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Sermon Notes

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The Infinite Dimensions of Christ's Love for Us

Ephesians 3:17-19

In his classic allegory, *Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan depicted the Christian life as a dangerous journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. The main character, Christian, travels from his original condition as an unconverted man in the City of Destruction through his experience at the cross of Christ, and through many other dangers. At the end of the journey, Christian has to cross the river of death to get to heaven – called the Celestial City. Only once he's crossed this river of death can he enter heaven. But amazingly, before he crosses it, while he is still on this side of the river, he and his friend, Hopeful, come to a place called "Beulah Land"

Bunyan: "The pilgrims were entering Beulah land, whose air was very sweet and pleasant; the way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season. Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds and heard the voice of the turtledove in the land. In this country, the sun shines night and day; wherefore, this was beyond the Valley of the Shadow of Death; and also out of the reach of Giant Despair; neither could they from this place so much as see Doubting Castle. Here, they were within sight of the City they were going to, also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for in this land the Shining Ones commonly walked, because it was on the borders of heaven. ...

Now as they walked in this land, they had more rejoicing than in parts more remote from the Kingdom to which they were bound; and drawing near to the City, they had a yet more perfect view thereof. It was builded of pearls and precious stones, also the street thereof were paved with gold; so that by reason of the natural glory of the City, and the reflection of the sunbeams upon it, Christian with desire fell sick; Hopeful also had a fit or two of the same disease... [they were sick with love for Christ!]

But being a little strengthened, and better able to bear their sickness, they walked on their way, and came yet nearer and nearer; where were orchards, vineyards, and gardens, and their gates opened into the highway. Now as they came up to these places, behold a gardener stood in the way, to whom the pilgrims said, 'Whose beautiful vineyards and gardens are

these?' He answered, 'They are the King's; and they are planted here for his own delights, and also for the solace of pilgrims.' So the gardener had them into the vineyards, and bid them refresh themselves with delicious fruit."

"After that, they fell into a rich sleep; and they talked in their sleep about the Celestial City to which they were going. And after they woke up, they saw the reflection of the sun upon the City (for the City was pure gold), and the reflection was so glorious that they could not, as yet, with open face behold it, but only through an instrument made for that purpose."

Then Christian and Hopeful resumed their pilgrimage to that city.

So... WHAT WAS THAT??? Was Bunyan just putting some fantasy in his allegory? Keep in mind, all this FORETASTE of HEAVENLY GLORY came upon Christian and Hopeful while they were STILL ON THIS SIDE of the river of death... still in this world!

Is there a "Beulah Land" experience that we Christians can have NOW, in this world, that fills our hearts with heavenly joy? That overflows our hearts with peace and a sense of Christ's infinite love for us? Is that something we can experience NOW, on earth? And if so, what do we have to do to get it? And if we experience this heavenly foretaste, how will it help us in our journey in this world?

I believe that in Ephesians 3:14-21, the Apostle Paul is praying for the Ephesian Christians, and through the text for us, to have PRECISELY that kind of experience

I believe it is part of our birthright as Christians in this world... it is part of the work of the Holy Spirit to give it to us... it is NOT REQUIRED that it happen for us in order that we go to heaven when we die... and I believe MOST CHRISTIANS NEVER EXPERIENCE a 1/100th part of it... but they COULD

Ephesians 3:16-21 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰ *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

I. Knowing the Unknowable: A Mystical Connection with Christ

A. Ascending the Mountain of Christian Experience

1. Ephesians 3:14-21 builds level by level
2. It seems like we're climbing a mountain of Christian experience, higher and higher as the verses unfold
3. Most Christians spend their lives down on the plains, in a smog-covered haze, unable even to see the mountain of Christian experience, not even aware that if they climbed, they could breathe fresh, sweet, mountain air and see sights they scarcely even knew existed
4. Ephesians 3:14-21 speaks of Paul's prayer for the Ephesian Christians
 - a. He gets on his knees and prays to the Father for them
 - b. He asks that God would **STRENGTHEN THEM** with power through the Spirit in the inner man
 - i) This is preparatory language
 - ii) Something big is coming, something **MASSIVE**, so massive, it needs huge preparations...
 - iii) The focus is the **INNER MAN... the HEART... the SOUL... the INNER PERSON**
 - iv) The active agent in this strengthening is the **HOLY SPIRIT**
 - v) The measure of this strengthening is the **RICHERS OF GOD'S GLORY...** according to that measure, Paul wants our hearts strengthened
 - vi) **FOR WHAT?**
 - c. The point of the prayer: that Christ may **DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS** by faith
 - i) It is a deep, full, rich experience of Christ in the heart

- ii) The Greek word is one of **SETTLING DOWN**... that Christ would **SETTLE DOWN** and begin to live constantly in your heart by the Holy Spirit
- iii) The issue is one of **CONSTANT FELLOWSHIP** with Jesus, moment by moment
- iv) This takes **STRENGTH** because the world, the flesh, and the devil are constantly assaulting that sweet experience of fellowship, of feasting with Christ in your heart
- v) More than that, it takes **STRENGTH** because the full experience of Christ's love for us is so overwhelming that it may knock us to the ground, take our breath away, render us unconscious...

