
MEETING NEWSLETTER

Ephesians 1:15-22

Welcome to WoW², Women of Worship, Women of Witness. This newsletter captures topics discussed during our February 2, 2021 meeting. The newsletter may not capture everything, and the topics may not be in the exact order discussed. The newsletter is intended to capture key points from our evening together, with like topics being grouped together for convenience. We hope you are blessed as you join us on our journey.

CURRENT VISION. “*Grace Like a Flood.*” We will learn how to approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so we will be able to obtain mercy and grace to help in our time of need.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE. **Hebrews 4:16:** “Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (NIV).”

DECLARATION OF FAITH. **We will** cultivate a safe place to grow in a peaceful environment by embracing our diversity, so each of us can learn according to her need, so we can operate in our gifts. **We will** operate according to the established guidelines of our group, all of which will help us to go boldly before the throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace to help for the transformation that comes as God sanctifies us through and through. **The outcome** of our sanctification will be a deeper level of trust in God, so we are not leaning on our own understanding, but acknowledging Him in all our ways, so He can direct our paths.

Opening. There’s a breaking that always come before we receive God’s blessings; therefore, we opened our evening with “Blessed, Broken, & Given” by CeCe Winans. In other words, when we’re looking for a breakthrough, we must be willing to be broken! Even when Peter told Jesus His crucifixion didn’t need to happen, Jesus told Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan!” (Matthew 16:23).

TOPICS DISCUSSED. We discussed Ephesians 1:15-22.

Ephesians 1:15:22. We summarized these verses with the apostle Paul was thankful for the saints in Ephesus, so out of love, he chose to pray for them. For simplicity’s sake, we categorized Paul’s prayer under two words: acknowledgment and enlightenment. First, he

acknowledged their faith in the Lord and love for others, and then he prayed for God to enlighten them in specific ways.

Nuggets from our discussion:

- V15-16. These verses tell us Paul was thankful for them and why he chose to pray for them. That this verse begins with “Therefore” (NKJV) or “This is why” (CSB),¹ points us back to the reasons why he chose to pray for them. Two reasons we noted were because he heard about their faith in the Lord and their love for “all the saints.”
- V15. Because of “the saints” belief in the gospel, some of the sheep, God’s children, are in the fold, so Paul is thankful and prays for them.
 - Paul’s prayer for those in Ephesus to receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation reminded us of the seven spirits of God, so we looked them up. Based on Isaiah 11:2, the seven spirits have often been identified as Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of wisdom, Spirit of understanding, Spirit of counsel, Spirit of power, Spirit of knowledge, and Spirit of the fear of the Lord.²
 - In discussing wisdom and revelation, we noted the Holy Spirit knows God’s mind, and He knows the secret things of God; therefore, the Holy Spirit would be the one to give us wisdom and revelation. This led us to two verses:
 - 1 Corinthians 2:11, “For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God”.
 - Romans 8:27, “Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”
 - We discussed how God brings wisdom and revelation to us in a way that is personal to each of us, so we “get it” – our aha moment. Then, as we come together and talk, in our sharing, we get a bigger picture and greater revelation!
- V17-19. This is the list of things Paul prayed for those in Ephesus from a place of love and gratitude for them.

¹ Christian Standard Bible

² “What are the seven spirits of God.” GotQuestions.org. <https://www.gotquestions.org/seven-spirits-God.html>

