

18th Sunday after Pentecost
23rd September 2018

Worship after Serving – 12:30 p.m.

Come to Jesus

Gathering to set the feast tables

Welcome & Song

For the Lord is Good

Table Prayer

"First Course" of the Meal

Grow in His Grace

Scriptures: Ephesians 1:15-23 & John 16:4-8

Kid's Stuff

Brief Sharing on the Scripture

"Second Course" of the Meal

**Discussion & Table Sharing on the
Scripture**

Whole Group Sharing

Offering & Prayers

Song: *No Other Name*

The Lord's Supper - around tables

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth
as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin
against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver
us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the
glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Go in His Power

Blessing

† _____, *child of God, May the Father's
presence be real in you. Amen*

Song -

Even So Come

Announcements

Dessert & Clean up!

Show His Love

Ephesians 1:15-23

1 This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. I am writing to God's holy people in Ephesus, who are faithful followers of Christ Jesus. 2 May God our Father & the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace & peace.

3 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. 4 Even before he made the world, God loved us & chose us in Christ to be holy & without fault in his eyes. 5 God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, & it gave him great pleasure. 6 So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son.

7 He is so rich in kindness & grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son & forgave our sins. 8 He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom & understanding.

9 God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan. 10 And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven & on earth.

11 Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, & he makes everything work out according to his plan.

12 God's purpose was that we Jews who were the first to trust in Christ would bring praise & glory to God. 13 Now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you; & when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. 14 The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised & that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.

15 Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus & your love for God's people everywhere, 16 I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, 17 asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom & insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. 18 I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich & glorious inheritance.

19 I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power (in/into) for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power 20 that raised Christ from the dead & seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. 21 Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. 22 God has put all things under the authority of Christ & has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. 23 The church is his body; it is made full & complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

John 15:4-8

15:4 Remain in me, & I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, & you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

5 "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, & I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. 6 Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch & withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. 7 But if you remain in me & my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, & it will be granted! 8 When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

Kid's Stuff

1. Who is someone you know really well? How?
2. What do you think it means to "know God?"
3. How do you think you would do that more?

18th Sunday after Pentecost - 23 Sept 2018 - Worship after Serving @ Fun Run – 12:30 p.m.

WHAT IF... You Know God...LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Keep your Growing Praise close by this morning because you'll need them...

Start with the text from Ephesians...Paul opens the letter with this profuse outpouring of praise to God for the great gift of salvation we have received because of the death/rez of Jesus Christ...And Paul's repeated prayer, in what follows, is that the Ephesians grasp the enormity of what they have in Christ through his death/rez/rule. Note: this is something that he keeps asking God to do. Paul himself is so overawed by the greatness of who Christ is & what God has done for him in & because of Jesus Christ, that he desperately wants all believers to have the same confidence/boldness/assurance in Christ & the same confident enjoyment of salvation he has.

1. *What does it mean to "really know" someone? Who is someone you really know? How did you reach that point in your "knowing" them?*

Notice what Paul asked God to allow their hearts to see...Here's truth: just like it takes prolonged engagement to "really know" someone, the more engagement you have with God, the more you see, the more you trust, seek, know & then live responsive to God! And that's the goal...to live responsive to God through the Holy Spirit because through Christ you are taken up into his life in the Father.

2. *In vs 16-19, for what does Paul pray concerning the Ephesians? Why do you think Paul prays for those things? How might those effect the church in Ephesus & its mission/members/ministry? What could happen here Water if you prayed for those gifts every day?*

1st - He prays for the people of Ephesus to receive wisdom & insight so they might increase their KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. 2ND – He prays that their hearts are flooded with light so they comprehend the CONFIDENT HOPE God gives in Christ. 3rd - He prays for them to experience the POWER they have in Christ. Think aloud about that...knowledge of God – confident hope – power of the resurrection...2nd part of vs 18 implies also (rich inheritance of being his people?)

NB – this isn't knowledge "about" but knowledge "of" What's the difference? Deeper into relationship with the Father through the Son by the power of the Spirit. Lived response & living responsive to the gift of saving grace in Christ...gift of being adopted as child of God... gift of being seated w/ Christ in the heavenly realms... gift of power of the rez in us... "access to" "in on the mystery of" "aligned with"

2ND COURSE OF THE MEAL — I'M GOING TO ASK PEOPLE TO
SHARE SOME ABOUT THIS MORNING'S SERVING

3. *If God's power toward/for/in us is so great, why do so many Christians & so many churches live ineffectively in the world? If you lived like you believed the power that raised Christ from the dead was alive in you, what might you actually do?*

Read from latest "Favoured" email re becoming "sin-focused rather than Jesus/Kingdom-focused)

Note also Philippians 3:10-11 – power of resurrection is manifested in sharing suffering/weakness AND Luke 15:31 "everything I have is yours"

15 "I am the true vine, & my Father is the gardener/vinedresser. 2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, & he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned & purified by the message I have given you."

Observations: True vine vs fakes – Gardener/vinedresser implies a greater purpose than simple existence of the vine – Shaping according to the plan of the vinedresser for the purpose of fruit-bearing...Context: last supper pre-crucifixion

Verses 1-3 pertain to our position; verses 4-8 speak of our practice. We come to the first imperative (or command) of the chapter in verse 4. Abide/remain – John uses 50+X in his writings. 11X in this chapter. How would you define that word? Implies on-going dependence, reliance, trust, engagement, relationship, companionship, confidence, belief...dwell

4. *According to Jesus (vs 5) what is our relationship to him? What are the implications of that understanding? (not just as individuals but as his church) How do you/we live what Jesus says we need? How is that a necessary result of vs 4?*

Note the negative vs positive implications vs 4 vis vs 5. Remaining/abiding in Christ results in conformity to the Word of God (particularly to the Son who is the Word) Since fruit-bearing is the goal abiding is essential. Source & sustenance is the vine...cut yourself off from that & you vote with your feet toward death.

How do you "remain/abide" in Christ? Can you practice that as a constant awareness? Note also this is not accidental. It is intentional...deliberate...focused

Last week...we ended worship praying a prayer that I often pray: *Father prepare me for whatever you require today and lead me in faith wherever you call me to go. In Jesus' Name...Amen.*

How would that kind of praying lead you deeper in your knowing God like never before?

In John 14:5 & 14:9 Jesus has reaffirmed Father/Son oneness. Here the "I Am" is continuous with God's OT self-revelation.

5. *Seven times in John, Jesus uses the Old Testament "I Am" to further reveal his link to the Father. How is this last use in John 15 both a promise & a command for us?*

THE 7 "I AM" SAYINGS OF JESUS FROM THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

- 1. Bread of Life:** *"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, & whoever believes in me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).*
- 2. Light of the World:** *"I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." (John 8:12).*
- 3. The Door/Gate:** *"I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come & go freely & will find good pastures" (John 10:9).*
- 4. Good Shepherd:** *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11)*
- 5. The Resurrection & The Life:** *"I am the resurrection & the life. Whoever believes in me, though they die, yet shall they live, & everyone who lives & believes in me shall never die." (John 11:25-26)*
- 6. The Way, the Truth & The Life:** *"I am the way, & the truth, & the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).*
- 7. True Vine:** *"I am the true vine, & my Father is the vinedresser." "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, & I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15: 1, 5).*