

Pastor's Prayer for the Body

(Verse by verse study.)

By Pastor Nick Bibile

**Eph 1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,
16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;
17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.**

V15) Here we see apostle Paul commending the believers in Ephesian Church for their faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints.

Why is that Christian faith is different than all the other religions faiths? It is not based on someone's philosophy or doctrine but on the person of Jesus Christ, this is called objective faith. The center of Christianity is Christ. Center of the Bible is Christ. Without Christ there is no Christianity. It is the person of Jesus Christ he is the center and his teachings follow.

In all other religions, their teachings comes first and the teacher is at the background. On Christianity it is the opposite. Our faith is centered not on a dead person but of Christ who was born without sin, who fulfilled all the demands of the law, in his active and passive obedience, who victoriously conquered death. We have a living Savior and our faith is a living faith.

Where do you find scripture of a living Savior?

1Co 15:14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

1Co 15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

What is the significance of having a living Savior?

When we have a living Savior we can truly trust on him as he is the object of our faith. We can truly commit all to him and truly depend on him, we can live on him and walk on him.

Note: on verse 15 apostle speaks on faith and love, have you ever come across any other scriptures in the Bible similar to this passage where faith and love goes together?

Col 1:3 We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,
4 Since we heard **of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love** which ye have to all the saints.

1Th 5:8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of **faith and love**; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

1Ti 1:14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with **faith and love** which is in Christ Jesus.

2Ti 1:13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in **faith and love** which is in Christ Jesus.

Why is it that faith and love goes together?

Faith and love are inseparable. They always goes together. When you have this true faith the result is true love. With this faith comes love. True faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ and from him comes the true love. This is the result of the true faith.

Paul is also commending their love to all the saints, to one another. True love begins in the church, to love one another and then it extends to all mankind. This love is a Christian love where the world does not understand, it is the unconditional sacrificial love of God where we first practice in the church and then extends to our neighbors.

There will be people who are weak and ignorant in doctrine, sometimes it will take a long time for them to understand. They will be rebellious at times but be patient. Do not come to quick judgment but be patient.

The love of God is a long suffering love which we lack in the church today as we are used to instant results. So we are quick to judge, quick to react, quick to get angry instead of waiting patiently. Just think of you, was God long suffering with you or not, was God merciful to you or not?

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.

Here is intercessory prayer for the saints. Apostle Paul is excited what God is doing in the Ephesians church and he is thanking in prayer. We see the affection the apostle had for them. As a Pastor he should know his people well, he should know their strength and weaknesses and he should intercede and pray for their weaknesses. We should not have a judgmental attitude saying I am the only one who is holy and obedient to the Lord. Then to be like a spiritual policemen always finding fault of others. Instead having a humble attitude in prayer and affection for them, if their wrong deal with them in love and humility. Need to have a gracious attitude. Now what was his prayer?

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

We see that the Ephesians Church is in the right direction of the Lord, they have faith in the Lord Jesus, their doctrine is right, they love one another. Now there is always a tendency to go beyond scripture and get into false doctrine. So he is concerned for the church.

This should be every pastors prayer for himself and for the flock, that nothing would be taught from the pulpit that comes from the flesh. Now let us see verse seventeen more closely.

What do you mean by the God of our Lord Jesus Christ? Does this go with Jehovah's Witnesses teaching Jesus is not God only Jehovah is God, Jesus God is Jehovah?

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, **I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.**

This relates to his human nature. Although he is fully divine he was also fully human. As a man he came as an obedient servant to fulfill the demands of the law where we have broken. As a man he came to do the will of God, as a man he set the example for us to follow God, as a man he was the mediator between God and man. The Father made Christ Jesus in our human flesh was subjected to our condition now through him we come to know God.

The Father of glory. This is a well known Hebrew idiom for glorious Father. It means the brightness of God, splendor of God, magnificence of God, the majesty of God and the excellence of God.

1Ch 29:13 Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

If I asked you please tell me your prayer needs and I will get a long lists of prayer which may

concern of peoples physical needs, problems, trials, financial needs, employment needs, home problems and all kinds but how many will ask for prayers for their growth and their spiritual needs?

Paul's prayer was may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

Yes, the Ephesian church knew the doctrines but is there a place we come to and say I have learned all of Christian doctrine and I am done. He is called our glorious God and the wisdom and knowledge of God is infinite, there is never stopping in learning his knowledge and wisdom.

Ps 119:96 I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad.

Ps 139:6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

Ro 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

This is a true Pastor's prayer that his body will always grow in the grace and in the knowledge of him and this should be our personal prayer. If I ask you, how long you have been a Christian? There are some not just one or two years but a long time, yet they have not grown in the Lord. They look very abnormal as an older person wearing a diaper and drinking with the bottle of milk.

