

## **Ephesians. The Identity of the Church that Overcomes.**

### **Part 9: Christ - the Endgame of History**

*Houses of Light Church • August 11, 2024 • Pastor Netz Gomez & Ilse Marquez*

#### **Focus: Ephesians 1:9-10**

*“...he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.”*

#### **Ephesians 1:9-10**

##### **I. God’s good plan throughout history**

- A. Last week, we looked at the riches of grace God has generously and abundantly poured out over us. By this grace, He gave us wisdom and understanding so we can comprehend what has been shown to us: the mystery of His will according to His good plan. (Eph. 1:8-9)
- B. v. 9b states *“according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ”* -It was God’s pleasure and His goodness that set forth this plan before time began. He intended to unite everything in Christ — things in heaven and on the earth — and the fulfillment of this plan will happen through the different seasons God has planned.
- C. God longs to unite heaven and earth through Christ. Because of sin, God had to remove humanity from the garden of Eden, which was an extension of heaven on the earth. He always intended for heaven and earth to be connected, and this goal hasn’t changed!  
He spoke through the prophets hundreds of years ago (before Jesus even came to the earth that this was His goal: *“I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”* **Ezekiel 37:26-28**  
And in Revelation we see how this word will be fulfilled: *“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.”* **Revelation 21:3**
- D. *“when the times reach their fulfillment”* (v. 10a) God has understanding and sovereignty over what happens in history. He is not shocked or undermined by the events of the past, present, or future, but actually is stewarding time until the day His plan is fulfilled completely.
- E. What the apostle Paul is saying here is that God's administrative plan for the universe, for human history and particularly the plan of redemption, is being fulfilled as God wants so that everything reaches its fullness and is united in Christ.
  1. There is another verse that helps us understand this term “the fullness of the times.” In the book of Romans, Paul applies this term to love:  
*For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. **Romans 13:9-10***  
He uses the same word “fulfilling” to talk about how love fulfills the commandments.
  2. Paul is saying that love is the “fulfillment” of the law — you could summarize all of the law in love. If we sum up all the commandments, the final result would be love.

- F. If we sum up all of time, the final result would be Jesus! God is steering history in this direction. Christ is the fulfillment of the times. In the universe and all of history, it's all about Christ! Paul says the same thing in Colossians:
- “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”*
- Colossians 1:16-20**
- G. Almost every single one of the first 11 verses of Ephesians we've studied say “in Christ” — everything is connected to Christ:
1. v. 1 - “the faithful in Christ”
  2. v.3 - “blessed us in Christ”
  3. v. 4 - “he chose us in him (Christ)”
  4. v. 5 - “adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ”
  5. v. 6 - “blessed us in the Beloved (Christ)”
  6. v. 7 - “in him we have redemption”
  7. v. 9 - “his purpose, which he set forth in Christ”
  8. v. 10 - “to unite all things in him”
  9. v. 11 - “In him we have obtained an inheritance”
- H. Jesus is the source and the endgame for everything. He is the one who started it all, and He has the last word on everything. Between the beginning and the end, everything was made in Him. If anyone were to ask, how did you get your inheritance, you answer, “In Christ.” It is only in connection with Him that we were chosen, have redemption, and were sealed.
- “All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.”*
- John 1:3**
- I. We can't lose sight of the centrality of Jesus according to His purpose. This is a good way of defining the meaning of life — it's Christ.

## II. What did this look like in Paul's life?

- A. If this is the way God is administering time and the history of the universe, this ought to be the way we steward our lives, families, businesses, etc. An important question to ask ourselves is: What does this look like practically? We find an excellent example in Paul's life:
- “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”* **Galatians 2:20**
- “But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death...”* **Philippians 3:7-10**

*“...it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”* **Philippians 1:20-21**

- B. Paul lived with His eyes fixed on heaven, knowing that what he could do or how long he could live was not what would bring him glory. He lived with His eyes fixed on Jesus!

### **III. What does this look like for us?**

*“Then Jesus told his disciples, “if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?”* **Matthew 16:24-26**

- A. How do we define success? What are we chasing after? What do we consider the “fulfillment” of our lives?

*“Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death...”*

### **Philippians 3:8-10**

- B. What makes us good? What makes our lives worth living? Perhaps it is not our social status, financial situation, or even level of education. What would happen if we counted it all as loss for the sake of knowing Christ?

### **REFLECTION QUESTIONS:**

1. **What does it mean to you that Christ is the origin and the end goal of everything?**
2. **What would your life look like if Jesus were the center? Think of some practical examples.**
3. **Why do you think God deserves all the glory in everything?**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. There will be no HOLY58 on the following dates: August 21 and August 28. We will resume on September 11.
2. Friday, August 30th, Movie Night featuring the film Kung Fu Panda IV at 6:00 p.m. You can purchase your ticket at the Passion for Jesus table to support the Heartbeat ministry on a trip through California. We appreciate your support!
3. Passion for Jesus! Sept. 4-6. Sign up at [heartbeatprayerroom.la](http://heartbeatprayerroom.la).
4. Don't forget to join a friendship group! If you need help finding one, talk to Peter or Isabel after service :)