B. Christian Mysticism: A Supernatural Experience

1. Many Christians want to stay clear away from discussions of **MYSTICISM**
2. They may be aware of weird eastern mysticism, like New Age mysticism, or of Buddhist meditations in which the goal is **EMPTINESS**, learning that you are nothing, to become nothing... etc.
3. Or they may have studied church history and know some of the history of Christian mysticism—Orthodox mystics who climb ladders of meditation through extreme asceticism... monks who went out into the deserts to dwell in caves and fast and pray and meditate and had strange visions
4. Or Roman Catholic mystics who had truly weird experiences and who preached strange doctrines
 - a. They sought to have direct experiences with God that **BYPASSED THE MIND**
 - b. Some of the mystics focused on the Virgin Mary or the saints...
 - c. Many of them had suspect theology
5. **BUT** Martyn Lloyd-Jones, the great Welsh preacher of the 20th century, has done an excellent job collecting clear examples of some of the greatest theologians in Church history who had astonishing experiences of Christ... and he would argue that this text describes the expectation every Christian should have of a **HEALTHY CHRISTIAN** mysticism... a supernatural experience of the love of Christ poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit

C. Evidence in the Text... This is NOT Commonplace Experience

1. Look at the **LANGUAGE** of the prayer request

Ephesians 3:17-19 And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

- a. Grasping the INFINITE DIMENSIONS of Christ's love... like your soul is soaring over the vast expanse of the universe of Christ's love for you
- b. You are probing the limits of the universe, and you soon come to realize there are no limits to Christ's love for you
- c. He is praying in paradoxical language of you KNOWING something that surpasses KNOWLEDGE... and you need POWER in order to do it
- d. And to KNOW LOVE... to experience it more deeply than you've ever done before
- e. And where does it all end up: THAT YOU MAY KNOW A FULLNESS that is indescribable and limitless... "Filled to the measure of all the fullness of God!"
- f. Not the emptiness of the Buddhists and New Age mystics... but the fullness of God Himself... to be as full, perfectly full as God is full

2. Evidence in the doxology

Ephesians 3:20-21 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

- a. God can do more in this issue of filling you with a knowledge of Christ's love than you can possibly imagine!
- b. This is NOT a COMMONPLACE filling, not an EVERDAY occurrence
- c. If you think so, you haven't read these words slowly and carefully and taken in their full import... felt their full impact
- d. This is an extraordinary thing that Paul wants us ALL to experience
- e. But I believe very few Christians ever do

Richard Robarts, minister of God, early 19th century... died of consumption at age 36; had powerful foretastes of heaven before he died:

[the account continues] "In the course of this day he experienced an ecstasy of heavenly joy. His eyes were bathed in tears, and he uttered words of

praise, consolation and triumph; it appeared as if he was transported into Paradise. It was evident that he experienced a foretaste of heaven." He said, "Oh, I am happy in my God, in his love. I am going to possess Him forever. I shall enter into that city whose streets are of fine gold, yes, the New Jerusalem from above, the City of the Living God."

[the final entry] "Since my last attack three weeks ago the Lord has been near and has manifested His love to my soul in an uncommon degree. I have been deeply humbled under a sense of my unworthiness and past unfaithfulness, but I have felt myself firmly fixed upon the Rock of Ages, and have been enabled to anticipate my departure from the body with unspeakable delight. One thing has much occupied my mind, namely, the great proneness I have ever felt to rest short of all the fullness of God. Often, it seemed within my grasp, often has my soul seemed to take possession of it, but never did I enjoy a constant sense of it, of all the great salvation of God. However, I never gave up the hope of possessing it fully, and I trust that I shall now obtain my heart's desire."

