
Resources

- Watch or listen to Sunday's sermon: abfboone.com/sermon-archive
- Find Life Group resources: abfboone.org/groups/resources

Ephesians 1:15-23

[15] For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, [16] I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, [17] that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, [18] having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, [19] and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might [20] that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, [21] far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. [22] And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, [23] which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Sermon Outline:

5 Ways To Pray For The Persecuted Church

1. Thank God For The Advance of The Gospel
2. Pray For a Deeper Knowledge of God
3. Pray For a Deeper Awareness of Hope
4. Pray For a Deeper Sense of God's Love
5. Pray For a Deeper Experience of God's Power

Life Group Leader Notes:



Weekly Discussion Guide

- What is your experience with the persecuted church? Have you ever been persecuted for your faith? Do you know anyone who has been persecuted for their faith? Are there any influential stories of persecution in the Bible or throughout Church History that have inspired you? What passages of the Bible help you think about and pray for the persecuted church?
- Paul began his prayer by thanking God for the *faith & love* that was growing in the Ephesian believers. Why was this report so encouraging to him? In the sermon, Michael said that God *uses* us, but he does not *depend* on us. How does this prepare us to face persecution? What might happen to a Christian who felt *indispensable* to God's mission? How would that person react to persecution or opposition?
- In verses 16-18, Paul wanted the church to *know* the Lord personally. What does it mean for the "eyes of the heart" to be enlightened? Is it more important to have a big heart or a big head? How do we develop a greater personal knowledge of God? (It's good to remember that this is ultimately a gift, and not something that can be developed from scratch - *I pray that the Lord would give you the Spirit of wisdom...*" This is why prayer is so important).
- Paul prayed that the church would know the hope to which they were called. Why is hope so important? Have you ever gone through a season where you lost all hope? (Perhaps some in the group are there now). What was that season of life like? Have you ever gone through a season of life where your hope was so great that it helped you persevere through a difficult season? What are a few things your life group can do to cultivate hope?
- Paul prayed that the church would know how valuable they were. In verse 18, he wanted them to know the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints. In other words, he wanted them to grasp how much God loved them. Perhaps you can read through Ephesians 1:3-14 and reflect on God's great love for the church.
- Paul prayed that the church would experience the immeasurable power of God. If someone were to review the last month of your life, would they see any evidence of supernatural power? Or would they simply see human striving? Where do you experience the power of God in your life?
- Are you preparing for persecution? Why is it wise to prepare for persecution, even in a country that was founded on the conviction of religious freedom? What practical steps can you take to prepare?

