

A. SPIRIT INSIDE

- Paul wrote the Ephesians a letter of encouragement meant to help them understand all that God had already done for them so that they might live and grow in Christ.
- The letter starts by describing the incredible benefits of being in Christ. (vv. 3-14) Next Paul prays that they might know God better by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation: Ephesians 1:13 – 19b NIV -- And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. ¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe.
- Paul desired that we would see what we have as believers, become all God intends us to be, and enjoy all the blessings that are ours. He wrote that we are:

○ Blessed with every spiritual blessing (v.3)	○ Recipients of His glorious grace (v. 6)
○ Chosen before time began (v. 4)	○ Redeemed by the blood of Jesus (v. 7)
○ Holy and blameless in God's sight (v. 4)	○ Forgiven of our sins (v.8)
○ Children of God the Father (v. 5)	○ Sealed with the Holy Spirit (v. 13)
- Paul wanted his readers to understand that the Holy Spirit lives within every believer. He brings them wisdom and understanding meant to transform the way they live.
- We often ask for HS to come when, in fact, this Scripture tells us we have Him already. Being sealed with the Spirit makes us:

○ Belong to God – only His adopted children have the Spirit (Rom 8:15)
○ Assured of Salvation – HS is our guarantee of life eternal in Christ (v.14)
○ Heirs with Christ – every spiritual blessing is ours now and forever (Eph 1:3)
○ Recipients of God's wisdom! (v. 17)
- Holy Spirit, the presence of our triune God, comes to live inside each believer at the time of their salvation. This isn't a separate event as it was at Pentecost. (Rom 8:9)
- This means that not only is God our Dwelling Place, but we are a people in which the Spirit of God has chosen to dwell: 1 Cor 3:16 -- Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?
- The Spirit works in our lives in many ways (as Helper, Comforter, Teacher, etc.), but His main purpose, as seen in this prayer, is to enable us to know God better. (v. 17)
- Until we have Holy Spirit living within, the only wisdom available to us is worldly wisdom: 1 Cor 2:12 -- We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.
- Insights:

B. SPIRITUAL EYES

- We are blind spiritually before knowing Jesus. Paul literally experienced what it was like to be blind to the truth of God and then have the scales fall off his eyes. (Acts 9:18)
- In the time between Paul's conversion and his public ministry, HS gave him wisdom and insight into the Scriptures with his new spiritual eyes. (Gal 1:15-18)
- The Spirit of wisdom and revelation used Paul's scholarly knowledge of Scripture, opened his eyes to the truth, then wrote much of the New Testament through him.
- In like manner, HS imparts wisdom to us primarily by using the written Word of God to open our spiritual eyes to the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 16:13-15)
- When we encounter the Word like this, it can be exhilarating, disturbing, confronting, ground-breaking, and always meant to be transformative. (2 Tim 3:16, Romans 12:2)
- When wisdom and revelation are received at the core of our beings, it will radically transform us in the same way as hateful Saul was transformed into Saint Paul!
- Once Paul reentered public life, he became a missionary to the Gentiles. Scripture often records him receiving wisdom from the Spirit on where to go next. (Acts 19:21, 20:22)
- Because we have that same Spirit of wisdom living in us, we can rely on Him to give us wisdom for next steps in everything we are called to do: Gal 5:16 AMP -- But I say, walk *habitually* in the [Holy] Spirit [seek Him and be responsive to His guidance], and then you will certainly not carry out the desire of the sinful nature [which responds impulsively without regard for God and His precepts].

- LISTENING EXERCISE:

Lord, please show us the current status of our relationship with Holy Spirit?

-- Where am I in terms of comfort or discomfort with the idea of HS living in me?

-- How healthy or sharp are my spiritual eyes?

-- Do I regularly experience the Spirit of God making the Word of God living and active (receiving fresh insights and personal applications)?

-- How often am I conscious of the Spirit's whispers or nudges leading me along the Way of Wisdom?

Spirit, would You bless my spiritual eyes that I might see and be transformed?

- Paul's prayer for us to know God better also highlights 3 important truths about our life in Christ that he wants us to know deeply:
 1. We are called to Hope
 - "Hope for believers is not the world's wishful thinking, but the absolute certainty that God will make true what he has promised." (Hoehner on Eph 1:18)
 - Disappointment, despair, and deferred hope (prolonged waiting on God) can interfere with seeing and receiving HS wisdom and insight in our inmost being.
 2. His inheritance is rich
 - As God's children, we have a lavishly rich inheritance in Christ. Greater still is the truth that we are God's own inheritance! We are of great worth to Him. (vv. 14, 18; Dt 32:9)
 - Lies about our identity in Christ prevent us from enjoying our inheritance. We are:
 - a) No longer orphans but God's adopted children (John 1:12, Gal 4:4-6)
 - b) Not sinners but saints and new creations who still sin (Rom 5:8; 2 Cor 5:17, Heb 10:14)
 3. His power is great
 - The Spirit living in us is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead! (Rom 8:11)
 - This immeasurable and unlimited power is available to us in real time to give us wisdom and victory over our flesh, the world and the devil. (Eph 3:16)
 - We stray from the path of wisdom by failing to avail ourselves of the Spirit within. He empowers us to understand His Word and to stay in step with Him. (Jn 16:13, Gal 5:25)
- Let's continually call upon the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in order to overcome the things which hinder us. So far, we've identified these hindrances to wisdom:

○ Distrust ○ False Hopes ○ Legitimate guilt & shame ○ Illegitimate guilt & shame ○ Hardship, situational & emotional ○ Prayerlessness ○ Self-reliance ○ Distraction & busyness	○ Possessions, power, & position ○ Analyzing & over-thinking ○ Trying to fix or control ○ Disappointment & despair ○ Deferred hope (waiting on God) ○ Lies about our true identity ○ Not availing ourselves of HS power
---	---
- May we grow in awareness of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation dwelling within us. And may experience His hope, riches and power each step on the Way of Wisdom.
- Insights:

C. TESTIMONY

D. PERSONAL APPLICATION

- ONE THING
- The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

- PONDER THE TRUTH

Which verse or principle stood out to you this week? Write it below taking some time to review it often. Be still in God's presence, alert for new insights. Record them here.

- PROCESSING THE TRUTH

Prayerfully consider the Listening Exercises from this lesson. Ask the Spirit to guide you into a deeper understanding of the truth and to reveal any specific faith steps He is calling you to take. Write down your insights.