

C. “In the heavenly realms...” (Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:3; 3:10; 6:10)

The goal of Paul’s prayer is *that the church’s imagination would be re-shaped so that Christ’s rule over everything in heaven and earth would be manifest through the church in everything in every place.*

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- How do you think having a painting like the *Pantocrator* above you as you gathered for worship would affect your imagination?
- “True fellowship with God and each other begins in worship and prayer.” Is this true? Why or why not?
- What is Paul wanting us to be able to see in his requests in this prayer? How are each connected to our adoption by the Father?
- To what end has the Father made the same power which raised Christ raised from among the dead available to His church?
- What are some of the powers which have dictated your life, or tripped you up in your walk? How do these powers actually gain power over you?
- Do you think our calling to maintain unity in the church is “one of our greatest opportunities” in our witness to the world?
- Do you understand the concept of “umwelt”? What is our spiritual umwelt naturally like and how is it changed?
- Are you more prone to pray like James & John or Bartimaeus?

Imagining the Kingdom: Transforming Our View of Reality

Jerry Cisar — July 2, 2023

Text: Ephesians 1:15-23

Introduction

A. Pantocrator

B. Ephesians is drenched in prayer and worship.

True fellowship with God and each other begins in worship and prayer.

Enlightening our eyes to see the changed reality that adoption brings about is necessary for it to transform our lives.

I. Transforming Our Relationships

A. Paul sees *their faith in Jesus and love for all God’s people* (15).

B. Paul calls on the Father of glory (17).

Kyle Snodgras: “‘Glory’ often refers to that which makes God visible or to his activity of making himself visible.... Given the context in Ephesians, the nuance seems to be ‘the Father who shows his glory,’ that is, the Father who reveals himself.”

- i. Paul asks the Father to transform us into His family for His purpose in the earth!
 - a) He starts by transforming our imaginations—the eyes of our heart.
 - b) He supplies the power to transform how we live with each other.
- ii. By making Himself known to us, the Father will make Himself known to the world.

- C. The reference to the church (ekklesia: gathered community) as Christ's body.

II. Transforming Our Imaginations

- A. Paul thinks our spiritual eyes need help.

- i. James & John (Mark 10:35-45)

- ii. Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52)

- B. How many senses are there?

"For a start, Aristotle missed a few in humans: proprioception, the awareness of your own body, which is distinct from touch; and equilibrioception, the sense of balance, which has links to both touch and vision." (Fiona Macpherson in Ed Yong, *An Immense World*, 10)

- i. Umwelt (perceived world)

- ii. We need a whole new means of sensing the world so we can reimagine a whole new way of living in it.

- C. What is it we are to see through this Spirit enabled vision?

- i. To know the hope to which he has called you

- a) Eph. 4:1-6 One of the key responsibilities of heirs was to maintain unity in the household. No wonder our calling as adopted children requires us to maintain unity.

- b) Another aspect of our calling is that we would bring honor to the family name, the Father.

- c) Our calling is to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, a light to the nations.

- ii. To know the riches of *his glorious inheritance* in the saints

- iii. To know his incomparably great power for us who believe

III. Transforming Our Ability

- A. Just how much power has God made available for us who believe to live in the calling He has given us?

- i. The same amount He used when He raised Jesus from (lit.) among the dead ones.

- ii. The same amount He used when He enthroned Christ **over** every other power.

- iii. He has also raised and seated us there with Him! (2:6)

- D. This is not *knowledge for knowledge's sake*.