

Sermon Text Discussion Notes 10/27/2019

Ephesians 3:14-21 – “When a Church Experiences the Power and Love of God” by Drew Hunter

Overview

This is the ninth message in our series on the book of Ephesians. We spent a couple months in the first half of Ephesians, which has been all about gospel doctrine. The second half is all about how to live in light of the gospel. And here, between these two halves, is this prayer. This is the bridge between the two.

In this prayer, Paul gives two requests and a praise. Each one teaches us to seek more from God. The text is outlined as follows:

- I) Experiencing More of Christ's Presence (v16-17)
- II) Grasping More of Christ's Love (v18-19)
- III) Expecting More from God's Power (v20-21)

The text shows us that this prayer is the doorway. The doorway between knowing the truth of the gospel and being transformed by the gospel. This is the doorway between knowing who Jesus is and being transformed by him. This is a prayer for strength to know God's love so that we can experience more from God.

Quotations

A definition of God's love: “A passionate, unwavering, joyous determination to do us good and to bestow upon our souls eternal happiness, no matter what the cost.” (Elyse Fitzpatrick, *Counsel from the Cross*, 60)

“A genuine and deep perception of the love of Christ rarely comes to the person who is not spending much time in the Scriptures.” (Carson, *A Call to Spiritual Reformation*, 194)

Understanding & Application

- 1) One of the central themes of Ephesians is that there is more to know of Christ, and more to experience of him. In what ways have you known and experienced him more during this sermon series as we've studied, meditated on, and discussed this book together?
- 2) What does it mean for Christ to dwell in our hearts in verse 17? What actions do we take to prevent this? What are some examples from this text that can help us?
- 3) In verse 19, Paul prays that the church in Ephesus would know that love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. Drew gave the example of how our grasp of Christ's love can often be like a quick glance at the night sky. What can we do to deepen our understanding and appreciation of his boundless love?
- 4) In verses 20-21, Paul stops in the middle of his letter to pray and give praise to God. When is the last time you've stopped to spontaneously praise God when his character or actions gripped you? How might making this a practice influence your sense of awe and wonder?
- 5) Verse 20 reminds us that God is not limited by even the biggest of our prayers. This should give us incredible, personal hope! Is there an area of your life where you feel hopeless? Take these words to heart and take your burden to the Lord.
- 6) Drew ended his sermon with three practical responses: pray responsively, pray in community, and pray humbly (even consider kneeling). How can we begin to practice these personally, with our families, friends, and in our church body this week?