

Sermon Discussion – 14 January 2024

Read Ephesians 1:1

Getting Started *Sharing from personal experience*

Who do you consider to be the 3 most important people in history after Jesus, and why those specific persons?

Observation *Discovering the context*

Ephesians mentions union with Christ and being “in Christ” more than any other letter- about 36 times. This phrase occurs approximately 164 times in Paul’s 13 letters. The term “in Christ” gets to the heart of Christianity. To be “in Christ” is to be personally and vitally united to Christ. Christians are people who are in Christ. You are united in His death and His resurrection.

- Why is it crucial to understand the concept of being "in Christ" in terms of identity?
- How does being "in Christ" differ from other ways people commonly define their identities?

Interpretation *Discovering the meaning*

1. In 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, the importance of both Adam and Jesus is highlighted. How does our identity in Adam affect us, and how does being in Christ offer a solution to this issue?
2. Discuss the difference between activity and identity. How do external activities and roles sometimes become confused with personal identity?
3. Explore the analogy of being branches connected to the vine (Jesus) in John 15:5. How does this imagery impact your understanding of your relationship with Christ? In what ways can remembering that you are a branch and not a vine affect your humility and dependence on Christ?
4. Discuss the concept of being ambassadors for Christ. What does it mean to be sent as ambassadors in your daily life?
5. Consider the idea that you can only be faithful “in Christ.” How does this perspective change the way you approach spiritual disciplines like prayer and perseverance? Share personal struggles with spiritual faithfulness and discuss how being in Christ can help overcome these challenges.

Application *Putting knowledge into practice*

- Two things that will be seen throughout our study in the book of Ephesians is our status and connection with God and the community He is building- the Church. How would you describe the status of your walk with Jesus today? Your engagement with Church? What is going well? Where is there room for growth?

- Try memorising John 15:5...
“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

- Begin to pray for your love for Christ and the Church to be increased during our study of Ephesians.