

The PATH, March 23-29, 2020

Theme: This week we continue studying the book of Ephesians. Someone once said that the question when we approach Ephesians is not so much what we will do with this book, but the question is what will this book do with us. It is a powerful testimony of the grace and power of God. The book has a two fold focus, and it is Jesus and the church. Paul wants us to see how the grace of God changes and empowers the church to be the light of the world in the midst of a crushing darkness.

Monday - Ephesians 2:11-12

Paul calls the church to “look back and remember”. Why? So that they will realize how blessed they are now. He calls them to remember back to the time before they knew Jesus, back then they were separated from Christ and they had no hope. Now however they have a relationship with Jesus, they can run to Him in prayer and because of that they have hope.

Can you imagine how bad it would be to not have Jesus in this world? What if you didn't know Him? What if you couldn't run to Him in prayer? What if you didn't have the assurance that He is praying for you and that you have the hope of heaven because of Him? What if you were still dead in your trespasses and sins? What if you had no hope?

We live in a world that is almost void of hope today. The fears of the coronavirus as well as financial fears associated with it have left many in the world hopeless. Yet we as followers of Jesus have hope. It is a hope that is only available through Him. So today be thankful for the hope that you have in Jesus but also pray and ask God to give you the opportunity and the ability to share that hope with someone around you. There are so many that are hurting and scared and thankfully Jesus makes all the difference in the world.

Tuesday - Ephesians 2:11-13

We were once far off, which means we were once no where near Jesus, we didn't have a relationship with Him. We couldn't talk to Him. We couldn't run to Him for hope. We couldn't cling to Him when life was falling apart and He wasn't clinging to us. Now however everything is different. Now we have been brought near. Now we can have a relationship with Jesus. Now we can pray to Him and cling to Him, and even more importantly we can know that He is holding on to us. What made the difference? Simply put the blood of Jesus.

His sacrifice on the cross of Calvary and the precious blood that He shed changes everything. It wasn't our works or our goodness that brought us to God. It isn't the family that we grew up in or our accomplishments. It's not the amount of money that we have given or the number of times that we have come to church. We are brought near to God in only way, and that is through the blood of Jesus. His blood changes everything. Because we have been brought near we should want to gather for worship, we should want to pray and give and do good things, but not to earn our salvation. Instead we do those things out of gratitude for the wonderful act of Jesus on the cross. We do those things in thanksgiving for the blood that He shed.

Wednesday - Ephesians 2:1-14

Verse 14 is overflowing with wonderful truths. Jesus is our peace. Jesus has broken down the wall of hostility between us and God. Jesus gives us access to the Father. It is all about Jesus and His blood.

What a wondrous God we serve. Because of Him we can have peace. That certainly means peace in the midst of a world with no peace, but it is even richer than that, through the blood of Jesus we have peace with God. We can now have a relationship with our Father, how? Because Jesus' blood washes our sins away. Sin keeps us from God, because a holy God can't look on sin, but because of Jesus' blood our sins are washed away and now we can have peace with God. Which means the wall of hostility is gone. We were once enemies of God and now we are His friends, and in fact His children. We can go to Him, pray to Him and trust in Him. We have peace with God!

We also have peace in this world. We live in a world of chaos and hopelessness, but in the midst this world we can have peace because of Jesus. We can have peace knowing that He is with us, that He loves us, that He is in control and that He has prepared a place for us in His kingdom.

We can also have peace with one another. The blood of Jesus is so powerful that it unites us together. His blood gives us the ability to truly love others and forgive others. His blood gives us peace.

Thursday - Ephesians 2:11-19

As I read through the book of Ephesians I am convinced that it a book that we need to read and perhaps even memorize. Memorize an entire book? It is certainly possible and in this world of uncertainty, fear, and panic it is certainly needed. Hebrew children during the times of the Old Testament would memorize the first 5 books of the Bible, perhaps we can learn from their example.

Ephesians is so filled up with hope, and with peace and with joy that it is a word that we desperately need. Consider what Paul says in this passage: we are forgiven, the hostility is taken away, we have peace, we have hope, we have access to the Father. Not only that we have peace with other people and most importantly we have peace with God.

Now Paul says we are new creations, and we are given the Holy Spirit. In addition to this we are fellow citizens with other believers of the Kingdom of God. We are part of His family. These are real life amazing promises that are in effect today. No wonder the hymn writer wrote the familiar refrain "Standing on the Promises of God". His promises are amazing, life changing, and good for all eternity.

Friday - Ephesians 2:11-22

Paul concludes this chapter by saying, "you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit." In other words the Holy Spirit of God dwells within us and is working within us to transform us into the dwelling place of God. He is working within us each and everyday (sometimes we are aware of it and sometimes we aren't) to make us into what we were created to be.

The promises of God give us hope for the present, erase the sins of the past, and let us know what we have to look forward to in the future. They also affirm to us that God is working within us on a daily basis. He is working and moving in us and hopefully through us to transform us and then to use us to make a difference in this world.

Let your prayer be today: "Lord continue to mold me and shape me, continue to make me into what I'm supposed to be and use me for your glory in the here and now and into the future as well."