- V18. We discussed the eyes of their heart may be enlightened implies revelation, and revelation lends itself to wisdom. Since the heart doesn't have eyes, we concluded "the eyes of their heart" refers to spiritual eyes. Thus, when we're looking at things, we can look with feeling through our heart OR with logic through our mind! Moreover, there's a difference in discernment and seeing. Seeing happens naturally. Discerning comes from the Lord.
- V18. We discussed our main hope is in what Christ has already done, in that we are now sons and daughter, and because of that, all our sins are forgiven.
- V18-19. The purpose of Paul praying for their heart to be enlightened was two-fold. First, he wanted them to know the hope of God's calling (His purpose for them and us). We highlighted how it's God's calling. God's inheritance. We also noted His calling on us goes back to He chose us (Ephesians 1:4). Therefore, instead of saying our calling, going forward, we want to remember it's His calling. Next, Paul wanted them to know the wealth of God's glorious inheritance in the saints. We discussed how when we know what glorious riches there are in His inheritance and we trust Him, His great power works in us.
- V19. We reiterated, when we trust Him, we have surpassingly great power working in us through the same Holy Spirit, the same power, that raised Jesus from the dead.
- V20. This verse tells us Christ was raised from the dead and He is now positioned in the heavenly places. This reminded us that earlier in chapter 1, we are positioned in Christ; now by Paul telling us where Christ is positioned, it helped us know where we are when we are "in Christ" – positioned in the heavenly places with Him!
- V22-23. Jesus is head over everything to include the church! Therefore, everything, every ruler, authority, power, dominion or any other name in this age or even in the ages to come are under Jesus' feet! Moreover, the church is the body of Christ, and it's supposed to be the full expression of Jesus who fills all creation! To fully grasp this concept, being the visual person I am, I drew a little stick man with a line under his feet. I identified the head as Jesus and the body as the church. Thus, if Jesus, as a whole, is above all things, and the church is His body, we too are also above all things.

Other nuggets from our discussion.

- Seeing the church as the full expression of Jesus reminded us that Christ is the full expression of the Father (Colossians 2:9), which led to our noticing the circular pattern of what Paul said. IF we are the fullness of Christ and Christ is the fullness of God ... IF we are following God's calling and glorifying Him, THEN we are the full expression of God. As a result, IF we are walking in Christ, THEN we have the same power that God used to raise Christ from the dead now made more sense to us.
- We explored "full expression" more. God. Jesus. The body. This is the three-fold order of expression. The body of Christ is the full expression of Jesus. Jesus is the full expression of God. And "the glory of God is man fully alive;" when man is fully alive, we are the full expression of Him who fills all creation.³ Thus, we concluded that our mandate as the church is to fill creation with the expression of Jesus!

Nuggets from our Takeaways.

- The church is supposed to be the full expression of Jesus.
- We were able to see the circular aspect of Jesus and the church. We, the church, are the fullness of Jesus only if we're doing what we're supposed to do. In so doing, we fulfill God's plan! And, if we're doing what we're supposed to be doing, the cycle feeds itself, as in when we're walking out God's calling and glorifying Him, we go to Him, and He fills our cup for us to pour out again.
- We gained better understanding of the Holy Spirit and what it means being "in the Spirit." We can have all the things Paul prayed for in verses 18 and 19, but the power is what we need to have.
- We desire deeper revelation of the power in us. We noted how, with each step through history, God got closer and closer until He was finally living in us. Yet, we're the generation that appears to be missing the fullness of the power in us.
- We tend to visit the surprisingly great power that's in us, but we don't dwell there.

³ This quote came from a website one sister was looking at related to this chapter of Ephesians. The quote is attributed to Irenaeus of Lyons (https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/1579882.Irenaeus_of_Lyons); however, while looking for the source of this quote, there is some controversy on what was actually said (<https://www.crossroadsinitiative.com/media/articles/man-fully-alive-is-the-glory-of-god-st-irenaeus/>). For our purposes, though, this quote helps us to understand how our life in Christ glorifies God.

Closing our discussion. We collected our prayer requests for the evening, and then played “Break Every Chain” before closing in prayer.

Song(s) for the week: “Blessed, Broken, & Given” by CeCe Winans, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJjyCM0tEXY>) and “Break Every Chain” by Jesus Culture, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtyVdC7E6Wo>).

Homework Assignment(s):

- Review the things that have stayed with you, because that’s what you’ll be tested on, and based on how you respond, you’ll know where what you heard fell in the soil of your heart.
- Determine what, if any action, we need to take on what we heard, which includes receiving truth.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 9, 2021. The current plan is to begin discussing Ephesians, chapter 2.

Closing: We closed in prayer for the needs lifted up, for the group overall, and as the Holy Spirit led.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns about information contained in this document, or would like to be added to or removed from the email distribution for the meeting notes, please email us at wow2@wow2women.com or complete a Contact Form on our site.