



Part 3: United to Jesus, Rooted in Love

Ephesians 3:14-21

We receive Jesus' peace as we experience his love through communion with him.

I. An Anxious World

"In our day, anxiety has become one of the significant ailments of our world. Yet it is also a signal, an alarm that something is desperately wrong in our world. We must differentiate between the individual mental health challenge of anxiety, which a minority of individuals in every culture experience, and the systemic anxiety that our contemporary culture's structures create." – Mark Sayers, *A Non-Anxious Presence*

"...that anxiety is so deep within the emotional processes of our nation that it is almost as though neurosis has become nationalized." – Edwin Friedman, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix*, 59 (quoted by Sayers)

"...the world is undergoing transformation... a chaotic period where most anything can happen and little can be predicted; where yesterday's rule takers become tomorrow's rule makers, but no one follows rules anymore; where competing global visions collide with each other; where remnants of the past, present, and future coexist simultaneously." – Randall Schweller, political scientist (quoted by Sayers)

"With no agreed-upon defining story or shared values, identity becomes something the participant in the networked society must search for themselves. Many search for meaning and identity in regionalism, nationalism, political parties, single-issue causes, or self-expression." – Mark Sayers

“When ordinary people do not know who they are, they get anxious.” – Marshall McLuhan (quoted by Sayers)

II. Jesus’ Peace, Our Identity & God’s Love

“Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27

A. Our True Identity in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:14-15).

“For this reason I kneel before **the Father**, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.” Ephesians 3:14-15

Paul emphasizes God as our Father in Jesus Christ. He refers to God as our Father 42 times in his letters (8 times in Ephesians). No other description of God is used more in the New Testament because this is the relationship Jesus came to offer us.

We need to recover a relational view of the gospel over a transactional view of God. The gospel is a Father movement grounded in the Father’s love for you in Jesus.

B. United to Jesus, Rooted in Love (Ephesians 3:16-19).

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

Paul is referring to our union with Jesus through the Spirit (John 15:4-5). Our union with Jesus by the Spirit is the wellspring of the Christian experience.

“The one thing God keeps us to steadily is that we may be one with Jesus Christ.” – Oswald Chambers

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, **continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him**, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” Colossians 2:6-7

Union with Jesus is a fact; communion with Jesus is a practice.

“I always knew He was this available, but I did not avail myself of Him.” – Tim Keller, WSJ, 9-3-22

III. There’s Always More: Deeper In, Higher Up

“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, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” Ephesians 3:20-21

Discussion Questions:

1. How was the Gospel explained to you? What has been your primary way of thinking of God? More Judge or loving Father?
2. What have you been taught about your union with Jesus through the Spirit? How has this shaped your understanding and experience of God’s grace? If this is a new thought, what do you think?
3. What do you think about Doug’s statement: “Union with Jesus is a fact; communion with Jesus is a practice.”
4. What can we learn from Ephesians 3:14-21 that could help us experience Jesus’ peace?
5. Can you describe an experience of God’s love in Jesus you have had?

Formation Resources:

1. See “Practices of Jesus” ([GreenwoodCC.com/Practices/](https://greenwoodcc.com/Practices/)).
2. Practices of Jesus Audio Devotionals (available weekly through Greenwood social media platforms and email subscription): <https://greenwoodcc.com/event/all-practices-of-jesus-audio-devotional/>