

The Enlightenment of God

By Dr. David DeWitt

*I pray that the eyes of your heart may **be enlightened**, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe (Ephesians 1:18-19a).*

What It Means to be Enlightened

This enlightenment of God to believers allows us to see God's perspective through (general and special) revelation in such a way that it is **understood to be true**. This would also include back-reading this enlightenment into Scripture, thus allowing the believer a fuller understanding of the character and desires of God through the written Word.

This is not the "Doctrine of Illumination," which incorrectly says the Spirit illuminate's believers to understand the meaning of a text. This is an enlightenment of God (the Father), which allows us **to understand that the text is true** and to understand it from God's perspective.

Enlightenment, Not Illumination

To understand how enlightenment differs from illumination, suppose I am a small boy who has been told at school that toys under the Christmas tree were made by elves at the North Pole. I also see various movies and Santas in the mall that confirm this. Then my father takes me aside and tells me, "Son, you need to understand that toys are made by toy manufacturers, assembled in factories, and sold in stores. They are not made by elves at the North Pole." And as I look at what has been disclosed by my father, I **understand it to be true**. Now I have, from my father, *a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge* of where toys come from.

Next, suppose I get on the Internet and find a Wikipedia article and read about how toys are made. With the *spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge* of toy making, which I received from my father, I can now better understand the Wikipedia article I am reading on toy making. It is not that my father interpreted the article for me. I could understand what it said without him. But I would not understand it to be true, if I understood toys were made by elves at the North Pole. But now with my father's *spirit of wisdom and of revelation*, I can understand the Wikipedia article in such a way that I don't just understand what it says, **but I understand it to be true**.

This passage is not about the Holy Spirit illuminating the meaning of a text of Scripture. But it is about God *the Father of glory enlightening* believers so that they see things from His point of view, the result being they focus, not on the benefits to man, but on the glory of God. Not just on **their** hope, **their** calling, and **their** inheritance but on *the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance*. And that's the *spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him*.

Conclusion

Near as I can tell, there is no way to know **how** God enlightens His saints to have *a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him*. We can only know that it exists, that it is a good thing to pray for, and that it is part of Christian maturity, granted by *the Father of glory*.