event:
- This describes the unique supremacy and sovereignty of Jesus Christ:
- Above all grades of rulership, real or imagined, good or evil, present or future, God has exalted and enthroned the crucified and risen Christ:

**(3) “What is the surpassing greatness of His power unto us who believe” (1:19-23)**

*(a) The Measure of God’s Power (1:19b)*

*(b) The Supreme Demonstration of God’s Power (1:20-23)*

**(i) Jesus Christ’s Resurrection and Exaltation (1:20-21)**

**(ii) Jesus Christ’s Universal Dominion (1:22)**

**(iii) Jesus Christ’s Headship over the Church (1:23)**

**I. The Exaltation of the Glory of the Grace of God and His Plan of Salvation in and through Christ (1:3-14)**

**II. The Enablement to Understand the Greatness of God and His Plan of Salvation in the sphere of Christ (1:15-23)**

**III. The Elaboration on the Great Power of God in Working out His Plan of Salvation in the sphere of Christ (2:1-3:21)**