

# Ephesians Series

## 8 The God who is Able 1 [Sermon Notes] Ephesians 3:10-21

*The story so far:*

- We are chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, sealed by the Spirit.
- Saved by grace through faith
- We are now in Christ

What has struck me so far in our study of Ephesians is the way in which how being assured of salvation is so vital for our faith. If we understand what Jesus has done for us on the cross, if we understand who we are in Christ, then that changes the way in which we view the world

Paul's situation was the same. He was a prisoner in chains. The man who had inspired them and taught them was a man with every prospect of being executed. These are people who were maybe going to be discouraged by hearing this. And Paul says - It's not like that at all, we are God's people and that means two things

Firstly it means that God's other creations that exist outside of our own universe learn more about the wisdom of God through the church. By that the apostle probably means the angels. What do the angels learn about God's wisdom from the church? That God is gracious, that God is loving. God's redemption of His church displays to the whole of His creation how loving and gracious He truly is. We are also people as Paul says earlier in the chapter that have been told the hidden secrets of God - not the angels but His church. Wow!

*10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. 13 I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.*

Secondly it means we can approach God with freedom and confidence. Whatever happens to us on earth, we can go straight into God's presence.

*2:18 (C) For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.*

*Heb 10:19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

We have boldness to enter His presence - boldness. AV of verse 12 says *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.* We can do that. We are His people.

Understand this, you are a child of God, you are the recipients of His promises we are people who deal in boldness - most of all in our dealings with our heavenly Father.

So as both Paul and they contemplate his sufferings, he says don't be discouraged we are His people, we are privileged to know the mysteries of God - things that God has made known only to His people. We are his children.

Are you discouraged this morning? You are a child of God, you have eternal life. Dwell on that fact. We are going to do that in a few moments anyway as we take the bread and drink the wine. You are a child of God. Think carefully on that. As you see your neighbours and your friends - you are a child of God. As you consider all the problems of Swaffham - how people don't know Jesus - we are the people of God. It isn't a title - it's a reality and because we have a right to be in the presence of God, we have a right to behave like what we are.

Look down at verse 22

*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.*

You might have noticed that this is my favourite benediction. We are the children of God, we are the people who can enter into that most holy of places. Not so the people of Swaffham, not so your friends and neighbours who don't know Christ.

Now compare this - you have the right to enter into that holy place. God can do immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine. Interesting isn't it. Let's bridge that gap in our prayer life and in our church. Because God is able to bridge that gap.

It's a critical point and Paul appreciated it. Most pastors appreciate it too because as a preacher I speak many words, but so often it feels like a waste of time. Why don't people respond to the challenge of their faith. Why are our churches full of old Christians but not mature ones. Why are they happy with being spiritual Peter Pans and not mature in Christ.

It's because we don't understand the nature of our relationship with God.

And that's what's life changing.

What sort of people are we going to be - life changers who prove God again and again that He does far beyond our aspirations.

Have you ever looked through a pair of glasses or binoculars the wrong way. Everything is small. Sometimes we look at God that way, we say He is big, but act as though He is small.

God is big - He can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine

*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*

My God is so big, so strong and so mighty there's nothing He cannot do. Do we really believe that - or are we looking through our glasses the wrong way!

The trouble with Christians in Britain has been that for a long time our God has been small, insignificant, unable to do more than we think He can - which isn't much.

What sort of God? So what?

The week after next we are going to explore the prayer that Paul prayed for the Ephesians, that they would have a God who had the right dimensions but for this morning, what size is your God? You needn't answer that, but your life will show it.