

Small Group Guide: Spiritual Riches

Week 3 - The Prison Epistles | Ephesians 1:15-23

Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by praying Paul's prayer from Ephesians 1:17-19 over your group, asking God to enlighten the eyes of your hearts to see the spiritual riches you already possess in Christ.

Ice Breaker

Share a time when you owned something valuable but didn't realize its worth until later. How did your perspective change once you understood what you had?

Key Scripture

Ephesians 1:18 - "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints..."

Sermon Summary

Paul prays for believers who already have everything in Christ—that their spiritual eyes would be opened to truly see and live in the riches they've inherited. He identifies three realities that transform our lives: the hope of God's calling, God's wealth in His people, and the resurrection power aimed at us.

Discussion Questions

Part 1: Living in Spiritual Poverty vs. Spiritual Riches

1. The pastor said, "We can have everything we need in Him and still live like we're running on empty." Why do you think believers often live in spiritual poverty despite having access to spiritual riches?
2. What distractions or circumstances in your life cause you to lose focus on what you have in Christ?
3. Paul was under house arrest when he wrote this prayer. How does his situation challenge our excuses for spiritual dryness?

Part 2: The Eyes of Your Heart

4. What does it mean to have "the eyes of your heart enlightened"? How is this different from intellectual knowledge about God?
5. The pastor mentioned that we often feel stuck not because God is withholding grace, but because our spiritual eyes have grown dim. What causes our spiritual vision to blur?
6. Share a time when God "turned the lights on" in your heart—when spiritual truth suddenly became real to you.

Part 3: Three Realities That Change Everything

Reality #1: The Hope of God's Calling

7. How is biblical hope (confident expectation) different from wishful thinking? Give an example from your life.

8. Discuss this statement: "Whatever the circumstance of your current story, it is not the final chapter of your life." How does this truth combat anxiety?

9. What situation in your life right now needs to be viewed through the lens of God's effectual calling?

****Reality #2: God's Wealth in His People****

10. The sermon taught that believers are God's inheritance—His treasured possession. How does viewing yourself as God's "wealth" change your self-perception?

11. In what ways do we display the "riches of His glory" when we love well, speak wisdom, or suffer for righteousness?

12. How should understanding that we carry God's glory affect how we interact with others this week?

****Reality #3: The Power Aimed at You****

13. Paul uses four different Greek words for power (dynamis, energeia, kratos, ischys) to emphasize God's strength working in us. Why do we so often try to live the Christian life on "spiritual fumes and human effort"?

14. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is directed toward believers. How should this reality change how you approach challenges, temptations, or ministry opportunities?

15. The church is called Christ's "body" and "the fullness of Him who fills all in all." What does this say about the importance of being connected to a local church?

Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Faith and love always belong together** - Pistis (full-weight trust) shows itself in agapē (self-giving love).
- ✓ **Pray before every decision** - Ask God to enlighten the eyes of your heart before you act, speak, or study Scripture.
- ✓ **Hope is grounded confidence** - Not believing God **can**, but knowing God **will** do what is best.
- ✓ **You are God's inheritance** - The local church displays God's glory and riches to the world.
- ✓ **Resurrection power is already yours** - Stop living from exhaustion and start living from the power that raised Jesus.

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one of these practices to implement this week:

Option 1: Prayer Practice

Each morning this week, pray this three-part prayer:

- "Lord, help me know the hope of Your calling."
- "Lord, help me see the riches of Your glory in Your inheritance."
- "Lord, help me experience the immeasurable greatness of Your power toward those who believe."

****Option 2: Spiritual Vision Check****

Identify one area where you've been living in "spiritual poverty" (worry, self-sufficiency, discouragement). Each day, ask God to enlighten the eyes of your heart to see what you already have in Christ regarding that area.

****Option 3: Glory Display****

Intentionally look for three opportunities this week to display God's glory through:

- Loving someone well
- Speaking spiritual wisdom
- Enduring difficulty with hope

****Option 4: Church as Inheritance****

Reflect on how you view your local church. This week, engage with your church community as if it were God's "treasured possession" (because it is). How might this change your participation, attitude, or commitment?

Group Activity

****Mapping Your Spiritual Riches:****

Give each person paper and pen. Draw three columns labeled:

1. Hope of His Calling
2. Riches of His Glory in Me
3. His Power at Work

In each column, write specific truths from Scripture about what you already possess in Christ. Share these with the group and encourage one another.

Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer

Share:

- One area where you need the "eyes of your heart enlightened"
- One way you want to see God's power at work this week

Pray together:

Close by having different group members pray through the three realities for the person on their right, asking God to make these truths real and transformative in their lives.

For Further Study

- Read Ephesians 1:1-23 in its entirety
- Study other passages about spiritual sight: 2 Kings 6:15-17, Luke 24:13-35, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
- Research the Greek words: *pistis, agapē, kardia, elpis, klēsis, ploutos, doxa, dynamis*

Next Week's Preparation

Read Ephesians 2:1-10 in preparation for next week's study on grace and spiritual transformation.