

Members to Missionaries – Ephesians 3

Intro: I want to start this morning by reading the last part of Ephesians 2 since Paul jumps off of that in Ephesians 3. (a brief discussion of the complexity of language in chapter 3. Then read 2:19-22)

Jason Steckel gathered quite a few “amens” when he said – a few weeks ago – that the youth ministry here was moving from recreation to transformation.

Sounds good... but why be transformed? Transformed into what? For what?

I. **A Prisoner of Christ Jesus**

- A. Paul begins a prayer in chapter one that he interrupts throughout Ephesians. Chapter 3 begins with a mention that he is a prisoner, and then a break in his earlier thought so that he can assure the Ephesians he doesn't consider his imprisonment to be a hindrance to his work or to the growth of the kingdom.
- B. “I, Paul” is left without a verb until verse 14 when he says “I kneel.”
- C. Paul uses the word “administration” in verse 2 to indicate that God's plan is being worked out in his life. He assumes he is still being transformed, used, placed into position – and he is ready to serve wherever he is placed.
 - 1. Just as the Gentiles have been placed into the family by the agency of God in Christ (v.6), everything is being done to reveal the wisdom of God. (v.10-13)
 - 2. But how? Transformed into what? By what power is it possible for people like us to show the manifold wisdom of God to the world?

II. **Back to the Subject**

- A. All right – we are to get busy... but we don't know enough yet to really rearrange our lives. Read vv.14-19.
- B. The power is love. Love is our marker, our power, and our method. It cannot be overdone. Jesus said that all men would know that we follow Jesus because of our love. (John 13:35)

- C.** Luke 7 – the story of the fallen woman. Broken, ratty hair, using the perfume that was most probably used in her sinful business... but Jesus said she was forgiven because of her love.
- D.** Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13 that even after all other gifts are done, after all the conflicts about and in worship, all that matters is love.
- E.** [if time allows – the guitar center story. Angels, love]
- F.** God is asking that your “default” setting is love. What is your default? (traffic, airport, school) Are you looking for the opportunity to love, to give, to share, and to care?
- G.** The root of all sin is self-centeredness or selfishness. The root of Christian transformation is love. (end by reading Ephesians 3:17b-21)

Transition into giving time. Two collections – the first of our money, the second of our pledges. The praise team will sing during both gatherings.