



"THAT YOU MAY BE FILLED WITH ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD"

EPHESIANS 19B-21

The already/not yet paradoxical truth of the gospel;

New creations;

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, *he is a new creation*. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

EPHESIANS 4:22-24

...put off your old self...and [be] renewed in the spirit of your minds, *and to put on the new self*, created after the likeness of God...

Righteousness;

ROMANS 5:1

Therefore, since *we have been justified* by faith, we have peace with God

2 TIMOTHY 2:22

So flee youthful passions and *pursue righteousness*...

What role does faith play in the already/not yet paradox of the Christian's identity? How can the Christian be strengthened to believe a spiritual reality about himself/herself that is either difficult or impossible to perceive with the physical senses (ie: being transformed "from one degree of glory to another," 2 Corinthians 3:18)? What do Psalms such as 103 and 146 teach us about this dynamic of the Christian life?

The crowning request of the prayer: the transforming work of the Spirit as He applies the love of Christ;

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17-18

Now the Lord is the Spirit...And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

1 JOHN 3:2

...but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

ROMANS 8:15

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

In what ways are this final request of Paul a culmination of everything he has said so far in the letter? In what ways is the granting of this request necessary for the directive statements that are to come (chapters 4-6)?

The fullness of God: All that God is for us through the love of Christ. God's gift of Himself in all the ways that His people can enjoy Him and benefit from knowing Him.

JOHN 10:10

...I came that they may have life and *have it abundantly*.

The power of His love strengthens us in our inner man, making us more aware of His love for us, which strengthens us in our inner man...

The love of Christ is both the means and the goal;

1 JOHN 4:19

We love because he first loved us.

Nothing else in the human experience parallels the role of the love of Christ for His people—it is both the means of attaining our ultimate joy, and the ultimate joy which we seek to attain. How does this truth shape and empower the Christian life?

The fallacy of treating Christ as the means but not the goal.

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“God is most glorified in us, when we are most satisfied in Him.” —*John Piper*

Which of the above fallacies in the Christian life do you feel are most common? To which are you most prone?

GENESIS 18:14

Is anything too hard for the LORD?...

JEREMIAH 32:27

“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?”

God does not fit into the limit of our expectations;

ISAIAH 55:8-9

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Does a God who is immeasurably bigger than your ability to understand Him elicit feelings of peace and security, or frustration and anxiety? Contemplate the untenable idea of a God who *is not* beyond our understanding.

God is not merely able to do this, but He is already at work doing it;

PHILIPPIANS 1:6

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Christians often will cite the phrase, “God is not done with me yet.” What does this mean in your spiritual life? Where and how do you draw the line between helpful encouragement and a cop-out in applying this reality to your ongoing Christian life?

The necessity of the Holy Spirit’s work;

PHILIPPIANS 3:10

...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death...

1 CORINTHIANS 2:10

...these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

ROMANS 8:26

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness...

What would you say is the difference between knowing *about* God and knowing God? Which one leads to the other? How does the Christian go about each type of *knowing*?

God is worthy of your highest praises;

“Has God become so central to my thoughts and pursuits and thus to my prayers, that I cannot easily imagine asking for anything without greatly desiring that the answer would bring glory to God?”

—DA Carson

Ephesians 1-3 is a lesson in both worship and prayer;

Meaningful worship does not just happen, it results from intentionality, purposefulness, attention, thought, and effort—all worked in us through the enabling power of the Spirit.

Do you think of meaningful worship as something spontaneous (just ‘occurring’ on Sunday morning, or during personal devotions), or something for which the worshiper must be prepared and exert an effort?

Our cognitive view of God often does not evoke devotion, contemplation, or obedience. Paul seeks to change that;

How important is your view of your Heavenly Father? What role does/should Scripture play in shaping this view? In what way does this relate to the “transformation” of Romans 12:2 that happens by the “renewing of the mind”?

We do not seek to glorify the Church. Instead, the Church is to be the primary and central glorifier of God.