

## Sermon Discussion – 4 February 2024

Read Ephesians 1:15-23

### **Getting Started** *Sharing from personal experience*

Have you ever felt helpless or powerless in a situation? How did it affect you and those around you? Discuss the challenges of feeling powerless in various aspects of life, both personal and societal. How does this resonate with the current state of the world?

### **Observation** *Discovering the context*

Paul uses this section of Ephesians to pray and give thanks for the church's faith in Christ and their love for all the saints. As Paul prays for them, he is simultaneously reminding them not to forget truths about who God is and what Jesus has done. This is not just an earthly reality but a cosmic-level paradigm shift. The example we must follow is to pray for each other that we would receive a spirit of wisdom and a revelation in the knowledge of God (Ephesians 1:17)

- In your own words, summarise what Paul is praying for the Ephesians to experience.
- Paul is praying that the Ephesians may increase in their intimacy with and knowledge of Christ. Would you say that you know Him better than you did a year ago? Why or why not?

### **Interpretation** *Discovering the meaning*

1. Explore the definition of hope presented: *a joyful expectation for the future, based on true events in the past which changes everything about the present*. How does the hope in the gospel differ from wishful thinking? Consider the analogy of a long drive and the importance of looking beyond the present difficulties. How can this perspective on hope be applied to your own life?
2. Discuss the idea that God's inheritance is His people (v. 18). How does this truth highlight the value God places on individuals, and how does it shape your understanding of your worth in Christ?
3. Reflect on the description of God's power as an overreaching abundance (v. 19). How does recognising the incomparably great power in Jesus influence your perspective on facing challenges and overcoming obstacles?

4. Consider the importance of Paul's prayer for the church in Ephesians 1:15-23. How can prayer play a significant role in deepening our understanding of our identity in Christ and sustaining us in challenging times?

**Application** *Putting knowledge into practice*

- Encourage one another with specific examples of how God's hope, value, and power have been evident in your lives. Reflect on the transformative impact of these truths and express gratitude for God's grace.
- Carefully re-read and pray this prayer alongside the Apostle Paul. In this prayer, we find God's power. It is at work in us and through us. Do not simply pray this for yourself, your spouse, kids, etc. Pray this for your home group and for our church. Consider taking time this week to memorise this prayer to be one you pray for the remainder of our time in our study of Ephesians.