

# Church Matters

The **Head** of the Church

# TALKING WALKING POINTS

## Leaders' Guide



A publication of **THE DISCIPLE**, the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

2022.8.7



## Questions for Reflection & Discussion

Open your Bible to Ephesians 1:15-23. Let's see what we can learn about the church and its head...

- 1 According to v. 15, what **two** things had Paul heard about the folks in Ephesus? Toward Jesus they had \_\_\_\_\_, and toward other believers ("all the saints") they had \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 According to 1 John 4:20 and 5:1, what is the **necessary connection** between those two things?
- 3 Paul asked God to give the believers in Ephesus "a spirit of **wisdom** and of **revelation** in the **knowledge** of Christ" (v. 17). Those all sound like "brain things"—but then in v. 18 he notes that they come via "the enlightening of the **eyes of their hearts**". What do you think about that?
- 4 This "spiritual heart-knowledge" comes via **revelation** from God. Look up the word "revelation" at <webstersdictionary1828.com>. According to Matthew 11:25–27, to whom does God **reveal** himself? To whom does God **hide** knowledge of himself? (Hint: See the context: Matthew 11:20–24).
- 5 We all reveal or withhold info based upon the trustworthiness of our listener (think: "best friend" vs. "telemarketer"! **What criteria** does **God** use to determine to whom **he'll** reveal and withhold info?
- 6 According to v. 18-19, "to us who believe" God reveals "the \_\_\_\_\_ of His calling, the riches of the glory of His \_\_\_\_\_ in the saints, the surpassing greatness of His \_\_\_\_\_."  
Our "calling" is to salvation. But according to Titus 1:1-2, **how certain** is biblical hope?
- 7 The inheritance God has for us is called "gloriously rich". How else is it described in 1 Peter 1:3–5?  
According to v. 19b-20a, **how "surpassingly great"** is the power God gives us? What else did it do?
- 8 Jesus is now seated "in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come." (v. 20b-21). Above **how many** "rulers, authorities, powers, dominions, and names" is Christ now? **How far** above them is he? **Who benefits from** Christ's supremacy over every created thing (v. 22c)?
- 9 The church—redeemed people—is metaphorically called "Christ's **body**" (v. 23a). Describe the mutual relationship between your own head and your own body.
- 10 How do you see that same dynamic in your relationship with Christ? How does it need to increase?

- 1 • faith in the Lord Jesus  
• love for all the saints
- 2 Belief in God (which is invisible and thus *unverifiable*) **is proven/validated by** our love for other believers (which is *both* visible and thus verifiable).
- 3 Christianity is **more than merely rational** (*not irrational, not less than rational, but rational and more*). You can't "smart your way into the kingdom of God"! This is why there are **many** brilliant atheists. More on this in the following questions...
- 4 God reveals himself to "babes". God hides knowledge of himself from "the wise and intelligent". Lest you conclude this proves that atheists are smart and Christians are gullible, look at the context!
  - God hides knowledge of himself from those who **think themselves to be** too "wise and intelligent" to respond in faith to the many convincing proofs he has given (Matthew 11:20–24).
  - God reveals knowledge of himself to those who respond to him from "an honest and good heart" (this is the "good soil" heart of the Parable of the Sower; see Luke 8:15).
  - God teaches in such a way that responsive people "get it", but the proud—who think themselves too "wise and intelligent" for religion—don't! (See Matthew 13:10–16). In fact, God actually **diminishes** the insight resistant people **have** (note v. 12b) if they do not soften their hearts—like "babes". 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 is a classic text on this phenomenon.
- 5 This was explored in 4, but the principle needs to be restated simply: Knowledge of God must be **revealed** by God, to people. Hard-hearted people cannot know God, no matter how high their IQ. In fact, God not only **does not reveal himself** to such people, he **actively removes** what little knowledge of God they currently possess. This is a judgement of God.
- 6 "the **hope** of His calling, the riches of the glory of His **inheritance**, and the surpassing greatness of His **power**"
- 7 • Biblical "hope" is not "wishful thinking" (as in, "I hope it doesn't rain during the game!"), but rather a confident expectation of a certainty. God has promised something, but we have not yet received it.
  - Our inheritance is "imperishable", "undefiled", "unfading", "reserved for us", and "secured by God's power".
  - God's power is "according to His (infinite, limitless) strength"; it raised Christ from the dead.
- 8 • "above **all** rulers, authorities, powers, dominions, and name"  
• "**far** above them"  
• "for the sake of his church"
- 9 • Your head controls and directs your body. Your body dies if severed from your head. Your head accomplishes all of its will through the agency of your body.  
• Your body never disobeys your head. Your head dies if severed from your body. No meaningful work would be accomplished if your head had no body.  
**Important Note!** The relationship between Christ and his redeemed people is **similar to** the relationship of a head to a body, but it is **not identical**. Christ created the world without us! Christ lived just fine without us—since eternity past! But, he has **chosen to give us the dignity of being** his "co-laborers" (1 Corinthians 3:9). He **chooses** to accomplish much of his work through us (Romans 10:13–14).
- 10 You likely will need to "prime the pump", so be prepared with your own answer to this question. (But wait for others to think and answer. Check your watch—20 seconds feels like an eternity!)

