

## HAVING THE FULLNESS OF GOD

**THERE ARE PHRASES CONTAINED IN VERSES OF THE BIBLE THAT CAN “CATCH OUR EYE” AND HAVE US STOP FOR A MOMENT. WE MIGHT ASK THE QUESTION - “WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?”** JESUS TALKED ABOUT “*Hating our family cannot be His disciple*” Luke (14:26), WHAT HATING MY FAMILY??? OR “*He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.*” (John 6:54) REALLY??? OR “*Few there be that find the way unto life*” (Matthew 7:14). **WHAT CHANCE DO I HAVE OF “GETTING IN”???**

**WHEN WE STUDY THESE PASSAGES WITH A STUDY BIBLE OR COMMENTARY THE PASSAGES ARE PUT IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE AND WE GAIN UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM AND MOST IMPORTANTLY WE GROW IN FAITH.** EASY, NO, PETER WARNS US IN HIS SECOND LETTER OF PETER 3:16 “*...In which are some things hard to understand..*”

**THERE ARE OTHER PHRASES THAT MAYBE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING.** WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT WHAT IS THE “*release of the Holy Spirit*”, HOW DO WE DO THINGS “*according to the will of God*”, HOW DOES “*faith work through love*”, HOW DO WE “*work out your salvation with fear and trembling*”. **WHAT DO THOSE WORDS MEAN TO US PERSONALLY?**

**THE BIBLE BEING THE “*Living Word*” HAS A MESSAGE FOR ALL OF US.** REMEMBER IN PART 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 “*...Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us.*” THAT IS THE REASON WE STUDY THE BIBLE, **BECAUSE THERE IS NO OTHER BOOK WHERE YOU WILL DISCOVER WHAT “*tasks*” GOD HAS FOR YOU!!!** WHEN WE ARE NOT DOING WHAT GOD DESIRES FOR US THERE WILL BE SOMETHING “MISSING” IN OUR LIVES.

**WHEN WE GATHER ON SUNDAY MORNING WE ARE EXPECTING HIS PRESENCE HERE, AT CENTENNIAL. BY HIS PRESENCE WE BE OPEN TO RECEIVE THAT WHICH GOD HAS FOR US – TODAY, THIS MORNING, RIGHT NOW IN THIS HOUR.** IT MAY COME THROUGH A SONG YOU HAVE SUNG MANY, MANY TIMES OR WORDS IN A PRAYER, A SCRIPTURE OR FROM THE MESSAGE. **YOU JUST CAN'T “BOX” GOD IN FOR HE COMES TO EACH OF US IN DIFFERENT WAYS!!!!**

ONE OF THESE “DIFFICULT” PHRASES WE MIGHT WONDER ABOUT IS IN TODAY'S NEW TESTAMENT READING - *The “Fullness Of God”*. **WHAT IS THE THIS “*Fullness Of God*”? WHY DOES IT MATTER TO ME?**

**THIS PHRASE IS USED IN OTHER PASSAGES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.** EPHESIANS 3:19 PUTS IT THIS WAY “*and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the **fullness of God.***”

**SINCE THE *Fullness Of God* LIVES IN CHRIST, THEN WE KNOW WHO OUR EXAMPLE IS AND WHO TO LOOK TO – JESUS CHRIST!** EPHESIANS 4:13 “*until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the **fullness of Christ.***” OR IN COLOSSIANS 2:9, “*For in Christ lives all the **fullness of God** in a human body.*”

JESUS WAS GOD IN THE FLESH WHEN HE WALKED THIS EARTH, SO IT IS INDEED GOOD TO LOOK TO JESUS TO SEE THE “***Fullness Of God***”. JOHN 1:16 TELLS US THAT “*From His **fullness** we have all received one gracious blessing after another.*” **THIS VERSE GIVES US THE ASSURANCE THAT WE HAVE ALL BEEN RECEIVERS OF BLESSINGS AND GRACE. NO ONE IS LEFT OUT. WE CAN ALWAYS COME INTO GOD'S PRESENCE AND KNOW WE ARE ACCEPTED AS WE ARE AND RIGHT WHERE WE ARE.**

**RIGHT NOW, HERE IN WORSHIP, EACH ONE OF US IS RECEIVING HIS BLESSINGS, WHETHER YOU “FEEL” IT OR NOT. WE CAN'T RELY ON OUR FEELINGS AND CIRCUMSTANCES WE FIND OURSELVES IN. RECALL FIRST THESSALONIANS 5:18 “Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.” GOD SENT JESUS AND JESUS PROMISED AND SENT THE HOLY SPIRIT. WE ARE NEVER, EVER ALONE. GOD DOES NOT WALK AWAY FROM US.**

**HOW DO WE LIVE IN THE “*Fullness Of God*”?** Paul in Ephesians prays that we “*may be filled to the measure of all the **fullness of God***”

THIS IS THE LAST SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT BEGINS. CHRIST IS COMING TO US IN THE “***Fullness Of God***” **HOW WILL WE RECEIVE CHRIST THE KING? HOW WILL WE PREPARE FOR HIM?** WILL WE SEEK HIM OUT AND BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVE IN THE “***Fullness Of God***”?

