

May 27th – Sermon notes

Text: Ephesians 3:16-21

Main Idea: Jesus wants us to know and enjoy the astonishing gift He died to give to us.

When you give someone a gift you want them to know the features of the gift. And you want them to enjoy it.

In the same way, it gives the Lord delight when we know and delight in His gift of unfathomable love paid for on the cross of Calvary all those years ago.

Paul says he is praying for the Ephesians to have power from above to experientially know how much God loves them so they can enjoy “be filled up” to all the fullness of God.

Amplified version of verse 19 [that you may come] to know [practically, through personal experience] the love of Christ which far surpasses [mere] knowledge [without experience], that you may be filled up [throughout your being] to all the fullness of God [so that you may have the richest experience of God’s presence in your lives, completely filled and flooded with God Himself].

Here are the features of the love the Lord wants us to realize and enjoy.

1. From death to life

Also called regeneration in Titus 3:5. ... Chapter 2 instructs us that we were all dead at one time. Which means excluded from the life of God. From union with Him. But we just didn’t know it.

It's kind of like hearing about someone but never having met them. Or, like living inside a house with no doors or windows. And then being shown what outdoors looks like for the first time.

But everyone who believes gets doors and windows that open to a world of wonder.

2. From alienation to adoption

Romans 8:17 tells us we become heirs and heiresses, fellow heirs with Christ. We receive every spiritual blessing that Christ has. Eternal life, glorified bodies, residence in New Jerusalem.

Right now, we are heirs living in a foreign land as ambassadors for our Father and His Kingdom. But one day we're going home. And in the ages to come, throughout eternity He will be revealing our infinite inheritance to us.

3. From enmity to friendship

In John 15:14 – Jesus says to His disciples you are my friends if you do what I command.

When we put our faith in Him as our Savior, we move from being enemies of God to becoming forever friends.

4. From exclusion to inclusion

Ephesians 2:12-13 Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Galatians 3:28 (NIV) 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Christ's gift is for everyone who believes, erasing toxic "otherness" and welcoming all into His kingdom

5. From darkness to light

1 Peter 2:9 – He called us out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Imagine being in a cluttered attic that is completely dark. We don't even know what we're stumbling over. Jesus turns the light on. We step out of spiritual darkness into the radiant light of His truth and grace. We see the path of truth and we recognize the path of error.

6. From oppression to freedom

Galatians 5:1 – it is for freedom that Christ set us free. Free to experience a life that is being transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit. A new orientation to want to learn about and internalize the things of God.

Freedom is an ongoing project. Don't be frustrated or discouraged by what you are not. Be thankful for what you aspire to be. Be thankful for God's work in changing your appetites and aspirations.

The Lord will continue to coach us to greater freedom until the day of Christ. He won't give up on you. He who began a good work in you will keep bringing it to completion until the day of Christ. Philippians 1:6

7. From separation to oneness

John 17:23 "I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity."

Christ invited us into His life. The life He shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit. We didn't invite Him into our lives, because we didn't have a life – we were dead.

The Scripture says He called us into fellowship with Himself.

Christ unites us with Himself and with fellow believers, creating a beautiful tapestry of unity.

And Jesus paid for it all by His sacrifice for us.