

Four Things I Must Know - Part 2
THE HOPE OF HIS CALLING

Ephesians 1:15-21

*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 hearts 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 desired and prayed that God's people, through the multi-faceted manifestations of His Spirit, might know Him.

1. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
 2. The hope of His calling or the hope to which He has call us.
 3. The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints
 4. The exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe
- Last time we discussed the first one - to know God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Today, we will focus on the second one. Verse 18:

"The eyes of your hearts being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling

It is very important that we know the HOPE to which Christ has called us because

- Without this hope, the Christian walk becomes a mere religious exercise
- Without this hope we will live in fear, doubt and unbelief
- Other religions have killed and kill for this hope
- This hope is the essence of all human life and existence
- Without this hope, life becomes meaningless and purposeless

Paul prayed that we would know the hope of Christ's Calling. Now, in order to understand Paul's prayer, we need to highlight and observe the three key components of the prayer, namely,

1. The hearts of our hearts being enlightened, (that is, the method, means or way)
2. The hope
3. His calling

However, I would like us to discuss it from back to front

1. His calling
2. The hope
3. The method

1. HIS CALLING

Many believers do not know or merely have a faint idea about our calling. Yes, we have been saved and our Christians but we do not have a comprehensive knowledge or understanding of our calling

- Now, by calling, I am not talking about the specific ministry or area of service assigned to us.

One Calling

Ephesians 4:1-4

"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling."

This scripture suggests that all believers have one calling in which we have been called, as there is one body, and one Spirit, and we have been called in one hope. We are admonished to walk worthy of this calling.

Called Out Ones

The word "calling" refers to a call, summons or invitation from God to partake of the blessings of salvation, through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a call to all, to which one must respond.

- God issued such an invitation or summons in **Isaiah 55:1** -

"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

- Matthew 22 talks about the parable of the Wedding Feast. **Verses 2-3**

"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding..."

- Those who respond to this divine summons or calling become part of the Church or 'Ekklēsia.' 'Ekklēsia' means the "called out ones." This denotes an assembly of people called out for a particular purpose

2 Corinthians 6:16-18

And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty."

1. God's calling is a holy calling

2 Timothy 1:8-9

"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and

called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began..."

2. God has not called us according to our earthly fleshy endowments - wisdom, might or riches

1 Corinthians 1:26

"For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."

3. God has called us out of darkness into God's marvellous light

1 Peter 2:9

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

2. THE HOPE TO WHICH HE HAS CALL US

Hope is one of the three Christian virtues described in *1 Corinthians 13:13*, together with Faith and Love. This makes Hope an essential and integral part of our Christian development and maturity.

Ephesians 1:15

Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints

- They had developed FAITH in God. They had developed LOVE for the saints. They now needed to develop HOPE. Which is why Paul prayed that we might know that Hope to which God has called us.

What is Hope?

Romans 8:24-25

For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

Hope can be a noun or a verb. Hope is more than a mere desire or wish.

- Hope is an active expectation

Noun - When Hope is a noun it is objective - it is the goal, end result or destination or expectation

Verb - When it is verb it is subjective - it describes the attitude of mind and experience of the person

- To know the Hope of God's calling, hope must be both Objective and Subjective: why

OBJECTIVE - Goal or end result

1. The Hope to which we are called is eternal life in Christ Jesus.

John 3:16-17

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. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

John 3:36: *He who believes in the Son has everlasting life..."*

- Eternally reconciled and connected with God. This promise was established by covenant.

Isaiah 55:3

Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you— The sure mercies of David.

2. The Hope to which we are called is Heaven

Hebrews 3:1 *...partakers of a heavenly calling...*

John 14:1-3

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also

We cannot imagine what heaven will be like, but the scripture tells us:

"that eye has not seen and ear has not heard, AND HAVE not entered the heart of man, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM"

Revelation 7:16-17

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes."

Revelation 22:5

And there shall no longer be {any} night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever.

- This is the hope of this heavenly calling.
- Many of us live without this expectation and anticipation. - we are earth focused and so fear, doubt, are discouraged. thus we fail to press on and engage with God in a worthy manner.
- However, life in Heaven is not only a future expectation, but also a present reality. Ephesians 1 tells us that we are already seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Also, Jesus has given us access by giving us the keys to the gates of heaven. We will discuss this further next week, when we look at the riches of the glory of our inheritance in Him

3. That We will be glorified

Romans 8:28-30

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

SUBJECTIVE - Our attitude of mind, lifestyle and experience

- Hope is one of the 3 virtues of our Christian faith, which we must actively pursue. Hope must be as active as Faith and Love.
- Christian Hope must be based on the fact of Christian experience. We must come to know and own this hope by experience

1. Come out from among them.

Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty."

- Come out from the darkness and walk in the Light

2. Be faithful. Fix your thoughts on Jesus and let Him be your example

Hebrews 3:1 (NKJV)

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of (who share in) the heavenly calling, consider (fix your thoughts on) the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3. Study the scriptures to know the fullness of the calling. This will produce and keep us in hope.

Romans 15:4

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

- In the scriptures we will find comfort, knowing that God is not a man to lie but that He always fulfills His word

Isaiah 55:10-11

"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return

to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

- As we study the scriptures we will not only find comfort, but also develop patience.

4. Walk worthy

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

"Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 4:1-3

"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

- Walk in Faith
- Walk in Love
- Live and Walk in the word - obeying it, doing it
- Let the fruit of the Spirit develop in you
- In relating to one another - goodness, kindness
- in relating to the world - sharing with them the Gospel, etc
- Be faithful to the Lord. Be faithful to the end.

5. Press on, be diligent and work to attain the goal of the calling

Philippians 3:13-14

"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press towards goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ"

2 Peter 1:10-11

"Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

- Press on in the word
- Press on in prayer
- Press on in worship
- Press on in Faith
- Press on in Love
- Press on in Hope

6. Hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end

Hebrews 3:6

But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

3. THE METHOD

The Eyes Of Our hearts and understanding Being Enlightened

To know, experience, live and walk in the hope of our calling, the eyes of our hearts needs to be enlightened. What does that mean?

The heart is the core of life, just as the physical heart is the Some versions use understanding instead of heart. However, the heart (not the physical organ) but the spirit and core of life consist of understanding, knowledge, will, etc and out of it flows all the issues of life. *Hence we are told to guard our hearts with all diligence*

2 Corinthians 4:6

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

We need the Holy Spirit. We need spirit of understanding, knowledge and counsel, to enlighten our hearts to know the hope to which we have been called

Romans 15:13

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

FINALLY

- In Isaiah 55:1, God issued an invitation, calling us to come...
- In verses 6-7, He asked us to seek Him, call upon Him, abandon our wicked ways and thoughts and return to the Lord
- God proved that He is faithful and that His word will always accomplish His purpose
- **Our promised HOPE is in verses 12-13:** *"For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."*