

# With Your Eyes Focused and Clear

You matter to God . . .

"(v.15) That's why, when I heard of the solid trust you have in the Master Jesus and your outpouring of love to all the Christians, (v.16) I couldn't stop thanking God for you—every time I prayed, I'd think of you and give thanks. But I do more than thank. (v.17) I ask—ask the God of your Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally, (v.18) your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for Christians, oh, the utter extravagance of his work in us who trust him—endless energy, boundless strength!

(v.19) All this energy issues from Christ: God raised him from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule. (v.20) And not just for the time being, but forever. (v.21) He is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. (v.22) At the center of all this, Christ rules the church. The church, you see, is not peripheral to the world; the world is peripheral to the church. (v.23) The church is Christ's body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence.

**Ephesians 1:15-23**

**The Message**

- ❖ We have the opportunity to apply these incredible words of scripture not only to our individual lives, but to the life of this church. What is God directing us to be and do as His church?

## **# 1 The church is a world wide caring community.**

*"That's why, when I heard of the solid trust you have in the Master Jesus and your outpouring of love to all the Christians, I couldn't stop thanking God for you!" (v.15)*

**-Yes, we cannot love everybody.**

**But our love cannot be confined to the limits  
of our own specific community.**

## **# 2 The church is a praying community.**

*"Every time I prayed, I'd think of you and give thanks." (v.16)*

*To pray is to remember "who owns the house."*

This is God's world and the people in it are his! The church is not an independent, self-determining group; it is a community that acknowledges it is owned and therefore under direction. We need to pray for Christians world-wide and all others.

## **# 3 The church is a thinking community.**

*"I ask God to make you intelligent and discerning in knowing him personally." (v.17)*

Christians must grow in wisdom and in their understanding of life, God, and the relevance of their faith. Wisdom is practical knowledge for right living. The church should first of all be a community of thinkers—not thinking separate from action, but thinking as the basis for action. Ignorance is an ethical issue.

## **# 4 The church is a community that understands time and opportunity.**

*". . . your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly what it is he is calling you to do, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for Christians." (v.18)*

This passage focuses on understanding the past, the present, and the future. Here the passage looks to the specific past event of God's work in Christ—his life, death, and especially the resurrection as events that have changed the course of history and determine the future.

In a world that knows no time except the present, Christians must remind people about the future.

## **# 5 The church is a community of power.**

*" . . . he is in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule. " (v.19)*

The power Christians have is not intrinsic power, something they have in themselves, but a power that comes from God, defined by the resurrection of Jesus and his exaltation as Lord over every other power, both now and in the future.

## **# 6 The church is a confident community.**

*"He (Christ) is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. At the center of all this, Christ rules the church. . . . The church is Christ's body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence." (v.21-23)*

Since Christ has been exalted over every other power, we Christians do not need to worry about powers. Nothing can separate us from Christ, disqualify us, or condemn us.