

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Conference

November 26-29, 2009

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE PRAYER OF THE AGE

Message Two

The Two Greatest Prayers of the Apostle Paul

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:17-23; 3:14-21

Eph. 1:17-23 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, **18** The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, **19** And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:14-21 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, **15** Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named, **16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, **17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are **19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

I. In Paul's first prayer in Ephesians (a prayer for revelation), he prays that we would have a spirit of wisdom and revelation with the eyes of our heart being enlightened to know the hope of God's calling, the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints, and the surpassing greatness of God's power toward us who believe—Eph. 1:17-23:

Eph. 1:17-23 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, **18** The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, **19** And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

A. We must be God's friends, those who understand His heart; we have to see, know, and have the vision of eternity, a vision that seizes us and captures us to the extent that we live the life of eternity and work the work of eternity—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; 6:17; 15:10; 16:10.

Gal. 1:15-16 But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, **16** To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

1 Cor. 2:9-10 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and *which* have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him." **10** But to us God has revealed *them* through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

1 Cor. 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.

1 Cor. 16:10 Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without fear; for he is working the work of the Lord, even as I am.

B. The hope of God's calling is "Christ in you, the hope of glory"—Col. 1:27 :

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

1. Christ realized by us, experienced by us, and gained by us to the fullest extent to be our ultimate manifestation and consummation as our glory is the hope of our calling—Phil. 3:14; Rom. 5:2.

Phil. 3:14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called *me* upward.

Rom. 5:2 Through whom also we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and boast because of the hope of the glory of God.

2. God called us and justified us, and He will glorify us, conforming us to the image of His Son; eventually, we all will be absolutely the same as Christ— 8:29-30; 1 John 3:2.

Rom. 8:29-30 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers; **30** And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.

3. The hope of God's calling is the ultimate consummation of our enjoyment of Christ, which will be the transfiguration of our body and the manifestation of the sons of God—Eph. 4:4; Phil. 3:21; Rom. 8:19, 23-25.

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Phil. 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

Rom. 8:19 For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.

Rom. 8:23-25 And not only *so*, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body. **24** For we were saved in hope. But a hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly await *it* through endurance.

C. The riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints speaks of God's sealing us with Himself to make us His inheritance for His enjoyment and God's pledging Himself to us to make Him our inheritance for our enjoyment—Eph. 1:11, 13b-14, 18:

Eph. 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph. 1:13-14 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, **14** Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.

Eph. 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

1. God's glory has its riches, which are the many different items that constitute God's divine attributes, such as light, life, power, love, righteousness, and holiness, expressed to different degrees.
2. Since we are God's inheritance, the Holy Spirit is a seal upon us; since God is our inheritance, the Holy Spirit is a pledge to us of this inheritance.
3. The sealing and pledging of the Holy Spirit continue to permeate and transform us with God's divine element for our enjoyment until we are mature in God's life and our body is transfigured in glory—vv. 11, 13b-14; 4:30; Rom. 8:23; Phil. 3:21.

Eph. 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph. 1:13-14 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, **14** Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

Rom. 8:23 And not only *so*, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.

Phil. 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

- D. The surpassing greatness of God's power—His resurrecting power, ascending (transcending) power, subjecting (subduing) power, and heading-up (overruling) power—is operating “in us,” is “toward us who believe,” and is “to the church”—Eph. 3:20; 1:19-23:

Eph. 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

Eph. 1:19-23 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

1. The church is the depository of this surpassingly great fourfold power of the Triune God.
2. When this power operated in Christ, it made Him the Head; when this power operates in us, it makes us the Body.
3. To experience the divine transmission of this power, we need to realize that this power is in us already—3:16, 20; Phil. 3:21b; 4:13; Col. 1:29.

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

Phil. 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

Phil. 4:13 I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

Col. 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

4. To experience the divine transmission of this power, we need to have a strong desire to get completely out of death—Rev. 3:1; 2 Cor. 3:6; 5:4.

Rev. 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.

