

## Four Things I Must Know - Part 1

### THE FATHER

#### Introduction

Someone described the Book of Ephesians as *the “high road” of New Testament revelation*, as it draws our attention to the glory of God. The book seeks to *change our perspective from that of a citizen of this world to that of a citizen of heaven*. It also seeks to change our orientation from one which is man-centred to one which is God-centred.

The Book of Ephesians is addressed to believers who are rich beyond measure in Jesus Christ, yet are living as beggars, only because they are ignorant of their wealth. The book describes the details of the spiritual wealth we have in Jesus Christ and shows us how to live and walk, rooted and in them.

#### **Ephesians 1:3**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ...*

Many believers do not know who we are in Jesus Christ. Thus we walk ignorantly and blindly, as losers, paupers and beggars. We are also weak, fearful, negative and defeatist. Unfortunately, the 'prosperity gospel' which is supposed to make us prosperous and rich, only has an earthly temporal focus and as such has failed to give us access to the fullness and richness of our spiritual wealth.

- Our blessings are located in the heavenly places so any gospel with an earthly focus will fail to give us access to them.

Paul, however, in the Book of Ephesians, desired and prayed that as believers, we should come to the knowledge of these things and walk in them.

#### 4 Things We Must Know

#### **Ephesians 1:17-19**

*Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.*

Paul earnestly prayed for the Church in Ephesus that they may know the following:

1. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
2. The hope of His calling or the hope to which He has called us.

3. The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints
4. The exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe

### KNOWING THE GOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER OF GLORY

#### **Ephesians 1:17**

*"...That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him"*

We can know of someone without actually knowing them. You can walk with someone without actually knowing them. Many believers simply do not know God.

#### **Effects of not knowing God**

- We live and walk in fear
- We lack faith and trust
- We walk in unbelief and doubt Him
- We walk in disobedience to His word and laws
- We become weak and lack power
- We displease God.

#### **Effects of knowing God.**

- Trust - *"And those who know Your name will put their trust in You..."* - **Psalm 9:10**
- Strength - *"...but the people who know their God will display strength and take action. (do exploits)"* - **Daniel 11:32**
- Grace and Peace - *"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord"* - **2 Peter 1:2**
- Spiritual Growth - *"For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God"* - **Colossians 1:9-10**

Therefore, we need to have the revelation and wisdom to know God, the Father. We need to know Him, His character, His mind and His ways. We need to know Him by revelation, encounter and experience.

The interesting thing is that the Father wants us to know Him.

#### **Jeremiah 9:23-24**

*Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. for in these I delight," says the LORD.*

God wants us to know Him and to be acquainted with His ways, word, and testimonies.

**Above all, God wants us to know His character. What can we know about God's character?**

1. That He is good, merciful, kind, gracious, longsuffering. Psalm 145 tells us that....

*The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy. The LORD is good all, and His tender mercies are over all His works... The LORD upholds all who fall, and raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look expectantly to Him and He gives them their food in due season. He opens His hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing.*

2. That He is faithful and trustworthy.

**Deuteronomy 7:9**

*"Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands."*

God is committed to being faithful –

**Psalm 89:2**

*"I will declare that Your love stands firm forever, that You have established Your faithfulness in heaven itself."*

**Lamentation 3:22** tells us that God's mercy and faithfulness are as dependable as sunrise and sunset. God is always there and will always be there every time you wake up in the morning and when you go to bed at night and through your sleep.

3. That He is just, fair and righteous

*"God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you" – 2 Thessalonians 1:6*

To say that God is just is to say that God is righteous and upright. God's justice (quality of being just) and righteousness are two sides of the same coin. His righteousness and justice even form the foundation of His kingdom. He only does what is right, fair and consistent with His word and Himself.

4. That He is Love

God is the definition of love! Without God love does not exist. God is the source of love. God's love (*Greek – agape*) for us flows from His being. His love for us is an essential and active part of His being.