John Owen: "There is a light that cometh and overpowereth a man's soul and assureth him that God is his and he is God's, and that God loveth him from everlasting... It is a light *beyond the light of ordinary faith!*"

II. For All Christians...Not Just Some

A. Key Observation #1: These Ephesians Were Already Converted

1. We know from Ephesians 1 that Paul is writing to Ephesians who are already converted and have already been SEALED with the Spirit

Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit

2. The sealing of the Spirit is the indwelling of the Spirit, with his giving assurance that you are converted...
3. BUT there is so much more the Spirit can do to minister the love of Christ to your soul
4. So note that Paul is praying for the "saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus"... these are Christians...

B. Key Observation #2: These Experiences Are For Every Christian

1. It is SO EASY for us to excuse ourselves from these kinds of thoughts
2. We may think this is only for the "super-Christian"

3. But Paul prays for ALL THE SAINTS to have this deep, full knowledge of the love of Christ

Ephesians 3:17-18 And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ

4. "Saints" means "Christians"... everybody... Paul is CLEAR about that...
- a. The Roman Catholic church has wrongly taught that saints are special people, men and women who lived unusually blessed lives, did astonishing ministries, did a miracle or two, and were canonized by the Catholic authorities
 - b. I went to St. Jeremiah's and St. Anselm's churches as a Catholic boy growing up
 - c. NO! The New Testament uses the word to refer to ordinary Christians
 - d. Look at the doxology:

Ephesians 3:21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

- e. Paul is praying for this unusual knowledge of Christ to affect the WHOLE CHURCH throughout ALL GENERATIONS!!
 - f. This is for everybody
5. BUT many Christians beg out, saying it's too hard, would take too much time in prayer

C. Edward Payson and Four Types of Christians

1. Edward Payson (1783-1827): American Congregational Minister
2. Had been a Christian for many years, had lived out a very fruitful ministry for Christ as a pastor... but then, God took him to a whole different level of experience of Christ's love for him
3. He wrote to a fellow pastor

"O if ministers only saw the inconceivable glory that is before them, and the preciousness of Christ, they would not be able to refrain from going about leaping and clapping their hands for joy, and exclaiming 'I am a minister of Christ! I am a minister of Christ!' When I read Bunyan's description of the land of Beulah where the sun shines and birds sing day and night, I used to doubt whether there is such a place.

“Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter ‘from the land of Beulah,’ of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The Celestial City is full to my view; its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors wafted to me.... He fills the whole hemisphere, pouring in a flood of glory in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun, exulting yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this almost excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable wonder why God would deign to shine upon a sinful world. A single heart and a single tongue seem altogether inadequate to my wants; I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion.” [Lloyd-Jones Commentary on Ephesians, *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*, p. 239-240]

WOW! What are they experiencing??!! Could I experience that level of foretaste of Christ’s glory for myself??

4. Edward Payson: Concentric Circles

“Suppose [people who claim to be Christians] are ranged in different concentric circles around Christ as their common center. Some value the presence of their Savior so highly that they cannot bear to have any separation from Him at all. Even their daily chores and employment they will bring up and do in the light of His countenance, and while engaged in it will be seen constantly raising their eyes to Him as if fearful of losing one beam of His light.”

Circle #2: “Others who, to be sure, would not be content to live out of His presence, are yet less wholly absorbed by it than these and may be seen a little further off, engaged here and there in their various callings, their eyes generally on their work, but often looking up for the light which they love.”

Circle #3: “A third class, beyond these but yet still within the life-giving rays, includes a doubtful multitude, many of whom are so much engaged in their worldly schemes that they may be seen standing **SIDEWAYS** to Christ, looking mostly the other way, and only now and then turning their faces towards the light.

Circle #4: “And yet further out, among the last scattered rays, so distant that it is often doubtful whether they come at all within their influence, is a mixed assemblage of busy ones, some with their **BACKS WHOLLY TURNED** upon the sun, and most of them so worried and troubled about their many things as to spend but little time for their Savior.”

[Lloyd-Jones Commentary on Ephesians, *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*, p. 242-243]

D. So... Where are YOU???

1. Do you live your life in continual focus on Jesus, sensing His presence, knowing His love, filled with His peace?
2. Or are you further... or further... or furthest away?
3. And if we begin to YEARN for this supernatural experience, what can we do to have it??
4. Let's look at the PRAYER that Paul prays

III. Rooted and Established in Love (vs. 17)

Ephesians 3:17-18 And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ

A. Paul Continues His Prayer

1. He's already prayed for all of them
2. For God to STRENGTHEN THEIR HEARTS to even be able to HANDLE the love of Christ being poured out into their hearts by the Spirit
3. For Christ to DWELL in their hearts by FAITH... so that they have a continual sense of fellowship with Christ
4. That's where the prayer is already