# Sermon Summary

Key Text: Ephesians 1:15-23

The headship of Jesus Christ empowers the church to make both an **earthly** and an **eternal** impact. In Ephesians 1:15-23 we discover **four distinct truths** about Jesus' leadership of his church.

I. The foundational **marks** of the local church. (15-16)

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (15)

Love for all the saints. (16)

II. The pathway to spiritual **maturity** for the local church. (17-18)

An attitude that seeks to know God. (17)

An understanding of the hope we have in Christ. (18a)

A realization of our eternal inheritance from Christ. (18b)

III. The limitless **might** working within the local church. (19-21)

Saving faith in Christ gives us unlimited access to God's strength. (19)

God's might is displayed in the resurrection and ascension of Christ. (20)

The power of God has exalted Christ above all - now and forever! (21)

IV. The **majesty** of the local church. (22-23)

Christ leads the church. (22)

Christ empowers the church. (23a)

Christ completes the church. (23b)

Christ reigns over all things through His church! (23c)

## Ephesians 1:15-23

<sup>15</sup> For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints,  
<sup>16</sup> do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers:  
<sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the full knowledge of Him,  
<sup>18</sup> so that you—the eyes of your heart having been enlightened—will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,  
<sup>19</sup> and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of the might of His strength,  
<sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ, by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,  
<sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.  
<sup>22</sup> And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,  
<sup>23</sup> which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.



God has ordained three institutions—each of which has a "head":

- government—with God-given rulers (read Romans 13:1-7)
- church—with a God-given leader (read Ephesians 1:20-23)
- family—with God-given authorities (read Ephesians 6:1-3)

You've observed first-hand how your family flourishes when your children accept parental authority (for example, accepting the wholesome dinner Mom cooked and going to bed on-time in order to get a good night's sleep). You've also seen how your family struggles when children resist parental authority (the examples are endless—from the "terrible twos" to surly teens!).

This week at the dinner table, have discussions about the purpose and goal of God-given authority (**2 Corinthians 10:8 & 13:10** explains both).

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**Whose church is it anyway? Who's in charge around here?**  
**"Five Question Bible Study" is a great way to learn more about Christ, our Head...**

**Monday**—Study Colossians 1:13-23

**Tuesday**—Focus on Colossians 1:13-14 & 21-23

**Wednesday**—Focus on Colossians 1:15-20

**Thursday**—Study Colossians 2:8-15

**Friday**—Study Colossians 2:16-19

**Saturday**—Study Colossians 2:20—3:4

Need blank copies for doing more  
"Five Question Bible Study"?  
e-mail: [Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com](mailto:Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com)

Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]