**Jeremiah 31:3**

*"The Lord has appeared of old to me saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you".*

God's love is steadfast and unchanging. It is not influenced by us or subject to our actions. It is unconditional and selfless. It is a deliberate, active and sacrificial love. *1 Corinthians 13*

**Isaiah 49:15-16 (NIV)**

*"Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me."*

There is no better demonstration of God's love for us than the life and death of Christ Jesus, when God gave His ultimate and best to us – His only Son, Jesus. –

**John 3:16**

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

**1 John 3:9-10**

*In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

## The Unfathomable God

Even though God wants us to know Him, He is Spirit, a mystery, often unfathomable.

**Job 11:7-9**

*"Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty? They are higher than the heavens above—what can you do? They are deeper than the depths below—what can you know? Their measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea."*

**Isaiah 55:8-9**

*"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."*

**Exodus 33:19-23**

*"Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."*

## WE NEED THE HOLY SPIRIT

How do we know these things? How do we, who physically dwell on earth, access the things which are ours but are situated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus?

**John 3:27**

*"John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven."*

**John 3:31**

*"He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all."*

We can never know everything there is to know about God, this side of eternity, without the Holy Spirit.

**Isaiah 11:1-2 also describes the Holy Spirit as:**

- 1) The Spirit of the Lord – the Holy Spirit
- 2) Wisdom – *the quality of having experience, knowledge and good judgement*
- 3) Understanding – *the ability to perceive the intended meaning of something*
- 4) Counsel – *Advice*
- 5) Might – *great and impressive power and strength*
- 6) Knowledge – *information, facts and skills*
- 7) The fear of the Lord – *the beginning of wisdom*

God sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be many things to us, including the following:

1. The Holy Spirit is our Teacher

**John 14:25**

*"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you."*

**1 John 2:27**

*"But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him."*

2. The Holy Spirit guides us into all truth

**John 16:13**

*"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come."*

The Bible states that God's Spirit will lead us to a deeper understanding of truth. If we allow ourselves to be guided by Him, He shows us truths from the scripture that we need to know and understand.

3. The Holy Spirit reveals Christ to us and in us. – *John 16:14,15;*

Jesus said, *"He will take of what is mine and declare it to you"*. It is the Holy Spirit who communicates to our souls the knowledge of who Jesus is and what He is like. He reveals Christ to the believer through the word of God. The Holy Spirit makes Jesus real to people, by bringing the resources and reality of Jesus to them.

**Colossians 1:26-27**

*"The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them 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."*

- God has revealed Himself through us through Jesus Christ **To know Jesus Christ is to know God! Jesus Christ is the Image of God**

**Colossians 1:15** – *"He is the image of the invisible God..."*

Though God the Father is invisible and has never assumed a visible form, He is revealed to us through His Son Jesus Christ, who is His very image in nature, essence, substance and perfection. Through Jesus Christ, we can see, hear, touch, speak to, know and understand God! Hallelujah!

**John 14:9**

*"Jesus answered: 'Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

*"...If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father"*

- He reveals the love of God - all consuming, unconditional, sacrificial, yet unquenchable and stronger than death

- **Therefore, Paul's prayer, "That I might know Him..." Should be ours too**

**Finally...**

We need the spirit of wisdom and revelation (knowledge) to know Jesus (intimately and by experience). We need the Holy Spirit in order to know Jesus.

**1 Corinthians 2:9-16**

*That is what the Scriptures mean when they say,*

*"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him."<sup>[d]</sup>*

<sup>10</sup> But<sup>[e]</sup> it was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit. For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God's deep secrets. <sup>11</sup> No one can know a person's thoughts except that person's own spirit, and no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. <sup>12</sup> And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us.

<sup>13</sup> When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths.<sup>[f]</sup> <sup>14</sup> But people who aren't spiritual<sup>[g]</sup> can't receive these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can't understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means. <sup>15</sup> Those who are spiritual can evaluate all things, but they themselves cannot be evaluated by others. <sup>16</sup> For, "Who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?"<sup>[h]</sup>

*But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ.*