B. "Rooted and Established in Love"

1. Dual image here
2. One of a mighty OAK TREE, rooted deeply in love
3. The other of a huge BUILDING, solidly established in love

C. Rooted = stability, security, nourishment, strength, and LIFE

1. The root system of the heart going deep down in the doctrine of love
2. The Love of God is poured into our hearts
3. So also Love for OTHERS... the TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS
4. So this is an already converted person who knows the language of love, the feel of love, the experience of love

5. They have already drunk from the sweet fountain of God's love in Christ and they know what it tastes like
6. Only someone who knows love in a small measure will be able to appreciate and receive more love in a greater measure
7. The ROOTED image is one of sucking life-giving water and nutrients from the soil of love taught in the gospel

D. Established in Love

1. Not easily swept away...
2. Not immature, blown away
3. Stability, strength, consistency

Ephesians 4:14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching

So, Paul prays for the Ephesian Christians to have already been ROOTED and ESTABLISHED in love

IV. Power to Comprehend (vs. 18)

Ephesians 3:17-18 And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ

A. Again, we have POWER Language

1. Some translations merely speak of "ability"... "may be ABLE to comprehend"
2. But since Paul has already spoken of POWER in conjunction with all this, we might as well continue with that idea

Ephesians 3:16-17 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

3. This kind of knowledge of Christ's love for us is nothing less than OVERWHELMING!
4. So Paul prays for power to comprehend

B. What does "Comprehend" or "Grasp" Mean?

1. It starts out intellectual... there is definitely a TRUTH side to the love of Christ, a doctrinal side

2. We have learned from scripture that the one who is loving us is the eternally begotten Son of God!!
 3. He is fully God and fully man
 4. He was born of the virgin Mary, lived a perfectly sinless life, did astonishing signs and wonders, was nailed to a cross as a substitute for our sins, died, was buried; rose physically from the dead on the third day
 5. Doctrine is of the essence of this prayer
 6. It is MENTAL... just as all true love is MENTAL
 - a. People who love each other want to KNOW as much as they can about the other person
 - b. When a date happens, the two people go to their homes at the end of the evening and ponder carefully all that happened that evening, all that was said, what it meant
- C. BUT It's FAR MORE than merely intellectual
1. Paul wants them to “seize hold of” Christ’s love for them
 2. Make it their own, take it into themselves
 3. It is mental AND emotional... it goes down to the deepest parts of your being
 4. It's like an AHA!!! moment in the relationship... a revelation of Christ’s heart to you
 5. “Now I KNOW how much you love me!!”

V. The Infinite Dimensions of Christ’s Love for Us (vs. 18)

***Ephesians 3:18-19 to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,
¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge***

A. Christ’s Love for Us

1. That is the focus of this entire prayer
2. Paul prays that Christians would have a far greatest SENSE, GRASP of Christ’s love for them

John 15:9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

Absolutely STAGGERING... those words

Do you have any sense at all of how much the Father loves the Son? How perfectly, how passionately, how intensely the Father loves His Son?

That's how Jesus loves each of you!!

The focus here is the love of Christ... Paul says a LOVE THAT SURPASSES KNOWLEDGE

It goes beyond anything you can finally know

The four dimensions here may not be intended to be parsed out... but this is how meditation can help us

First, the love of Christ for us is MEASURELESS... immense

Illus. like driving all night to the Rocky Mountains, and coming to a spectacular scenic overlook where you can see dozens of mountain peaks stretching for miles and miles... but its pitch black when you arrive; you've never seen mountains before, you were born in the city and this is your first trip; then, the sun begins to rise and you see the faint outlines of the peaks and its surprising... then as the light comes more and more, you begin to see the magnitude of the heights involved, the expanse of the valleys and rivers before your eyes; when the dawn spreads its orange and red glow over the scene, you finally get a sense of how stunning it is and your breath is taken away

So it is with the love of Christ

ALL OF US UNDERESTIMATES IT!!

Now with our minds we're going to fly like in an ultralight over the mountain peaks and valleys, soaring and seeing the dimensions of it

Ephesians 3:18-19 to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge

B. How Wide is Christ's Love

1. Perhaps we think of the breadth of Christ's saving purpose to his elect in every nation on earth
2. The stunning breadth of the saving power of Christ for all his chosen people in every tribe, tongue, nation is amazing

Revelation 5:9-10 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."¹⁰ You have

made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

3. How BROAD is the love of Christ!
4. We are part of a vast, astonishingly diverse army of redeemed people from all over the world
5. When you see them in heaven, your breath will be taken away!

