

Ephesians

Lesson 1: Ephesians 1:15-1:23

Preliminary Questions

Take a few minutes to compare what these words mean when you see them in the Bible to what they mean in other contexts:

Glory in the Bible: The manifestation in this world of the Creator of the world and the Father of Jesus Christ, and the aim of Christ's work according to John	Glory everywhere else: what athletes who play their games on TV claim to strive for. Also a song that people sing at UGA games.
Power in the Bible	Power everywhere else
Inheritance in the Bible	Inheritance everywhere else

Looking at the whole span of Ephesians 1:3-23, why do you think Paul started with this prayer of praise before he starts talking about unity within the Church in chapter 2?

If, as Wright claims, "Messiah/Christ" is roughly equivalent to "king" in the 1st-century imagination, what's the significance of a Christ/Messiah who is seated at the right hand of God (1:20-21)? What does that do to the relationships that Christians would have had to Rome? That Christians now have to Washington? What is the significance, politically, of the Church's being the body of this king (1:22-23)?

On page 15, Wright compares the political power of Ephesus (as a center of Imperial authority) with its status as the site of several important temples (among them the shrine of Artemis that rises violently against Paul in Acts 19). Since our own world is wrestling right now, all over the place, with relationships between religious authority and political power, what does this Ephesians 1 prayer say to you today about such matters?

What are your thoughts, right now, about the close connection between Father, Son, and Church in 1:22-23? Does Wright headed in the right direction (pp. 16-17) on this question?