Same God: **Ephesians – wk 3 – When I think of you**

**A person must learn to stand, then walk! Video - How our 1 yr-old daughter Lucy became a biped. One does not come before the other!**

**When you understand where you stand, you find yourself in a strong position to walk with confidence.**

**Chap 1-3 Our position in Christ - God’s plan to us**

**Chap 4-6 Our practice in Christ – God's plan for us**

**MAP / pics \*\* - Back story - Ephesians**

* **Paul started the church - lived there 3 yrs – miracles & riots - Acts**
* **Port city, vacations, events - Written by Apostle Paul in prison**

**Last 2 wks - where we stand** **as a child of God, you are chosen, adopted, forgiven, enlightened, heirs, saved, included, secure!**

**Ephesians 1:15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, (often used in gift cards)**

**What follows is the Apostle's prayer for them. When I hear of your faith in Jesus and your love for each other, I can’t help but pray for you. Four things.**

**(I pray that…) 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, (the Trinity at work) 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, (Spiritual eyes)**

**(I pray that…) that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,**

**(I pray that you know) 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might**

**(I pray you know) 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he (the Father) put all things under his feet (reference to PS 110) and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.**

**This is a spiritual father and pastor’s prayer**

**4 things he prays they would never forget and always know.**

**BTW – these are great things to pray for those you love**

**1. I pray you - Know Jesus deeper (Phil 3:4-6, Acts 17:22-28, Rom 8:14-16)**

**Ephesians 1:16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, (I keep praying…) 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened,**

**Two truths about knowing God (that are often misunderstood)**

* **Obeying the Bible is not knowing God**

**The Bible tells us to know Him, but we have conditioned ourselves to think that obedience is knowing Him.**

**To obey the laws does not mean I am in a close relationship status with the police or judges. Obedience does NOT = relationship.**

**You might say, “Well, Jesus said, 'If you love me, you will obey me” (John 14:15, 21, 23, 15:10, 1 John 2:3, 1 John 5:3, 2 John 1:6). You’re right, it is said a lot!**

**But notice this – it does not say, “If you obey me, I’ll love you.” But – “if you love me, you’ll obey me.”**

**To know him (is to love him) - and from that relationship, we desire to obey him. If you love me (intimacy = relationship), you will…**

**If we don’t get this, we tend to be religiously good but spiritually lost. I, too, pray you know God deeper.**

* **Knowing about God is not knowing God**

**There is a distinction between knowing about - and knowing.**

**You might know some things about Jesus, God, and the Bible. Maybe grew up in church, went to Bible school, or go here. You might answer Bible trivia questions correctly… but you don’t know him.**

**Reminds me of - Matthew 7:22** **Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ 23 Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.’**

**Paul prays, That God… “may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him (Jesus)… (to deeply know him)**

**The Spirit of wisdom and revelation is the work of the Holy Spirit.**

**Knowing God is not information, reason, opinions, assumptions, religious affiliation, or feelings- it is supernatural revelation of Jesus.**

**(1 Cor 2:10, 12:3, Matt 13:11, 16:17, Jo 14:26, Ro 11:33, Gal 1:12, Eph 3:3-5)**

**I pray that you would supernaturally know his love, goodness, grace, mercy, patience, and kindness. How? in the knowledge of Jesus, through the HS.**

**Ephesians 3:18 (I pray that you) may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**

**Filled to the top, lacking nothing - never doubt the depth of his love for his own! That’s his prayer and mine. Many** **run from God because they do not understand the richness of his goodness.**

**2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (Maybe you understand the grace – it's time you grow in knowing the Lord!)**

**\*\* Pray – God may we know you deeper.**

**2. I pray you - Know the hope of your calling (1 Pet 1:3-5, Col 1, Titus 2:13)**

**Ephesians 1:18 (I pray) that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,**

**The great hope of our calling is the Return of Jesus and our resurrection - the riches of the kingdom of heaven. You’re called to that Kingdom! May we see this great calling.**

**Two things - when you understand this future calling:**

* **You won’t hold so tight to this life**

**When you see your future hope, you live open-handed.**

**You understand when Paul says - 1 Tim 6:7 - We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.**

**Like you, we can sometimes get caught up in the details here.**

**You understand when Jesus says - Matthew 6:20 - Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. (All will fade, rust, break, tear, and pass - only what is eternal will last!)**

**Can't take it w/ you, but can send it ahead, Jesus’ layaway plan**

**When you know this, you become generous, unbound people - less anxious about money and possessions. You become eternity-minded. Holding loosely what God gives you.**

**Some struggle to trust God with their finances and struggle to give; that might be because they don’t truly understand their future calling.**

**1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 11 Flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.**

**How can I be free from the worry of money and possessions? Reach for the eternal and take hold of your calling! Everything here is an overnight bag; the real valuables are at home**

* **You’ll have the boldness to live freely in God’s calling**

**When you have your eyes on the prize of eternity. You see those around you differently – and you do and choose things differently.**

**Our lives are brief – eternity is forever. AND - billions of people’s future eternity are at stake. I now know that!**

**The trials, setbacks, and circumstances we face are only temporary.**

**God, what do you have for me to do? God, what do you have for me to say? God, where do you have for me to go? We all have a calling!**

**Every Christian is a missionary – wherever / whoever you are.**

**Because I have a clear understanding of eternity and know my calling - I will not bow down, shrink back, cringe, or cower!**

