



## **Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups**

# **“Building Church”**

**Preached by Daniel Grothe**

**September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

### **Summary**

*Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.*

In this sermon from Ephesians 1:15-23, Pastor Daniel explores Paul's prayer for the church at Ephesus. Speaking from prison, Paul writes to strengthen the believers by reminding them of what God has done for them in Christ and then prays for three specific things: that they would know the hope to which God has called them, the riches of God's glorious inheritance in His holy people, and God's incomparably great power available to believers. The pastor emphasizes that while we can experience God in various settings and transcendent moments, the greatest recurring density of God's presence and power is found among the gathered people of God. He contrasts the world's marketing of despair and doom with God's subtle but persistent invitation to

hope and illustrates how the church community provides both spiritual and practical support through difficult seasons.

### **Key Passage | Ephesians 1:15-23 NIV**

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[a] 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. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

## **Opening Prayer**

*Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own*

### **Heavenly Father,**

as we gather to discuss Your Word, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You have for us today. Just as Paul prayed for the Ephesian church to have enlightened hearts, we pray that the eyes of our hearts would be opened to see the hope, riches, and power You have for us. Help us to be honest with one another, to listen well, and to apply Your truth to our lives. Guide our conversation and draw us closer to You and to each other through it. In Jesus' name, **amen.**

## **Getting Going**

*Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.*

What's one of your favorite recurring gatherings with friends or family that you look forward to and why?

## Discussion Questions

*Answer as many of the following questions as time and interest permit.*

1. Pastor Daniel mentioned that 'hope is the thing with feathers' that quietly perches and sings. How have you experienced hope in subtle ways during difficult seasons of your life?
2. Paul prays that believers would know 'the riches of God's glorious inheritance in his holy people.' How have other believers been a source of 'riches' in your life?
3. Paul prays that the 'eyes of your heart may be enlightened.' What does this phrase mean to you, and how might God be enlightening the eyes of your heart right now?
4. Pastor Daniel said, 'The more I practice, the luckier I get' regarding experiencing God's presence. What spiritual practices help you experience God's hope, riches, and power more consistently?

## Making It Personal

*Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life*

This week, commit to being intentional about experiencing the three things Paul prayed for: hope, riches in God's people, and power. First, identify one area where you need hope and spend time daily meditating on a scripture that speaks to that situation. Second, reach out to someone in your church

community who might need encouragement - call them, send a message, or invite them for coffee. Finally, pray specifically for God to demonstrate His power in a situation where you feel powerless. Come prepared next week to share how you experienced God's hope, riches, and power through these intentional actions.

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## **Key Takeaways**

*Commit to memory one point from the message before you dismiss.*

- Paul prays for hope to undergird God's holy people - while the world markets despair, God subtly and continually stirs hope in our hearts.
- The riches of God's glorious inheritance is found in His holy people - our true wealth is in the relationships and community of believers.
- The greatest recurring density of God's presence and power is found among the gathered people of God, not in isolated transcendent experiences.
- Like Gary Player who said, 'The more I practice, the luckier I get,' the more we practice being in God's presence with God's people, the more we experience His hope, riches, and power.
- God has made Jesus 'head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.'

## **Closing Prayer**

*Have someone from your group close you time in prayer, using the words below or your own.*

**Lord Jesus**, thank You for being the head of the church and for filling us with Your presence and power. We are grateful for the hope You've called us to, the riches we find in one another, and the incomparable power You make available to us. Help us to keep our minds stayed on You, knowing that You are our everlasting rock. This week, may we be carriers of hope in a world of despair, may we value and invest in Your people, and may we move in Your power to make a difference in our community. Give us eyes to see opportunities to warm the hearts of others, knowing that as we give warmth, we receive warmth. We pray this in Your mighty name, Jesus. **Amen.**