**WHAT ARE SOME ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES WE CAN WORK ON? *THE FIRST THING WE CAN DO IS TO COMMIT TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD IN ALL OUR WAYS. DO YOU FIND YOURSELF MAKING A DECISION AND ASK GOD TO BLESS IT? WE CAN TURN THAT AROUND AND SEEK GOD AND LET HIM GUIDE OUR DECISIONS.***

**THE SECOND THING WE CAN DO IS TO NOT LIVE IN ANXIETY.** IT IS SURELY SAD EVEN HEARTBREAKING TO SEE HOW OUR MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR SOCIETY IS AFFECTED BY ANXIETY. **JESUS TALKED ABOUT SUCH ANXIETY EVEN IN HIS TIME.** TO SUM UP HIS WORDS OF MATTHEW 6:25-34, *he talks of how much more important are you then the critters of this world or its plants. God will take care of you so there no reason to be anxious about anything including tomorrow, tomorrow will take care of itself.* **WE TEND, HOWEVER, TO FORGET WHY WE NEED NOT BE ANXIOUS FOUND IN VERSE 33** - "*Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*".

**THE THIRD WAY TO LIVE IN THE FULLNESS OF GOD IS TO GIVE THANKS IN EVERYTHING.** PEOPLE WHO LIVE THIS WAY ARE BLESSED IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS, WHILE THOSE WHO GRUMBLE AND COMPLAIN POISON A GOOD ATMOSPHERE AND HINDER THEIR FAITH.

**A FOURTH WAY IS TO LIVE FOR JESUS NOT FOR OURSELVES FOR AND OUR DESIRES.** WE ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD AND LIKE JESUS WHO DID THE WILL OF GOD, SO WE TOO LIVE A LIFE OF WALKING WITH HIS SPIRIT AND SEEK TO KNOW HIS WILL FOR OUR LIVES.

**FIFTH, WE MUST NEVER LOSE OUR DESIRE TO SEEK GOD.** IN THE BEATITUDES JESUS TELLS US "*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*" WE SHOULD MAINTAIN A "SPIRITUAL TENSION" BETWEEN WHERE WE ARE CURRENTLY AND WHERE WE CAN BE ON OUR SPIRITUAL WALK.

**SIXTH, WE SHOULD HELP OTHERS BY SERVING THEM.** MATTHEW 20:28 "*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many.*" **JESUS IS OUR EXAMPLE.** HE HAD THE "**Fullness Of God**" AND IF WE TOO ARE TO LIVE IN "**Fullness Of God**" THEN WE AS DISCIPLES WILL SERVE OTHERS.

**LASTLY, BE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS.** BE COMMITTED TO A BODY OF CHRIST LIKE CENTENNIAL. WE TOGETHER SEEK ANSWERS AND GROW IN OUR FAITH.

WE CAN SEE THAT LIVING IN THE "**Fullness Of God**" IS NOT A PUZZLE WE CANNOT PUT TOGETHER, BUT SOMETHING WE ARE DOING FOR THE MOST ALREADY IN OUR LIVES.

THERE IS A PRAYER **PAUL PRAYS** FOR IN HIS LETTER TO EPHESIANS. IN CHAPTER 3, VERSES 16-19 "*I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to*

*grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the **fullness of God.***”

WE HAVE JUST GONE OVER THE WAYS TO LIVE IN THE **Fullness Of God**, BUT PAUL IN HIS PRAYER, PRAYS FOR THOSE THINGS THAT GET US THERE, TO THAT POINT WHERE WE LIVE IN THE **Fullness Of God** IN OUR DAILY LIVES.

FIRST, **PAUL PRAYS THAT WE MAY BE STRENGTHENED THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.** THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL ENCOURAGE US IN HEART, MIND, WILLS, AND SPIRIT. THE END RESULT OR DESIRE IS THAT CHRIST CAN DWELL IN OUR HEARTS THROUGH FAITH.

**PAUL SAYS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT ENCOURAGING US, AND BUILDING US UP IN FAITH CHRIST CAN NOW DWELL IN OUR HEARTS. THAT THROUGH FAITH WE ARE BEING ROOTED AND ESTABLISHED IN LOVE.**

**THE PRAYER OF PAUL TURNS TO THE POWER WE HAVE TO GRASP OR UNDERSTAND THE LOVE GOD HAS FOR US!** TO GRASP HOW WIDE AND LONG AND HIGH AND DEEP IS THE LOVE OF CHRIST TELLS US IN ROMANS 8, IT SAYS “*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

**THESE ARE WORDS THAT SUPPORT THE LOVE OF GOD FOR US – EACH OF US, ALL OF US ARE INCLUDED. ACCORDING TO PAUL'S PRAYER WHEN WE KNOW THIS LOVE IT SURPASSES KNOWLEDGE!** THE WORD ‘KNOW’ HERE SUGGESTS A KNOWLEDGE OF AT THE HEART LEVEL, IT IS PERSONAL BY OUR OWN EXPERIENCE.

THIS IS THE MEANING OF THE “**Fullness Of God**”. BECAUSE WE KNOW THE LOVE OF GOD SHOWN THROUGH JESUS CHRIST FOR US, WE CAN LIVE IN THE FULLNESS OF GOD AND SERVE OTHERS BECAUSE AS IT SAID LAST WEEK IN FIRST JOHN 4:19 “*We love, because He first loved us*”.

AMEN.