

## Ephesians 3:14-20

Being filled with all the fullness of God?

What do they need to know? How deep God's love is for us

Why do they need to know it? Because it makes us want to live for Him.

What do they need to do? Realize daily how high, deep, wide and long His love is for us.

Why do they need to do it? So we are filled with the fullness of God that leads to a lifechange.

How can I help them remember? Eden Story

One Point: Be filled with the fullness of God

### Me

I was laying down with my daughter in bed, cause she is spoiled and says every night, I need my daddy to lay down with me. I can't resist because I love this time. She takes me by the hand to her bed and I rub her back to go to sleep. So stinking amazing because I know she feels loved. But, last night as I was doing this, she turned over to me and we have this little thing we do where we go, I have a secret and I lean in and kiss her on the cheek real fast. But last night she said I have a secret daddy, and said I love you and hugged me so much and her face lit up when I hugged her back. As I was laying there...rubbing her back I thought I know she loves me, a lot, why did that just brighten my day? It was because I got to experience that love instead of just hearing words about it. Then I began to wonder about the passage today and became overwhelmed with how much God loves us. I know He loves me but for some reason it's like through Eden's hug I experienced His love? Have you ever felt that?

### We

We know God loves us but do we ever really feel it? We push, seek, force ourselves to read our Bible, pray, tell others about Christ but many times we do it out a feeling of necessity. We want to please God, don't we? Then why do we go through these seasons of doubt, dryness, stress of wondering where the heck He is. We want to experience His love daily. We feel overwhelmed, burdened sometimes, ok a lot of times when we are trying to seek God. Do you just get so overwhelmed and stressed out that you make yourself dry? In the last year think about if you were filled with God's love, experiencing it, loving life or were you more I'm forcing myself to read the Bible, I'm stressed that I God isn't answering me, I'm trying to figure out why I'm in a valley, etc. Which were you more?

### God

What an amazing description of the vastness of Christ's love for us. This love is...

**Wide** enough to cover people from every tribe and tongue on the earth.

**Long** enough to last for eternity.

**Deep** enough to reach the depths of our most secret sins.

**High** enough to exalt us to the throne room of God's presence.

What Paul is saying is that God needs to strengthen us to grasp this amazing love. Grasp is the word comprehend. It's a strange word that actually means to seize, lay hold of, and plunder (steal) whatever wealth is found. It would be used to describe a city that was under siege and robbed of its treasure.

What this means is that we're to lay hold of and grab onto this truth, wrestle it to the ground and take from it all its wealth.

v.18 – until we understand this, we can not move to the second half of Ephesians, how to live like a follower of Christ, a child of the light.

v.19 - First we have to understand His sacrifice before we can pattern His life. To misunderstand this is to miss the Gospel entirely. Jesus didn't come to show us how to live so that God would love us. Jesus came to live and die for us so that God would love us and we would want to live a life full of God.

### **You: So What?**

Some of you might be tempted to say, "I know God loves me by grace. I know that God loves me" but if you're not being shaped and transformed by it, then you don't "know it" in the way that Paul wants you to know it. In fact, since Paul is speaking God's desires, God wants you to know it as more than just a fact. This truth has to begin changing our emotional and thought life or it will only remain a concept and not a living reality.

On the other hand we know that there are times when you've done everything wrong and you've utterly blown it. You might believe God has every right to withdraw His love and presence from you, and you'd be right. Strangely however, God's love can be powerfully experienced in these moments. Because God's love is "grace-love" and not earned, we can say with some confidence that this will probably be more of your experience than the first.

### **Now What?**

We need to experience God's love daily. That means focus on God first loving us. So many times you feel as if you have to live a certain way in order for God to love you. Ha! God is so much bigger than that, it wasn't that Jesus came to show us how to live so God would love us. That's backwards thinking. Jesus lived, died, rose so that God would love us and then we would want to live a life full of God. Big difference there, we don't make ourselves clean before going to God. Matt Chandler says the sign of a mature Christian is not one who cleans himself all up and then comes to God saying I'm ready but someone who goes only to God and no one or nothing else to get cleaned up. That is the grace-driven effort. And when we do that in the community of Christ by building relationships that matter it is a grace-drive community that is centered on the Gospel that uplifts each other to go to God to get cleaned up...not ourselves.

### **We**

When we realize that God first loved us with nothing less but unconditionally, we begin to experience that love...not just know it. Christ said that everything you know comes from your heart yet we still live like we have to know God's love to experience it. Did you come to know Christ because it was the logical thing to do? Ha! Ya right! You experienced God's love in your inner most being. When that happens we can't help but live for God, that is why this was driven home by Paul before the second half of Ephesians. We can't move on until we have completely grasped this. Where are you? Do you just know that God loves you or have you actually experienced it? When we daily focus on how much He loves us, we can't help but to be filled with Him. Be filled with the fullness of God this week.

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