

All About Jesus (KEYNOTE)

Ephesians 1:15-23

This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16 I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. 17 I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength. 20 He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens— 21 far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he subjected everything under his feet and appointed him as head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

An American in Kenya story...

Our culture—even American Church culture— can seem like this in some ways...

- People might be willing to receive Jesus as divine and even as savior, but Jesus is simply just included as one of the many Gods or voices or spirits that people look to in life.

American culture paints some pretty inaccurate pictures of Jesus...

- And many Christians also paint inaccurate pictures of Jesus
- And it is THIS inaccurate picture of Jesus that our culture sees when it thinks about Jesus and about the Church.

Our passage in Ephesians 1 is what our world needs to see and hear about Jesus!

Our culture—our church culture—needs a new ENLIGHTENED perspective on God and on life.

In Ephesians 1:15-19 we see Paul praying for Christians to have this new perspective:

- An enlightened perspective on God
- And an enlightened perspective on themselves as children of God.

This is important for us to see because we often assume that our problems in life are due to our circumstances... when the problem actually is our **perspective**.

Christian, our life's problems aren't because our circumstances are bad, it's that our perspective is dim.

- We don't have a full perspective.
- We need to be shown what we aren't seeing
- What we aren't seeing needs to be shown to us!
- **We need REVELATION.**

The big question is WHERE do I find revelation—where do we get revelation?

The current answer to this issue is, “to look within”...

Even religion is focused on this inward focus:

- The Church of Self-Realization.
- Eastern meditation
- Universalist Church
- The growing prosperity gospel

We are encouraged to look within and get/give help from others when we feel low or lost.

This is how most religions function too.

I remember reading about a famous celebrity religion...

- I read the first 200 pages of a book about this religion and God was mentioned just one time, and it was a simple statement that, **“God helps those who help themselves”**.
 - That’s not even in the Bible!
 - That was Benjamin Franklin!!

But “God helps those who help themselves” makes perfect sense to us in our American cultural mindset, doesn’t it?

- It says that it is good to go to religion, but we are going to use it to find answers within ourself.
- If we want revelation, we need to work hard—with God’s help—to discover this revelation within ourself.
- Our culture is searching for revelation within our individual selves.
- **The Bible exposes our need for revelation, but shows us that true revelation—the revelation that we all NEED—only comes from outside of us—only from God.**

This is what Paul is praying for in this passage—for revelation and perspective from God.

This is true wisdom and relationship and power and IDENTITY that we can get only from God.

And God has given us the FULL REVELATION of His love and the FULL REVELATION our new identity in His son Jesus.

- Paul just finished saying the Holy Spirit is the SPIRIT OF REVELATION!!
- God’s Spirit is IN US and He reveals the truth to us!!

In Colossians 3:11 Paul said,

Colossians 3:11b (CSB)— ...Christ is all and in all.

Christ is everything!

This truth affirms the utter sufficiency of Jesus for every spiritual issue in the life of every believer.

- **Jesus is all that is necessary for salvation.**
- **Jesus is all that is necessary for spiritual life.**
- **Jesus is where we find our joy and identity and power and hope!**

Living as if Jesus really is ALL and really is IN ALL is very, very counter-cultural.

- Our culture and the wisdom of our culture argues for self-reliance...
- Our culture wants us to CHOOSE to rely more on the government...
- There are clear laws *requiring* students to ONLY learn that humanity came from random, unguided, unintentional, unintelligent natural forces.

We face constant opposition to the truth about Jesus & the truth about who we are in Christ.

And so, many Christians have a shallow relationship with the living Christ and so they aren't even aware of the resources that are available in Him.

Dimmer switch replacement... analogy of a Christians’ life...

- We can have our “switch turned on” but it is at the dimmest possible setting.
 - **There is barely any current passing through and so there is nearly no light.**
- And these Church-going people have **no idea** about the remaining power that can bring such tremendous light.
 - It seems like much of the church today has the dimmer switch at the lowest position possible.

Many Christians are living powerless lives with no understanding of what is available to them.

- We get discouraged because we don't see within ourself the ability to improve or change.

So Paul prays for Christians to see, know, understand and live according to the greatness of the person of Jesus.

Ephesians 1:20-23 (CSB)

He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens— 21 far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age but also in the one to come.22 And he subjected everything under his feet and appointed him as head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

Church, we MUST see how great Jesus is!

- We don't need to fear ANYTHING!
- There isn't any rule or authority that we fear!
- There isn't any dominion or name on earth or in the universe that is above Jesus!