Heb 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Heb 5:13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

Christians should not always remain babes, but should grow in Christian knowledge, and leaving the food of babes, they should learn to digest strong meat.

How many people labor and spend so much money for their outward appearances and bodily health and exercise. People are more concerned of their outward appearances than their soul, as they live a careless lifestyle die without God and go to hell. There are many who would say, I am so busy that I have no time to read and study the word of God. This is a very common excuse but let me tell you, many of you have a lot of time to watch your favorite TV programs, you have much leisure doing worldly things, in amusements no wonder you don't have time because you have put last priority to the word of God. Why? Because you don't see it in the spirit you see it in the flesh.

Many who are young and strong spend all their energy and time for worldly things in the way of devil's temptations. They would say, we want to have fun, this is exactly the devil is telling them, don't get into God now but have fun, look all your friends they are just join them and enjoy. When you get old you can read the Bible, go to church and be a Christian. How do you know that you will live till you get old? Do not listen to yourself but listen to God just imagine if you can spend all your youthful energy for the Lord which will profit your soul.

When I was in the Philippines there was this American missionary at a meeting told the Filipino pastors, "We do not need doctrine, we have enough of it, we need evangelism." I was amazed by this statement. Doctrine is teaching, how can you evangelize without teaching the right doctrine. No wonder the church is looking for emotional types of teaching that will gratify the flesh and not the soul. Listen to what Apostle Paul said.

Ro 10:2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

1Co 1:4 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus

Christ;

5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge.

Col 1:10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.

I cannot explain better than how John Calvin the reformer explained in his book institutes of the Christian Religion on this subject. Calvin begins with man's pride. He said, "we always seem to ourselves just, and upright, and wise, and holy, until we are convinced, by clear evidence, of our injustice, vileness, folly, and impurity." In another paragraph he said, "Scripture uniformly relates, holy men were struck and overwhelmed whenever they beheld the presence of God." When they saw the majesty of God, Jg 13:22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

We need to put our pride down first, once we see how feeble, weak, the corruption in us we will see the glory of God's knowledge. We cannot learn of God knowledge in pride but in humility. Satan knows the word of God but it is a prideful knowledge.

Also we need to be careful that the knowledge of God we have will not puff our heads. Spurgeon said, "Oh, but!" he says, "I am humble." Is there any soul living that is so proud as he is who says he is humble? He went on to say this is the climax of pride.

1Co 8:1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

Spurgeon said there is good fertilization behind the pulpit for pride to grow. We cannot learn of God with pride, in humility we read and study the word of God and also many love to teach because they just want to show off how knowledgeable they are in the word of God. Oh! It brings a lot of satisfaction to the flesh, it glorifies the flesh.

John Bunyan said on one occasion; after he had done preaching, a brother came to him, and said, "You have preached an admirable sermon." "Ah!" said Bunyan, "you are too late; the devil told me that before I got down the pulpit stairs."

Many preachers like applause from the audience. It glorifies their flesh.

I cannot explain better than how John Calvin the reformer explained in his book institutes of the Christian Religion on this subject. Calvin begins with man's pride. He said, "we always seem to ourselves just, and upright, and wise, and holy, until we are convinced, by clear evidence, of our injustice, vileness, folly, and impurity." In another paragraph he said, "Scripture uniformly relates, holy men were struck and overwhelmed whenever they beheld the presence of God." When they saw the majesty of God, Jg 13:22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.

Humility is to feel that we have no power of ourselves, but that it all cometh from God. Humility is to lean on our beloved Lord Jesus Christ. The more we learn of God the more we become humbled. The wisdom of the knowledge of God should go to our heart and soul and not to our flesh.

Let me ask you a question, give me an honest answer. If God tells you, ask me anything, yes anything that you desire and I will give it to you. What will you ask God to give?

1Ki 3:5 In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

1Ki 3:7 And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

8 And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9 Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

10 And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

2Ch 1:10 Give me now wisdom and knowledge.

Would you like to be in the very presence of God?

Moses spoke to God face to face as a man speaks to his friend. (Exo 33:11) Yet Moses desire was to see the Glory of God. So he said, please show me Your glory. (Exod 33:18) Moses was asking God to show his inner glory, which God replied no man shall see Me and live.

This should be our desire not always asking for physical things but ask God what he really pleases. Ask for wisdom and knowledge, to be with God in his presence.

You cannot be in the presence of God with pride but in humility.

Ps 10:17 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

David said in Psalm.

Ps 27:4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

<http://www.sounddoctrine.net/>