2 Cor. 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Cor. 5:4 For also, we who are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened, in that we do not desire to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

II. In Paul's second prayer in Ephesians (a prayer for experience), he prays that we would be strengthened into our inner man for God's unique work to build Himself into our being—3:14-21:

Eph. 3:14-21 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, **15** Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named, **16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, **17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are **19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

- A. In verses 16 through 19 the word that is used four times in the apostle's prayer: the apostle prayed that the Father would grant us to be strengthened; the result of such a strengthening is that Christ makes His home in our hearts; the result of Christ's making His home in our hearts is that we are full of strength to apprehend the dimensions of Christ—the breadth, length, height, and depth—and to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ; and the result of this apprehending and knowing is that we are filled unto all the fullness of God; these steps make up a metabolic process by which the Body of Christ is constituted with the riches of Christ through our enjoyment of those riches.

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

- B. In Ephesians 1 our spirit is revealed as an organ for us to receive revelation concerning the church; in Ephesians 3 our spirit is a person, the inner man, for us to experience Christ for the church; in order to experience Christ unto the fullness of God, we need to be strengthened with the fourfold power of the Triune God into our spirit through the Holy Spirit.

Eph. 1:1-23 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, **4** Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love, **5** Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, **6** To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved; **7** In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace, **8** Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence, **9** Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, **10** Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him; **11** In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will, **12** That we would be to the praise of His glory who have first hoped in Christ. **13** In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, **14** Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory. **15** Therefore I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you and your love to all the saints, **16** Do not cease giving 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 to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, **18** The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, **19** And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:1-21 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you, the Gentiles — **2** If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you, **3** That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief, **4** By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ, **5** Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit, **6** That in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the Body and fellow partakers of the promise through the gospel, **7** Of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God which was given to me according to the operation of His power. **8** To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel **9** And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things, **10** In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church, **11** According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord, **12** In whom we have boldness and access in confidence through faith in Him. **13** Therefore I ask you not to faint at my afflictions for your sake, since they are your glory. **14** For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, **15** Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named, **16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, **17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are **19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations

forever and ever. Amen.

- C. Our heart is the totality of our inward parts (our mind, emotion, will, and conscience) and the center of our inward being; when Christ makes His home in our heart, He controls our entire inward being and supplies and strengthens every inward part with Himself.
- D. In our experience of Christ, we first experience the breadth of what He is and then the length; when we advance in Christ, we experience the height and depth of His riches:
1. Our experience of Christ must become three-dimensional, like a cube, and must not be one-dimensional, like a line.
 2. In our experience of Christ we must go back and forth and up and down so that eventually our experience of Him may be a solid “cube,” like the Holy of Holies—Exo. 26:2-8; 1 Kings 6:20; Rev. 21:16.

Exo. 26:2-8 The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain, four cubits; all the curtains shall have the same measurement. **3** Five curtains shall be joined to one another; and *the other* five curtains shall be joined to one another. **4** And you shall make loops of blue *strands* on the edge of the one curtain at the end in the set; and likewise you shall make *them* in the edge of the outermost curtain in the second set. **5** You shall make fifty loops on the one curtain, and you shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite one another. **6** And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and join the curtains to one another with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may become one. **7** And you shall make curtains of goats' *hair* for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains you shall make. **8** The length of each curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain, four cubits; the eleven curtains shall have the same measurement.

1 Kings 6:20 And the interior of the innermost sanctuary was twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide and twenty cubits high; and he overlaid it with pure gold, and he overlaid the cedar altar.

Rev. 21:16 And the city lies square, and its length is as great as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed to *a length of* twelve thousand stadia; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

3. When our experience of Christ is like this (balanced by the Body), we cannot fall or be broken—cf. 1 Cor. 12:24.

1 Cor. 12:24 But our comely *members* have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the *member* that lacked,

- E. We eventually can know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that we may be filled unto all the fullness of God—Eph. 3:19:

Eph. 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

1. The love of Christ is knowledge-surpassing, yet we can know it by experiencing it.
2. The fullness of God is the issue of our enjoyment of the unsearchably rich Christ as the embodiment of God dispensed into our being; through His indwelling, Christ imparts the riches of all that God is into our being to make us the fullness of God, the corporate expression of God.

- F. God superabundantly fulfills not only above all that we ask but also what we think concerning the church according to the power that operates in us—v. 20.

Eph. 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

- G. We are being strengthened into our inner man according to the riches of God's glory, and then unto Him is glory in the church; first the glory of God is wrought into us, and then it returns to God for His glorification—vv. 16, 21.

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.