

# AWAKEN!

## *Ephesians 1:13-23*

Christ's Resurrection demonstrated God's awesome power

### LET'S GET STARTED

*Resurrection*—the word lies at the heart of every Christian's hope. Life from death. Light penetrating darkness. Joy eclipsing gloom. Christianity is a faith of *hope*, and a very special kind of hope. As Christians, we don't cross our fingers and wish for something good to happen by chance; we fold our hands in prayer and praise God for His sure and certain promises.

As our church regathers following a weeks-long shutdown caused by the Covid-19 virus, we come to celebrate Christ's Resurrection as the great hope of every believer, because by rising from the dead Christ defeated all evil and made our salvation possible.

### LET'S HEAR THE WORD

In Ephesians 1 Paul assures the believers at Ephesus that he prays for them regularly, and he shares his list of prayer requests on their behalf. He praises God for raising Jesus from the dead, because the Resurrection makes all of God's wonderful promises to believers come true.

Ephesians 1:13-16—<sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. <sup>15</sup> For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, <sup>16</sup> I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. . . .

### Quotable

*You could speak of Jesus' rising as the most hopeful thing that has ever happened—and you would be right!*

—J. I. Packer

*Because of the empty tomb, we have peace. Because of His resurrection, we can have peace during even the most troubling of times because we know He is in control of all that happens in the world.*

—Paul Chappel

### If you would like to know more

*Risen: 50 Reasons Why the Resurrection Changed Everything*, by Steven D. Mathewson, (Baker Books, 2013)

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Paul's prayer requests for the Ephesian Christians extend to believers today. Through Paul's words we hear God calling us to awaken to three vitally important things:

**1:** <sup>17</sup> 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.

**God: "Awaken to all of my truth, so you'll \_\_\_\_\_ me better!"**

**2:** <sup>18</sup> I pray also 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 the saints,

**God: "Awaken to the bright future I have in store for you, so you'll be \_\_\_\_\_!"**

**3:** <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, <sup>20</sup> which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

**God: "Awaken to my mighty power, so you'll \_\_\_\_\_ me more!"**

## LET'S LIVE IT

Paul's prayer requests can be summed up in a single word: *grow!* God wants us to grow in our knowledge of His Word, in our awareness of our future with Him, and in our trust in His power. As we celebrate Christ's Resurrection, let's resolve to grow deeper and stronger as we follow Jesus, because we know He's alive!

Ask yourself:

What am I doing regularly to deepen my knowledge of Scripture, and how can I take it to the next level?

Does awareness that I will spend eternity with God encourage and strengthen me as I face life's challenges?

When I pray, do I really believe God is able to answer me and meet my needs?