**If God is for me, who can be against me? Rom 8:31 / I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Ph 3:14**

**The word Calling means (Gk) = an invitation. (megaphone – come eat) We are divinely invited/called to partake in the Kingdom. To come sit with the family of the redeemed. But we must remember – others are invited to the table also – and you are the vehicle for that invitation.**

**Later, Paul says – Eph 4:1 - I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called…**

**There is more to God than our initial salvation! We are called to advance the Kingdom of God. Volunteering is one way - but this is just the beginning. The harvest is ripe, and laborers are few – John 4:35**

**I pray that you know Jesus more deeply and know your calling more clearly, and**

**3. I pray you - Know the Holy Spirit’s power (Phil 4:13, 3:10, Rom 8:31-39)**

**Eph 1:19 (I pray you know) what is the immeasurable greatness of his power (dunamis) toward us who believe, (The Holy Spirit) according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,**

**To know this = is to be aware, realize, experience, see appreciate, understand, and to grasp. Do you know his power?**

**Paul throws out this same concept in another book he wrote**

**Phil 3:10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection…**

**If you want to know something, Google it, Alexa, Siri, Bixby. Name it, you can find the answer. But God is more than information. He is not just 5 steps to financial freedom - or 3 steps to thriving…**

**God is more than facts and data; He is transformative power.**

**We know not just a God of knowledge, but a God of dunamis (Acts 1:8)**

**God still does miracles, heals, opens doors - still does the impossible. Don’t brush off the power of God because you’re “intelligent.”**

**1 Corinthians 2:4 My message and my preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, 5 so that your faith would not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.**

**Our walk with God is not designed to be just about the brain (though we do not check it at the door); there is also a supernatural aspect that we are to know and live – today!**

**Three things to know about the power of God**

* **You cannot harness the power of God**

**Paul tells the Corinth church about supernatural spiritual gifts, then adds this… 1 Corinthians 12:11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.**

**God is almighty and all-powerful - we cannot hold him hostage or demand our way. He does as he desires and determines – not as we demand and mandate.**

**Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand. / Proverbs 16:9 - The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps. / Job 12:10 - In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind. / Job 42:2 - I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be stopped. / Psalm 103:19 - The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. / Daniel 4:35 - All the people of the earth are nothing compared to him. He does as he pleases among the angels of heaven and among the people of the earth. No one can stop him or say to him, 'What have you done?'**

**God is all-powerful and has complete power over how He uses it. There is no formula for it or vending machine combination.**

**God heals and does miracles- as he desires! Thank God for it!**

* **In Christ - You have power to overcome and endure**

**There is power to stand strong, overcome, and endure any hardship**

**(Ro 2:7, 8:29-39, 15:3-5,13, Heb 12:1-15, Jam 1:12, 1 Chron 16:11, 1 Jo 5:4-5)**

**1 John 4:4 – Children (of God), you are from God and have overcome them, because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. (that’s power)**

**Colossians 1:11 - We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power, so you will have all the endurance and patience you need…**

**Philippians 4:13 (concerning hardship and trials, Paul says) "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." (that’s power)**

**That power, child of God, is yours! You will overcome what you’re going through right now. The power of God is in you!**

**2 Cor 12:9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

**Many Christians do not know this or recognize it and walk in defeat. Like Paul, I pray you know the power of God at work in you.**

**We pray knowing God is able – and leave the rest to God’s will.**

* **In Christ - You have the power to see the dead raised to life**

**Ephesians 1:19 …That power (in you) is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead…**

**Romans 8:11 - And if (if you are reborn in Christ) the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.**

**The power that raised Christ from the dead will raise and quicken your body. This is our hope of glory.**

**And in this life, God is able to raise a dead marriage, dead job, dead finances, or a dead spirit! What is dead in your life?**

**Paul ends his prayer with a powerful declaration of the power of Jesus!**

**4. I pray you – Know the glorious nature of Jesus!**

**We might end with a simple, “in Jesus name, Amen” - but Paul**

**Ephesians 1:19… That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead…**

**Jesus is risen! Cross was final work, but not final word, He’s alive!**

**…and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realm…**

**Jesus is God! – Right hand, symbol of full honor and authority!**

**21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion…**

**Jesus is sovereign! - complete 100% supremacy as God, he reigns!**

**…and every name that is invoked… in the present age and in the one to come.**

**Jesus is exalted! Present and future - no name is greater!**

**22 And God placed all things under his feet…**

**Jesus is king! - Jesus is right now king of all!**

**…and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, (head of the church collectively) 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (All things are by him, through him, for him)**

**Jesus is moving! – In and through the world - through his people!!**

**Jesus is – the living way!**

**\*\* Notice this - 22 …the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. \* Jesus was the fullness of the Father, while on the earth, we are now the fullness of Christ in the earth.**

**\*\* Jesus is the body of God – we are the body of Christ!**

**Want to see God? – see Jesus. Want to see Jesus? – see us!**

**\*\* Jesus is the hands and feet of God – in the flesh!**

**The church (together) is the hands and feet of Jesus – in the flesh!**

**I know church people are not always good at being like Jesus, but if we can know where we stand, we can be who we are created to be.**

**I pray that you – know God ever deeply, know his calling more clearly, and know his power more presently, and know the glorious nature and work of Jesus more fully! Are you in the know?**

**Where are you today? Where do you need to know him?**