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The Two Greatest Prayers of the Apostle Paul

CHAPTER TWO

A SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION

THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The Unique Organ to Receive and Contact God

In Ephesians 1, the main thing the Apostle Paul prayed for is for us to be given a spirit of wisdom and revelation. This spirit is not the Holy Spirit but our human spirit. For centuries, Christianity has missed the mark of God's economy (1 Tim. 1:4-6) simply because they have neglected this basic matter—the human spirit. Some may speak often of the Holy Spirit, yet they do so in an objective way as if the Spirit were something far away from us. The Apostle Paul knew that the problem is not with the Holy Spirit but with the neglect of the human spirit. Today many neglect their spirit, and some do not even realize that they have a human spirit.

Let me illustrate in this way. Suppose you know all about ice cream, yet you do not realize that you have a mouth. There is no problem with the ice cream. The problem is that you do not realize you have a mouth with which you can receive and enjoy the ice cream. This may seem like a childish illustration, but this is the situation in Christianity today. They may talk a lot about the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but they do not realize the organ with which we must contact and receive the Holy Spirit. If we are going to receive the air, we need to use our lungs. If we are going to listen to something, we have to use our ears. We must use the right organ. God purposely created only one organ to receive and contact Him—our spirit (John 4:24; Rom. 1:9).

Exercising Our Spirit to See the Church

We may know about our spirit, but we may still not be so clear that we need to exercise our spirit. We may exercise our mentality too much and neglect our spirit. When some hear the young people shouting and calling on the name of the Lord, they may be bothered. They may think, "I don't like this kind of church." Eventually, they will be kept away from the meetings by their reasoning mind. We must realize, however, that the church is a matter in our spirit, not in our mind. Only by exercising our spirit can we discern matters clearly in the church.

Although the church is a great subject in the Bible, the Apostle Paul's Epistle concerning the church is very short with only six chapters. If we are going to know the church, the main thing is not to exercise our mind to know the teachings, but to exercise our spirit. Thus, Paul prayed for all of us, that God, the Father of glory, may give to us a spirit of wisdom and revelation (Eph. 1:17). For the church, we need such a spirit, and we all have a spirit, but we have to exercise our spirit. We need to use our spirit. If you are in your mind, you could never be clear

about the church. The mind is the wrong organ with which to realize the church. However, if you exercise to enter into your spirit and stay there, you will see the church. The church is absolutely something in the spirit.

A sister once told me that I talked too much about the church life and asked if I ever spoke about the family life. When she said this, I realized deep within that she was just in her mind. Because she was in the mind, the family life was everything to her. If she would have changed her position by turning herself from the mind to the spirit, she would have contacted the Lord Jesus. She would have seen the church life. The church life is not in our mind. We should not exercise our mind to understand the church. The church life is in our spirit. We need a spirit of wisdom and revelation, not to merely understand the church, but to see the church.

The Need for Wisdom and Revelation

Paul prays for a spirit of wisdom and revelation (1:17).

Wisdom is the ability to realize and understand things. For example, if you would give me a camera, I may not know how to put in the film or how to take a picture. I may not even realize that I have to take the lens cover off. I simply do not have the wisdom to know and understand how to operate a camera. Wisdom is to know and understand something, but revelation is to see something. Suppose there is a big factory with many machines. We may have the wisdom to know how to operate all the machines, but if the factory is not open to us, we cannot see anything. On the other hand, if the factory is opened, we can see everything, but if we do not understand the machines, our seeing means very little. We need both the wisdom and the revelation. Our spirit is a spirit of wisdom and revelation. We must turn to our spirit to get the wisdom to know and understand the things of the church and also to receive the revelation to see the things of the church.

The hope of God's calling

First, we must have the proper base and foundation of being in the spirit. Then Paul prays that we "may know what is the hope of His calling" (v. 18). Because we have been called by God, we now have a marvelous hope. Paul's concept is that this hope is our destiny and also our destination. We all must see the hope, the destiny, and the destination to which God has called us.

The Freedom of Glory

We do have a hope as a result of our being called by God. This hope is that we will be transformed and transfigured, thoroughly conformed to the image of Christ. When we look at ourselves, we realize that we have many flaws. Physically, I have many wrinkles and spots. But one day, we will all be the same as Christ, not only inwardly, spiritually, but even outwardly, physically. We will be absolutely like Christ in His glory (1 John 3:2; Col. 3:4). Today, Christ in us is our hope of

glory (Col. 1:27). But one day, all my wrinkles and spots will be gone. I cannot tell you how wonderful, beautiful, and glorious we will be! Today, because we are still under corruption, we groan in ourselves (Rom. 8:23), waiting eagerly for that day of glory when we will be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God (v. 21). We will be delivered out of groaning to enjoy the freedom of glory. This is our hope, our destiny, and also our destination. Day by day, we are marching onward toward this destination. Our hope is that, one day, we will arrive. This destination is not the heavens, but the freedom of the glory of the children of God. When we are all fully conformed to the image of Christ, we will be in glory. Today, I am fully content to be in the church life. In the church, we are on our way to glory, and this glory is the hope of our calling.

