



Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – October 21, 2023

The Lord be with you.

I'm gonna talk with you for a few moments about something that I do not understand, something that is beyond comprehension, that is beyond our ability to grasp, to fathom. And that is how much Jesus loves you and me.

That Jesus loves you just as you are. That Jesus loves you in ways that you cannot begin to know, in ways that you cannot imagine, and I pray for you that in the next few moments that you will let yourself go, that you will let yourself sink deep into the boundless ocean of God's love, where your feet will never touch bottom. I'm praying a prayer, the Apostle Paul, prays for all Christians to know Jesus' love. Now, you would think that Christians would already know Jesus' love. Well, we're just getting started.

I'm looking at Ephesians Chapter 3, verse 16, where I pray along with the Apostle Paul. "I pray that according to the riches of His glory, God may grant that you maybe strength in your inner being with power through the spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith as you are being rooted and grounded in love, and I pray that you may have the power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. So that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

Now, there's a lot here, so let's just focus in on this one phrase, it sounds like an oxymoron, where Paul prays that we might know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. This is a prayer for you to know something... something more than you can know. The Bible speaks of two kinds of knowing, two kinds of knowledge, there was head knowledge and there was heart knowledge. Head knowledge, well, that's the stuff you read in books, learn in a lecture, study for an exam. Then there is heart knowledge, that is a knowledge that goes down deep into your heart to where you experience it, where it's real for you in your daily living, 'cause you know a person might know all the different Greek words for love, a person might have read stories about love from all over the world, the person might even have written a PhD dissertation on love, but if that person has never been in love, he doesn't really know love. So Paul is praying here for us to have heart knowledge, to know in our real life experience how much Jesus loves us, to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that there is always more to know of the immense vastness magnitude of Jesus love for you.



water from rock

If you get on the Hubble Space Telescope website, you will see there that Hubble telescope can see 10 to 15 billion light years away, and that in that 10 to 15 billions of light years, Hubble can see billions of galaxies and literally trillions of stars, but they say that Hubble telescope can only see so far. They say that there was so much more of the universe yet beyond that, Hey, God does things in a big way, doesn't He, and we see how when God loves us, we can see that lovely so far, and God's love for us goes on and on, surpassing knowledge, I sometimes think of myself as a Christian. I think of myself as being something like The Explorers who first set foot on the American soil in they could see that it was a rich and blessed land, but they didn't have a clue to what lay beyond. They could not know about the Mississippi River, the Rocky Mountains, The Grand Canyon, the Oregon Coast. There was so much more that would have to be explored. Well, you and I, we have set foot in the love of God, but there is so, so much more that God gave his most precious possession, His only son, not to be atoned, but to atone for the sins of the whole. That is love surpassing knowledge.

A few years ago, I spent a delightful evening talking with a professor of quantum physics, listening as he excitedly told about the mind-boggling world of subatomic particles, protons, neutrons, quarks, and he told me that Cambridge University had just published his textbook on quantum physics. And he said that he ended the textbook saying to students, if you don't understand anything of what you read in this book, keep in mind that your professors don't understand it either. It is beyond understanding. Well, you know, if that's true for quantum physics, the Jesus for you and me is beyond understanding. We can't understand it. But we can enjoy it. We can relax into it. We can live life in it. And Paul prays, we might know Jesus' love in its breadth and length and height and depth.

You see the love of Christ. Well, it's like looking out in the universe that as high as you can go, as deep as you can go, as far as you can go, there is God's love for you and me. The Bible tells us that God is love. Love is God's very essence has very being. Love is not an attribute of God, a feature of his personality. No, God is love, and that means a God can no more stop loving you, then you can stop being all powerful, than he can stop being eternal. And I think, I think if Jesus pulled up a chair and sat down by you right now, I think Jesus would say something like this, he would say, I know everything about you, I know every skeleton your closet, I know every struggle, I know how you wrestle with doubt, I know all that. I know how you are hot one day and cold the next, I know that. Now, here's what I want you to know. I want you to know how much I love you, and that I love you just as you are. That you don't have to change a thing to do anything to make me love you, and it will take you an eternity to know how much I really do love you, but I do look forward to showing you...

I'm thinking that I'm kind of like that professor of quantum physics as I've been talking about something I don't understand, but it is wonderful to explore God's love for you, and it's a love for me.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler in the pilgrim way. Thanks for listening until next time.