

Renewing Your Life for Good

Ephesians 3:14-19

Introduction:

- A. A synopsis of the history of the Christian church
 1. 30 AD – 100 AD
 - a. Jesus commanded a group of _____ to evangelize the world, baptize converts, and disciple them
 - b. The message spread so rapidly establishing many churches that it upset the J_____ leadership enough to persecute Christians.
 - c. The chaos resulted in the Roman government p_____ Christians and killing the leadership
 - d. By the end of the first century all the a_____ had been killed for spreading the gospel except John.
 2. 100 AD – 313 AD
 - a. Severity of persecution by Rome increased (thrown to lions, burned alive, skinned alive, boiled in tar).
 - b. Christianity f_____ in spite of the persecution.
 3. 313 AD – 476 AD
 - a. Persecution was ended by the Roman emperor Constantine who established religious f_____ in the empire.
 - b. Z_____ for spreading the gospel began to decline
 4. 476 AD to 1517 AD - know as the D_____ ages
 - a. Spiritual leadership became c_____ as they established strange doctrines
 - b. Those who stood against the doctrines were t_____ and sometimes killed.
 - c. Only the clergy was allowed to r_____ and interpret the Bible.
 5. 1517 – 1700's – Reformation of the church
 - a. Began with Martin L_____ nailing a list of 95 doctrines that the church wrongly taught.
 - b. The Bible was put in the hands of the people thanks to the invention of the p_____ press.
 6. The last 300 years have been a continuous cycle of spiritual sleepiness and spiritual awakening.
- B. Your spiritual life has its ups and downs
 1. Period of being on f_____ for God
 2. Periods of l_____
 3. Period of d_____
 4. Period of r_____
- C. How can we stop these cycles and just stay renewed?

Communicate to God all the time (14,15)

- A. Because Gentile believers are fellow members of God's household, Paul b_____ his knees before God the Father (14)
1. Before Paul became a Christian
 - a. He was a P_____ of Pharisees (Phil 3:5)
 - b. He displayed his religiosity by s_____ and praying in view of the public.
 2. Paul's prayer
 - a. A h_____ rather than a ritual (Greek tense tells us this to be an ongoing practice rather than a one time thing)
 - c. His prayer was before the F_____ and not before the public.
- B. How are we to treat prayer?
1. Not as a r_____ or as a public spectacle
 2. Since God is interested in us, we need to have h_____ to heart conversations with Him daily rather than just in times of crisis (1Thess 5:17 – pray without ceasing)
 3. As a means of s_____ in a spiritual renewed state

Depend upon the Spirit's power for living (16,17a)

- A. The kind of power (16)
1. An i_____ strengthening that originates from God and is channeled through the Holy Spirit who indwells us.
 2. It is not automatic but requires our c_____ with God (if it were automatic, Paul would not need to pray for this).
- B. The purpose of this power (17a) – that Christ dwell in their hearts through f_____
1. Faith is d_____ upon Christ
 2. Christ dwelling in our hearts is where we are so dependent that it is no longer us l_____ but Christ living in us.
- C. Paul was an example of depending upon the Spirit's power
1. Although imprisoned physically, he was free spiritually.
 2. Although restricted from traveling, he continued to p_____ the gospel (Roman Guards; visitors) and t_____ believers (letters and personal visits)
- D. Application – don't make the following your strength but allow the Holy Spirit to empower you
1. Although f_____ are real do not let them drive you but depend upon the Holy Spirit to empower you to live right (Gal 5:16)
 2. Don't let bad circumstances get the best of you, but make the most out then and trust God to g_____ you. (Rom 8:28).

3. Strained relationships are common
 - a. T_____ to God about it
 - b. R_____ from any wrong and ask for forgiveness.
 - c. A_____ the problem in love (Gal 5:22,23).

Grab hold of the fullness of Christ's love (17b-19a)

A. The action we are to have – grab hold of FULLNESS of Christ's love

1. Most versions lead the reader that the action has to do with the m_____ (*comprehend Christ's love, grasp, understand*) but His love is beyond our comprehension.
 - a. Acts 17:25 – God does not n_____ anyone or anything but gives life and breath to all things.
 - b. 2 Pet 2:4 – God could have condemned us all like He did the a_____ who sinned.
 - c. God executed His plan of salvation in Christ for us which gained Him nothing - Jesus will forever carry the scars (Lk 20:26,27; Rev 5:6) and will forever be a man (1Tim 2:5)
2. The Greek word literally means, *to take down*, and practically means to g_____ hold of.
 - a. Verse 19a is another way of putting it - *and to know the love of Christ*. (The word know does not mean to know facts but to e_____ it).
 - b. Christ's love is beyond the grasp of our minds, but not beyond the experience of our h_____.
 - c. Verse 19 states that the love of Christ surpasses k_____ in the sense of experience – Christ's love will never run out.

B. How we grab hold of Christ's love

1. His saving love - by t_____ Him to be your God and Savior (Rom 5:8)
2. His disciplining love – by r_____ from your sin (Rev 3:19,20)
3. His nurturing love – by e_____ adversity as Christ carries you through it.

Be filled up to all of God's fullness (19b)

As you: 1) Communicate to God throughout your day;

2) Depend upon the Spirit's power to propel your life

3) Grab hold of the fullness of Christ's love

Then you are going to be filled up with God's fullness – lasting renewal.