God's Inheritance in the Saints

The second matter that Paul prays for us to know is "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18). We have seen that God's inheritance in the saints is the Christ that has been wrought into us. Actually, the Christ that has been wrought into us is the church, so the church is God's inheritance. This matter is very deep and profound. Do not think that the church is an organization, a group of religious people, or any kind of social or religious entity. The church is simply Christ wrought into us in a corporate way.

The Transmission of God's Power Producing the Church

The third matter that the apostle prays for us to see is "the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe" (v. 19). We must pay attention to the short phrase, toward us, in this verse. This great power is not something which is unrelated to us. This power is toward us. Continually, this great power is directed toward us who believe. We are the object of this power.

We should never forget the four items which constitute this power. First, it is the power that raised up Jesus from among the dead (v. 20), the resurrection power. Second, it is the power that seated Christ at the right hand of God (vv. 20-21), the transcending power. It cannot be held down, suppressed, or oppressed; it transcends everything. Third, this power subjected all things under the feet of Christ (v. 22). This is the subduing power. Fourth, it is the power that gave Christ to be Head over all things (v. 22). This is the overruling power that rules over everything. We have to realize this power in all of these aspects. This great power is the resurrection, transcending, subduing, and overruling power, and it is this power that produces the church.

Experiencing the Divine Transmission

In verse 19, this great power is "toward us who believe." To receive God's power, there is no other condition than that of believing in the Lord Jesus. As long as you believe in the Lord Jesus, this power is toward you and even in you. Then verse 22 says that Christ has been given to be Head over all things to the church. This word "to" indicates a transmission. Here we have a divine transmission of all the power which God has wrought in Christ into the church. Although we may see this, it could be merely a doctrine to us. We must also see how to apply it. To

experience this power, the first thing we need to realize is that this power is in us already. It is just like the electricity that has already been installed into a building. But with most of us, our "amperage" is too low. Our capacity to receive the transmission of this power is too small. This power has been installed into us, but because our capacity is too small, many times in our experience "the fuse burns out," and the power does not work. We must all look to the Lord that our capacity may be enlarged that we may experience the power that is within us.

Manifesting the Resurrection Power

To experience this power within you, first, you need to have a strong desire to get completely out of death. If you cannot tolerate death within you, you will realize the resurrection power. Many Christians are indifferent toward death. As long as they can come and sit quietly and hear the choir sing and the pastor give a good sermon, they are content. They may love the Lord and fear Him. They may try not to do anything sinful or be worldly. They may save some money for the offering, and sometimes they may even pray for the church. However, whether the church meetings are dead or living, they would not care. Concerning death, they are altogether indifferent. Someone who is indifferent like this could never realize the power of resurrection. If you mean business with the Lord and if you hate death and are desperate to be delivered from anything dead, deadened, or deadly, you will see the power that is "toward you." If you are genuinely grieved that your city is so dead, with nearly no one loving the Lord and standing for His testimony, and if you are desperate with the Lord, then the resurrection power will be manifested.

Burdens for Church Prayers

- For GTCA burden, especially for saints' participation in the move in Stockton and San Luis Obispo.
- For daily exercises in God's ordained way training: Personal contact with the Lord, Pursuing the truth, Participating in the study group, Praying with companions and in the church prayer meeting, Prophesying on the Lord's day and Going to the meetings on time.
- For gospel preaching on West Valley College campus, as well as for English-speaking testimony in Campbell.
- For young people that they would have morning revival, pursue the truth and become gospel seeds on campus.

Announcement

- Morning Revival: The prayer of the age, week 4
- Prayer meeting will be held at br. Peter Liu's house. Meeting will start at 7:30 pm.
- GTCA on two weekends 2/5-6, 2/12-13, please register via brother Peter Liu.
- GOW study group please read training manual this week on pp. 35-37, 48-51. The first monthly training on 1/29 will be held at South SFCC, starting at 9 am.
- 2011 International Chinese Speaking Conference will be held on 2/18-20 in Anaheim, CA.