Lownes Free ChurchSunday Morning – October 13, 2019

**The Mystery and Majesty**

**of Jesus Christ**

*How God’s Glory and Promises Find Fulfillment in His Son*

Exploring Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians

***Comprehension: We pray for power to grasp the fullness of Christ.***

***Ephesians 3:14-21***

 We’ve seen that in Christ the believer now has all he or she needs. Sins forgiven, adopted as God’s child, inheritance guaranteed, eternal blessings galore are secure. Not only that, God’s own promise is sealed with the presence of His Spirit, who is the guarantee (down payment) of all that is to come.

 What more is required? Just as Paul prayed that believers would understand the mystery and its blessings after naming them (chapter one), here he prays that we believers will grasp the fullness of God’s love. Understanding God’s love leads to a deepened relationship with Jesus through the power of grace. As any relationship, this one grows.

 Paul’s language is so expansive that we can get lost in the wonder of it all, but basically he asks for three things and then lets us know that those things are guaranteed by a God of infinite riches and glory.

 Why are such prayers necessary? Because we still are living in these bodies of flesh, subject to temptation, trials, and turmoil. We are easily led astray by Satan and the world’s empty promises of satisfaction. But if we keep before us who we are and the fullness of God’s love and provision, we have a place to stand and the will and energy to fight!

***How do we comprehend the fullness of God’s love? By asking that. . .***

***Our all-powerful sovereign Father will hear our prayers.*** v. 14, 15

All things are under God’s sovereign hand and named by Him. As He is over everything, we can pray to Him about anything. Matt. 5:25-34

***Our life of faith in Christ grows ever stronger.*** vv. 16, 17a

 Only God’s power can strengthen our faith in Him, enabling us to trust Him more deeply about more things (often via trials). Matthew 14:31

***We grow in our grasp of the extent of God’s love.*** vv. 17b, 18

 The words, “God loves you!” take on a fuller meaning when we realize that it has no bounds. God will do anything for His. Rom. 8:31-39

***We experience God’s love for us to overflowing.*** v. 19

Knowing God leads to loving God, which leads to experiencing God ever more deeply in more and more ways, eternally. Philippians 3:7-11

***He answers us according to His resources, not our requests.*** vv. 20, 21

 Thank God that He does not just answer your prayers! He does far more than that by translating them into His glorious will. Romans 8:26, 27

***What are the implications for our prayer life?***

 1. Shouldn’t some of our requests be about knowing God better?

 2. Shouldn’t we believe that God can grant far more than we ask?

 3. Shouldn’t we have more respect when we say, “In Jesus name. . .”?



***Why it matters. . .***

*How does Paul use spacial images (length, breadth, etc.)? What does it imply?*

*How does Paul describe our prayer-answering God? Why so many descriptive words?*

*How does Paul’s prayer report here interface with “The Lord’s Prayer”? Matt. 6*

*What do you think gets in the way of our knowing and loving God more fully?*

*Why don’t we trust God to give us what we need (rather than what we want)?*