

## Worth Living for . . . 'Now to Him'

Ephesians 3:20-21 Sunday AM, August 6, 2023

**Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 3:14-21** (NASB95) For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. <sup>20</sup> Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup> to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 2 introduced a new way to view people superseding all other delineations. Instead of intersectionality, let's call it cross-sectionality.

<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Verses 8-10 remind us that faith in the work of Christ causing us to yield to a life under God as king—this kind of saving faith is a gift of God's grace. How and why does God work reconciliation to Himself this way? Paul speaks of this as a mystery which has been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit. And the Gentiles becoming fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, is central to Paul's commission to make this mystery known to them. Paul does this from a position of dependence, seeing his calling as a gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. Dependence makes you aware of God's kindness, power, and provision. <sup>8</sup> To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ. But Christ was not merely given so Gentiles and Jews could be reconciled to God, but <sup>10</sup> so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. These supernatural beings also need to see His wisdom and worship. How about you? Do you see the wisdom of God and worship? Do you see that wisdom in a personal way, as a recipient of His grace making you part of His people—the church? Do you know the love of God? It is not obscure but pours from Scripture as God interacts with His rebellious creation. Worship the lovingkindness of God!

**\*Hymn (Powerpoint): Lovingkindness**

**You may be seated.** But what if you DON'T see God's lovingkindness? Most of you know the drill. You must work to see it—you must study God's Word, meditate on it, get perspective from those who love God and know you. But what if you think you have tried and still have little? Perhaps you can't see God because you only see your failed expectations or effort. Even if you know you haven't done all you can, it seems too hard. Now look at it from the perspective of those entrusted with caring for your soul. It seems overwhelming to help others continue looking to God in a healthy way. You can't change yourself or others—God does. But it requires more work than you or I care to do not only in our own lives, but also in the lives of professing Christians around you—Paul felt the weight of all this and yet said, <sup>13</sup> Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory. Sounds nice, but if you've lost heart, you know it seems almost impossible to NOT lose heart. So Paul turns to the only One great enough to do the seeming impossible. For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Christian, go to God not merely with your frustrations, guilt, and failures, but asking that you and I would see Him—His works and the personal nature of His actions on our behalf—pray you/we would KNOW the love of God. Pray these hymns together.

**\*Hymn #259: Breathe on Me, Breath of God** **Stand & sing chorus across the page. (Then verses 2-3 together)** **\*Hymn #261: Fill Me Now**

**\*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn Scripture: Isaiah 25–26:4** (NASB95) O LORD, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name; For You have worked wonders, Plans formed long ago, with perfect faithfulness. <sup>2</sup> For You have made a city into a heap, A fortified city into a ruin; A palace of strangers is a city no more. It will never be rebuilt. <sup>3</sup> Therefore a strong people will glorify You; Cities of ruthless nations will revere You. <sup>4</sup> For You have been a defense for the helpless, A defense for the needy in his distress, A refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat; For the breath of the ruthless is like a rain storm against a wall. <sup>5</sup> Like heat in drought, You subdue the uproar of aliens; Like heat by the shadow of a cloud, the song of the ruthless is silenced. <sup>6</sup> The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine. <sup>7</sup> And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. <sup>8</sup> He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken. <sup>9</sup> And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation." <sup>10</sup> For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain, And Moab will be trodden down in his place As straw is trodden down in the water of a manure pile. <sup>11</sup> And he will spread out his hands in the middle of it As a swimmer spreads out his hands to swim. But the Lord will lay low his pride together with the trickery of his hands. <sup>12</sup> The unassailable fortifications of your walls He will bring down, Lay low and cast to the ground, even to the dust. <sup>13</sup> In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; He sets up walls and ramparts for security." <sup>14</sup> "Open the gates, that the righteous nation may enter, The one that remains faithful." <sup>15</sup> "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You." <sup>16</sup> "Trust in the LORD forever, For in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock."

**Offering: \*Doxology:** Isaiah commission in Isaiah 6 takes our breath away even as Isaiah was made aware of his unworthiness before being shown where he would serve. This was necessary, because his job would be difficult—giving God's message of judgement to those who refused to bow to God's holy rule. Yet the harsh realities of Israel and Judah's judgments in chapters 6-10 were contrasted with the kingdom of God and its ideal king in Isaiah 11-12. Chapters 13-23 speak of judgment against the nations and chapter 24 spoke of judgment against the whole earth, but then did you hear the hope of God's deliverance and care for His people in Isaiah 25-26? Looking ahead with an eternal perspective and seeing more of God's deliverance stemming from His wisdom and great love is what Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians. Because Paul's heart was steadfast, trusting in the Lord, he ends this section with Pastor Jahn's text for this morning, glorifying God for full and final deliverance. <sup>20</sup> Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup> to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. Don't negate your struggles, your blindness, but DO praise God for what He says is praiseworthy. Look for it.

**\*Hymn #4: How Great Thou Art**

As Pastor preaches, pray God will tear down anything in God's place and strengthen what brings Him glory.

**\*Hymn (Powerpoint): O Great God**

**Message: Worth Living for . . . 'Now to Him' Ephesians 3:20-21 \*Hymn #372: Living for Jesus \*Prayer**