



Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture

SERMON TEXT: Ephesians 1:15-23

KEY POINT: What we all need is for the Lord to open the eyes of our hearts.

FOR LEADERS

- **Final Descent!** *We are approaching our final weeks together in Communities before we break for the Summer! Take some time to fellowship with your group before we close and talk a bit about expectations for the Fall Season. Will you be continuing? Will there be any changes in time / location / leadership? Anyone that you could see leading for this upcoming year?*
- **Feedback:** *Walking in discipleship together this past year during Pandemic has been CHALLENGING (to say the least)! Even so, the challenging seasons we've faced have opened new doors of opportunity for us together as a church. As we prayerfully consider what it means for discipleship to consider to flourish at Emergence, we would very much like to hear from our faithful leaders! When you have a moment, please head to www.emergencenj.org/feedback to let us know what your experience has been and to help provide insight as we plan for what's to come!*

GETTING STARTED

- [1] Communities Video:** Watch this week's community extras video!
- [2] Icebreaker:** Would you sooner prefer the beach or a pool? Why?
- [3] Opener:** What were your biggest takeaways from the sermon this week?

FAITH & LOVE

Ask for someone to read Ephesians 1:15-16.

- [1]** According to scripture, what is a "saint?"
- [2]** What two things make Paul give a "thumbs up" to the Ephesian church? How do these two things serve as markers for healthy Christianity?
- [3]** Why do you think Paul specifies "love toward all *the saints*" - Shouldn't it be love for all people everywhere? What difference does this make, and what does this mean practically for the Church?

THE EYES OF YOUR HEART

Ask for someone to read Ephesians 1:16-19.

- [4]** What are some things you notice about how Paul prays for people? How does this compare to the way you pray for people?
- [5]** What does Paul mean by, "the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him" and what is the "hope" to which God has called us? (vv.17-18). Why should Christians have more than just a surface-level understanding of these things?
- [6]** Consider that the "riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints" actually refers to the Church as God's inheritance – what implications does that have for us as the people of God?

For Leaders: *Note that there are two things in v.18 that Paul wants our "enlightened" hearts to see – one that is ours (our hope), and one that is God's (his glorious inheritance – the Church). If the second of these is the sticking point, note that*



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it is "his" inheritance that's in view. Another way to put it is that the Church is God's gift to himself, which is pretty mind-blowing!

- [7]** What obstacles can sometimes prevent us from seeing the Church as beautiful? How can we navigate these things in a way that help us to see things the way Paul sees them?
- [8]** Paul also prays that we would see and understand the "immeasurable greatness" of the power of God at work on his people. Where have you caught a glimpse of this yourself?

CHRIST OVER ALL

Ask for someone to read Ephesians 1:19-22.

- [9]** What does it mean to say that Jesus is seated at God's right hand? Why is this important, and how does it impact the way we share our faith?
- [10]** Paul wraps this section up by calling the Church Christ's "body," and the "fullness of him who fills all in all." What does this mean?
- [11]** How should this passage impact the way we conduct ourselves within the church?

PRAYER

- [1]** Pray that God would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.
- [2]** Encourage your group to specifically use the language of this passage to pray for one another and any prayer requests offered!