C. How Long is Christ's Love

1. Perhaps here we think of the ETERNITY of his love... how LONG he's been loving you and all of us

Jeremiah 31:3 "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.

2. He set his love on us in election from before the foundation of the world

Ephesians 1:4-5 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ

3. Christ has been LOVING you personally, and all his church collectively, for MILENNIA!!
4. He effectively shed his blood for you the moment he accepted you as his sinful elect

Revelation 13:8 names have ... been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world

5. And he will go on loving you forever!

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

John 6:39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

D. How Deep is Christ's Love

1. Here I want to reflect on how deep Christ had to descend to save a sinner like you and me... the depth to which he would sink to save us

On May 23, 1939, the submarine Squalus sank during a test dive off the coast of New Hampshire, and sat on the frigid seafloor 243 feet down. A diver

descended into the terrifying, dark, and freezing waters to attach a cable to the sub by which a diving bell could descend and rescue the sailors.

How deep would you go to save someone's life?

2. The ultimate picture must be Christ's willingness to die for us under the wrath of God

Philippians 2:6-8 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

3. This is surely a love that surpasses knowledge! Jesus was willing to undergo torture, beatings, rejection, condemnation, bearing our sins, crucifixion, the infinite wrath of God for your wickedness...
4. That's how low Jesus would go to save us
5. It is a love that surpasses knowledge

E. How High is Christ's Love

1. This perhaps could refer to how highly Jesus will lift you up!
2. The plans he has for all of us... the riches of his saints in glory
3. We've already covered this in Ephesians 2

Ephesians 2:6-7 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

4. But there is so much more exaltation Christ will do for us
5. He will raise us up from the grave
6. He will give us resurrection bodies
7. He will give us a portion in the New Jerusalem and in the New Heaven and New Earth

VI. Filled to the Measure of the Fullness of God (vs. 19)

Ephesians 3:19 that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

- A. This is the Final Aspect of this GREAT WORK OF ASSURANCE
- B. This is the greatest elevation we could ever experience in our souls
- C. God is always PERFECTLY FULL in himself
- D. He wants us to experience that fullness
- E. More next week, God willing!!

VII. Applications

A. What Do We Do About All This?

1. Be willing to THINK DEEPLY about all this

^{KJV} **1 Peter 1:13 ¶ Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind**

- a. We tend to be so lazy when it comes to scripture
 - b. Be willing to look carefully over these verses
 - c. Think about them deeply
2. Assess yourself
 - a. Ask yourself, “Does this kind of supernatural experience of Christ’s love for me characterize my daily life?”
 - b. Where am I in those four categories of Christians... how much do I experience a sense of the love of Christ for me that lines up with these words
 3. Believe that this kind of experience of Christ’s love is POSSIBLE... more than that... is PROMISED to us
 - a. Don’t let Satan convince you that something like this could never happen to you
 - b. Believe that you can have a foretaste of heavenly joy, the love of Christ poured into your heart by the Holy Spirit
 4. Meditate daily on these kinds of verses
 - a. Perhaps memorize Ephesians 3:14-21
 - b. Go carefully over these words day after day
 - c. Set this concept constantly before your mind

5. Don't be satisfied with less!! Don't come up short of the fullness of what God intends for you
 - a. Don't live like a pauper when you could feast like a prince
 6. Don't make excuses
 - a. "I'm too busy to pursue Christ like this"
 - b. Does a busy, single man who is successful in business say "I'm too busy to find a wife?" He may for a while, but his loneliness will start to press in on him... he will know that something huge is missing from his life
 - c. He will MAKE TIME for finding a wife because it's that important to him
 - d. Will you make time to pursue Christ's love?
 7. Do not think this will be simple... some easy thing
 8. Pray for this for yourself and for others
 - a. This whole thing is presented as a PRAYER
 - b. So, pray for this for yourself... and pray for others as well
 9. Remember that this is not impersonal... a "thing" we're trying to achieve... this is a personal relationship we're seeking to develop... it is CHRIST we want
 10. Purify your heart from sin... from the things of the world... be willing to mortify the deeds of the flesh
- James 4:4-8 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely? ⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." ⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.***
- a. Expect that, as you begin to pursue intimacy with Christ, you will see more and more sin in your heart!!
 - b. Expect this to happen! Confess it... grieve over it
11. Persevere in this!!! Expect setbacks, disappointments... but never stop pursuing Christ

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

B. Non-Christians: COME TO CHRIST!!