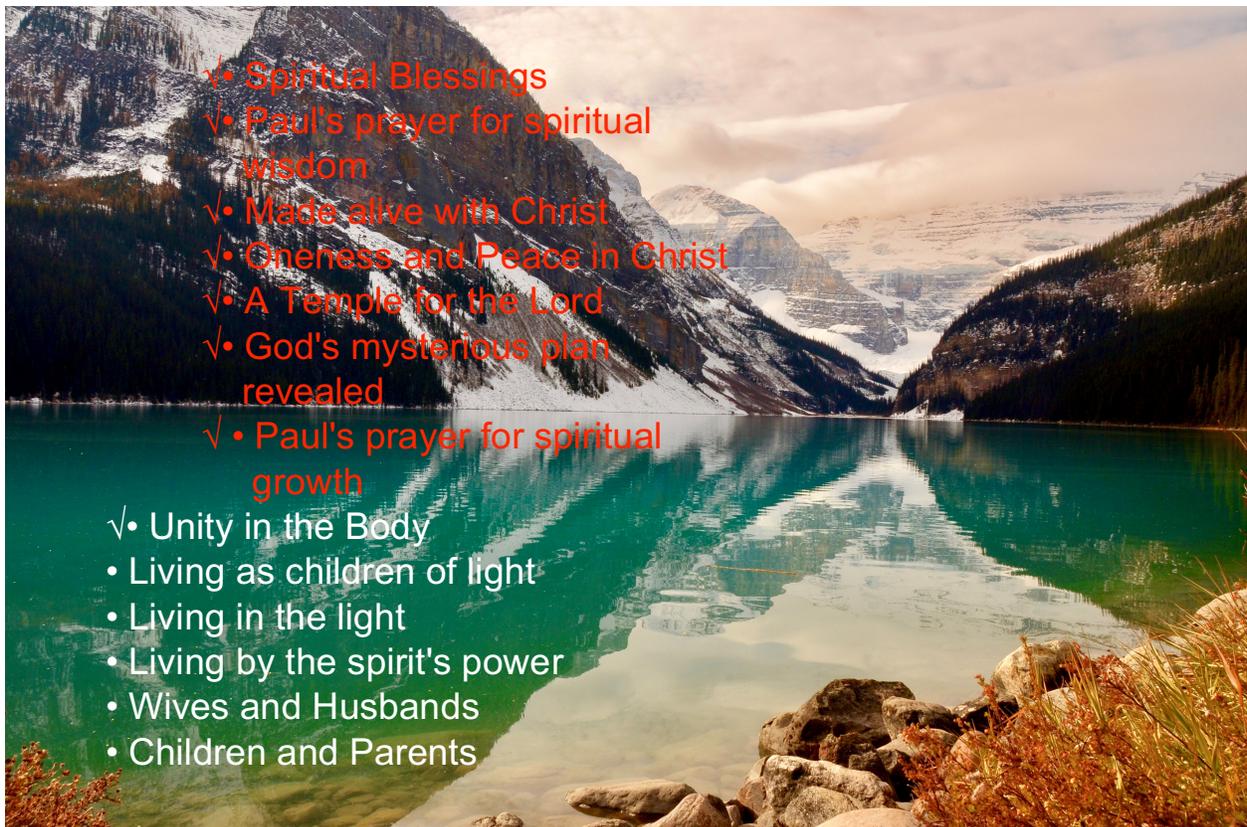


Pathway Visalia Men's Ministry:
Oct. 3rd, 2022 -"Paul's prayer for spiritual growth"
"EPHESIANS"

On the first Monday of every month, our Pathway Men's Ministry meets at 6:30 pm. Our next meeting will be on Oct. 3rd. For those who were unable to attend and for anyone that is interested, we post the study on our Pathway Visalia website. I pray that you will be able to join us. It is such a blessing to share with one another. Below is an overview of the topics that we will discuss as we work our way through the book of Ephesians.



PAUL'S PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

19. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

QUESTION: Let's talk about experiencing the love of Christ. How would you say your experience has been over the years that you have been a Christian. Can you specifically list how the Lord has shown His love toward you?

20. Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. 21. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

As Paul closes out the first section of Ephesians, he uses a doxology (which is a summarizing statement which means "glory")

QUESTION: As you look at vs. 20 & 21 - what stands out to you re. the glorious grace that we have been given?

UNITY IN THE CHURCH

Ephesians 4:1-16

Chuck Swindoll comments re. Being Gentle: In many people's minds, gentleness is a synonym for weakness. But gentleness is not weakness - it is strength under control. The Greek term for this concept was used to describe a horse that had been broken. A broken horse is just as strong as it used to be, but it's no longer uncontrollable or wild. It's gentle. Gentle people give as much thought to their personal claims as humble people do to their personal merits - very little. Gentleness is also characterized by the absence of any disposition to assert personal rights. When is the last time you met any strong natural leaders who were humble and gentle? You could probably number them on one hand, maybe with fingers left over. But Jesus was like that (Matt. 11:29 - Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.) When you "lead a life worthy of your calling", you will be like Christ, and the world will notice. You will also have the qualities that support unity and peace in the church.

1. Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God **(that is, to live a life that exhibits godly character, moral courage, personal integrity, and mature behavior - a life that expresses gratitude to God for your salvation)**. 2. Always be humble **(forsaking self-righteousness)** and gentle **(maintaining self-control)**. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.

QUESTION: Why do you think Paul finds it necessary to "beg us to lead a life worthy of our calling"?

QUESTION: What does Paul say are the characteristics of a person who is leading a life correctly?

QUESTION: Paul lists humility, gentleness, moral courage, personal integrity, mature behavior and being patient with each other. Which of these characteristics is the most challenging for you?

QUESTION: Can you share how we can make allowances for each other's faults?

QUESTION: Can you share a time when someone else made allowances for your faults?

3. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace **(each individual working together to make the whole successful)**. 4. For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. 5. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6. one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.

QUESTION: What are some examples for things that we can do to "keep ourselves united in the Spirit"?

QUESTION: What happens when we fail at this?

QUESTION: What happens when we succeed?

7. However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ. 8. That is why the Scriptures say, "When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to his people." 9. Notice that it says "he ascended." This clearly means that Christ also descended to our lowly world. 10. And the same one who descended is the one who ascended higher than all the heavens, so that he might fill the entire universe with himself. 11. Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.

QUESTION: Paul writes: "However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ". Why is it important to remind ourselves of this truth - (that he has given each one of us a special gift)?

SPIRITUAL GIFTINGS

1 Cor. 12:7-12 7. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. 8. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. 9. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. 10. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. 11. It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have. 12. The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.

QUESTION: What is the difference between a natural gift and a spiritual gift?

QUESTION: Do you know what your spiritual gifts are?

QUESTION: How do you routinely use your gifts?

12. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

QUESTION: From God's perspective - what is His purpose for giving us these gifts?

QUESTION: So, as His people - what are we to do?

13. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

QUESTION: What will continue?

QUESTION: How does building up the Church by using our gifts, help our faith and our knowledge of Jesus?

14. Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. 15. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. 16. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

QUESTION: Share a time when you were tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching?

QUESTION: What are some current winds of doctrine that are influencing the church?

QUESTION: Paul writes; " He makes the whole body fit together perfectly" - how do you see this truth in action?