

Sermon Discussion

Nov. 8, 2020

Questions to ponder:

-Our text (Ephesians 1.20-23) comes at the end of a somewhat lengthy statement by Paul where he shares how he has heard of the Ephesians faith and gives thanks for it. How do you think Paul intends his words in verses twenty and following to bring the Ephesians hope?

-Pastor Calvin referenced verse 21 and Jesus' name being above every other name in his sermon. What do you think it means for Jesus' name to be above every other name?

-In Scripture, the biblical authors often point out that Caesar may think he is in charge, but it is truly God who is in charge. That's a nice thought, but what does that look like practically? What does it mean—today—for God to be in charge when it looks like worldly governments are actually the ones in charge?

-This passage tells us that the church is the fullness of "him who fills all in all" (i.e., Jesus). What do you think it means for the church to be the fullness of Jesus?

-Can you think of a time in your life when things felt out of control, but that you can now look back on and see how God was actually in control? If you are willing, share about that situation and how it felt then versus how you may feel about that time now, with hindsight.

From the Bible:

Ephesians 1.20-23 – “²⁰ God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²² And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.”

What others are saying:

- “I am not in control. But I am deeply loved by the one who is.” –Glenn Packiam
- “When you accept the fact that sometimes seasons are dry and times are hard and that God is in control of both, you will discover a sense of divine refuge, because the hope then is in God and not in yourself.” –Charles Swindoll
- “Testimony is an integral part of the black religious tradition. It is the occasion where the believer stands before the community of faith in order to give account of the hope that is in him or her.” –James Cone
- “The Christian icon is not the Stars and Stripes but a cross-flag, and its emblem is not a donkey, an elephant, or an eagle, but a slaughtered lamb.” –Shane Claiborne
- “Resurrection stands for a lot of things — but for me, it stands for hope. As someone who doubts a lot, resurrection can often be reduced to believing certain things about what happened on that fateful Sunday morning. And if you don't believe that, you're in trouble. There are days that I don't believe that. But the resurrection is the hope that it's true. The hope that in spite of everything and all my frustrations with church, can we indulge the hope that God makes all things new, and that God can take all the things that we screw up and all the pain that we inflict on one another, can God take it and make it something beautiful?” –Rachel Held Evans