So, EVERYTHING that Jesus wants to do to you, and for you, and in you, and through you cannot be stopped by any other power or authority!

Jesus isn't just above—He is FAR ABOVE all other rulers and rules.

- He's far above Satan & Satan's demons.
- He's far above all other spiritual forces.
- He's far above laws and lawmakers.
- Jesus is above EVERY OTHER NAME!!

There is no force or entity in the universe that can match the power of Jesus Christ.

- There is no human or human authority that can compete!
 - So when we are struggling, why do we run to men & women whose power is suspect?
 - Why wouldn't we run to Christ whose power is infinite in our behalf?

I recently had someone tell me the they wanted me to pray for them because I, "have a direct pipeline to God."

- That's a sweet thought—and it's true—I DO!! ... **And SO DO YOU!!**
- We ALL have this same direct pipeline to God!
- We're all saved by Jesus and filled by the Spirit and loved by our Father...
- **There isn't any secret pipeline!**

Other times people will want to meet to get help with a problem.

They don't want to talk to someone else—just me.

People are inevitably let down by me...it is impossible for me to unscramble the omelet of their life.

- But in my weakness, Jesus is strong, and I inevitably and always bring people into HIS counsel and into HIS power.
- The best service we can render to people in need is to send them to the one who is head over EVERYTHING!

- You may be looking for help unfolding an impossible scenario in your life...
- You may be wrestling with fear or anxiety in life...
- You may be drawn thin in your marriage and have become hopeless...

This morning we need the one who knows us and knows more about us than anybody.

- We need to RUN to Jesus!

- This morning we need to place ourselves at His disposal.

There isn't any human being that can offer the resources that Christ has.

You say, "Well what are you for then?" That's a fair question...

We're here to direct you to Jesus.

- That's why the staff and leadership is here.
- All who minister and teach minister and teach complete dependence upon Jesus.

Not to lead you to us or to Reality, but to call you to Jesus!

The greatest lesson I can teach is that you're not going to find what you need from any person... you're only going to find help and strength and peace in Jesus.

Jesus' might matches His majesty.

- Jesus is KING and He RULES everything!
 - Jesus is CREATOR and He holds everything together.
 - Jesus conquered sin by innocently dying on the cross.
 - He then defeated death by resurrecting Himself from the grave!
 - **Jesus is superior to every ruler, every authority, every being—human and angelic.**
 - **Jesus is better and stronger and ABOVE all—now and forever!**
- So we go straight to Jesus!
- We cast our cares directly on Jesus!

In our passage today Paul communicates good theology for Christians in his prayer for us:

- He says Christ is all—that Christ is everything.
 - If we would just understand the greatness of His plan and the greatness of His power...
 - If we would simply know the greatness of His person...
 - If we would just EXPERIENCE the greatness of His power...

We would RUN TO HIM!!

He is, according to verse 23, the fullness—He fills all and is in all.

- **Jesus is it!**
 - He's the fullness.
 - He's the everything.
 - He's the source of everything.
 - Everything is from Him, for Him and is by Him...

We need to see this and understand this.

This is particularly important for us in our current Christian culture...

Because if we are not careful to clearly understand who Jesus is and who we are in Jesus, we can grow discontent and search for something more within Christianity...

- If we are not very careful we might believe the idea that being in Christ is not sufficient...
- That being "in Christ" does not give us all there is, and that we need to seek something more.

Some Christians are looking for **more** of Christ—like there is a gradual increase in our Christian experience of salvation.

- Some Christians are on a quest to get **more** of Jesus...
- Some Christians are seeking MORE of the Holy Spirit...
- Some Christians are seeking MORE power for life...

We would only need to seek more from if Jesus somehow restricted the blessings that we each receive.

- As if the resources of Jesus Christ were sort of doled out and consumed like a prescription drug—one dose at a time...
- As if we have to pray a certain way for more of it...
- As if we might somehow get more of God if we engage in some particular ritual or routine...

This hit me recently when someone recently told me, “I search for every possible thing I can get because I want to get all of Jesus that there is.”

But there is no “more of Jesus”—there is just **IN CHRIST** and there is **NOT In-Christ**.

- **The biblical view of salvation is that the Christian is granted EVERYTHING in Christ**
- **There is no need for a search for something more.**

A search for “something more” undermines the essence of salvation.

- When we search for “more” we are questioning what Jesus said when He declared, IT IS FINISHED!
- As if there is something missing that must be sought...

