

## **Open the Eyes of My Heart (Part 6)**

Ephesians 1:19-23

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If you were here during the last few sermons, you will recall that Paul describes all the blessings we receive from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 1:3-14. He wants us to realize how much we have in Christ. Then in vv. 15-18 Paul says that he prays for believers to know God more, specifically the hope to which we are called, the riches of God's inheritance in us, and the incomparably great power for those who believe. Up to this point, Paul has focused on all that we have been given through Jesus. It might be tempting to think that we are at the center of all this blessing, like cats who think they must be god because their master takes care of them. But we must be instead like the dog who thinks that the master must be god because of all he has done for the dog. And so in vv. 19-23 Paul uses the idea of resurrection power to pivot the focus back onto Jesus, who is the true center of everything. We are not as deserving or valuable as we think we are. God loves us not because of who we are, but because of who He is. So we must take the focus off of ourselves and put it on the object of our faith, Jesus Christ.

Paul discusses seven aspects of Jesus. First in v. 20 we see that God raised Jesus from the dead. We have heard this so many times that it seems almost ordinary. But the resurrection is the defining difference between Christianity and other religions, whose leaders have died long ago. Jesus came back from the dead and is alive today. Those who witnessed Jesus after the resurrection were transformed from being cowardly to being bold enough to die for their faith. The One we have faith in left us not just with His teaching, but with His transformative power, His life flowing through us. We live a new life because He lives.

Second, Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father. The right hand seat is a seat of power and authority (Psalm 110). God chooses to draw attention to His Son, because when you glorify the Son, you glorify the Father. It's sort of like how parents feel proud of their children's accomplishments. When children do well, it reflects well on the parents.

Third, Jesus is above all rule, authority, power, dominion, and title (v. 21). All these are referring to Jesus' authority being above all other authority. He is the King of kings. Isaiah 2 says that Zion will be lifted up above all other mountains. Israel will be lifted above all nations, its capital Jerusalem will be above all cities, and its King is above all kings. Jesus will be the

only undisputed superpower on the earth. As Philippians 2:9-11 says, His name is above every other name.

Fourth, Jesus' power and authority is not just in this present age but in the age to come. He is exalted both now and forever. It might seem like Paul is using a lot of hyperbole here, but it's not exaggeration at all. Jesus' power is not limited by time or anything else.

Fifth, the Father placed all things under Jesus' feet (v. 22). Again in Psalm 110 we see God making His enemies a footstool. In Psalm 2 God laughs at the nations for conspiring against His Son. They don't stand a chance. We who are on Jesus' side are on the winning side.

Sixth, Jesus is the head of the Church. Jesus' enemies will submit and bow down because they are forced to. But we who are on His side will submit because we know how much He loves us. We are in a relationship with Jesus. We are united with Him. He is the head and we are the body. We recognize that Jesus is supremely qualified to be our King. He has the power to overcome all else, and loves us so much that He was willing to die for us. What reason do we have to follow anyone else?

Finally, in v. 23 Jesus fills everything in every way. This isn't some pantheistic statement saying that everything is a part of God or that God flows in everything like the force in Star Wars. Rather, it simply means that Jesus is at the center of everything. Through Him all things were made, and all things are subjected under Him. He is the center of the universe. There is no one like Jesus, so let us turn our focus on Him alone.