If you are IN CHRIST, you have ALL OF HIM!!

- You have ALL of God’s love.
- All approval.
- All power.
- All access.
- All EVERYTHING!!

2 Peter 1:3 (NLT)

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence.

And IN CHRIST, you are IN the one who is far above every ruler and authority

- You are in the one who has power and dominion over every title given...
- You are IN the one who is over every power NOW and FOREVER.
- You are IN the one under whose feet EVERYTHING is subject!
- You are IN the one who has been appointed as head over everything!
- You are IN the Church, which is his body.
- You are IN the one who fills all things in every way.

The problems of life are not the result of our circumstances...

The problems of life are the result of losing PERSPECTIVE!

Christian, we are the people Paul is talking about in 2 Corinthians 3:18 when he says:

2 Corinthians 3:18 (CSB)

We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.

THAT is what every Christian ought to focus on—focus MORE on Jesus!!

- What if we focus less on our psychological problems...
- Focused less on our current political problems...
- Focused less on what others are doing or have done to us...
- Focus less on our health problems...

What if we gave LESS SPACE to the broken & dark & scary & unknown & MORE SPACE to Jesus?

- Focusing less on our feelings of powerlessness and MORE on Jesus' power...
 - Focusing less on our hurts and brokenness and MORE on His healing and restoration...
 - Focusing less on arguing about politics and non-essential issues and MORE TIME fixing our eyes on Jesus...
- There are 10,000,000 Christian books that can help you help yourself be a better Christian.
 - There is only ONE book that speaks the full truth about who you already are.

You don't need MORE Jesus—you already HAVE Him!!

- You need to take your eyes off of other things and fix your eyes on Jesus so you can SEE, EXPERIENCE and WALK in Him!!

LOOK AT JESUS—Paul is saying that we are filled with HIM!!

What an incredible thought—We are filled with his fullness.

We are desperate for the Holy Spirit to help us get a grip on the greatness of the plan and the greatness of the power, and the greatness of the Person of Jesus.

THIS is what is going to change the way you live—JESUS!

- Jesus has to.
- Nothing supersedes Jesus.
- There's no greater power.
- No one can ever change anything that He's planned because no one has greater power.
- No one can love you more.
- No one can ever do more—all other names are impotent compared to Jesus.
- No one could ever love you more because He is love by nature.
- You are secure in Him.
- You have a future in Him!

And Paul says that Jesus is IN US—He is IN US and is head over the Church.

Do you realize that you are the fullness of Christ in the world?

He has chosen to radiate Himself through you!

He's not just in you FOR you...

- He is in you for HIS GLORY!
- He is in you so He can SHINE through you!
- He is in you to seek and save the lost THROUGH YOU!!

This is God's great plan—to SAVE you and RADIATE through you.

- And God **energizes** the plan with His Spirit.
- God energizes YOU by putting His Spirit IN YOU!
- God has begun working HIS plan within us, Christian, and **He is faithful...**
 - **GOD IS FAITHFUL!!**
- **God has begun working HIS plan within us and He is faithful to bring His plan to fulfillment.**

In verse 23 aPaul says that the Church is Jesus' "BODY"—the FULLNESS of Jesus...

- Christian, there is real POWER in you!
- There is real HEALING for you!
- There is real PURPOSE for you!
- There is real IDENTITY for you!

ALL of these amazing truths and realities for us are for us IN CHRIST!

- So how do we live in light of this?
- How are we supposed to posture ourselves in life?

- **We are to look AT CHRIST!**
- **We FIX OUR EYES ON JESUS!**
- **We TURN OUR EYES UPON JESUS.**

Our lives are lived facing 180degrees from the world as we look at JESUS.

- As we turn our eyes upon Jesus, the things of earth grow strangely dim...
- As we turn our eyes upon Jesus, His light RADIATES more obviously IN us and THROUGH us!

We are a people who have been set-apart from the world—set-apart TO CHRIST!

- We are God's own possession!

We are in Jesus and Jesus is in us.

- THIS is our reality, church. JESUS is reality—like our bus says.

JESUS is our reality!

- When Jesus is our reality, He changes EVERYTHING!
- Listen to the prophet Isaiah talk about Jesus:

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NLT)

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us.

The government will rest on his shoulders.

And he will be called:

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His government and its peace will never end.

He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity.

The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven's Armies will make this happen!

Today we let's our eyes upon Jesus...

- RUN TO JESUS.
- SIT WITH JESUS.
- Go to the ONE who IS our EVERYTHING.