



Date: _____

Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Jesus Isn't Santa Claus Series, Lesson 30

Lesson Title: Meet Jesus, He Wants to Fill Your Heart

Take Home Point: Meet Jesus, he wants to fill your heart with his presence.

Warm-Up:

Have you ever encountered someone who doesn't want to learn something that may change their life? I have. And I think there is nothing sadder than determined, deliberate ignorance. This condition can result from fear or pride, but is most often the result of plain old self-centeredness. For example, in our culture the message of freedom from sin and death in Christ Jesus is frequently drowned out by the cries of those who do not want to be told they are sinners. This is not because they don't want to improve their lives. It is because the improvement offered by accepting Christ's sacrifice means admitting guilt to a God to whom they do not want to be accountable. They want to be in control, even if that means refusing God's wonderful presence now and in eternity.

Read: Ephesians 3:16-19

Observation (What happened?):

List all the blessings we receive from God that Paul mentions in these verses.

Where are we strengthened through the Holy Spirit?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What do you think it means to be filled with all the fullness of God?

Why do you think this is so important to Paul on our behalf?

Insight:

Isn't it interesting that verse 16 speaks of being rooted and established in love? Whose love is Paul talking about? I think he is talking about God's love for us. God's love is what drove him to give his son as an atonement on our behalf, doing for us what we could not do for ourselves. When we give in to that love and are rooted in it, we can begin to see all God offers us through his Spirit. Then in verse 19, Paul uses an interesting phrase, "to know this love that surpasses knowledge." How can we know something that is not knowable? This is where the life of the spirit goes beyond information and enters the whole heart. Paul wants us to experience and revel in the lavishness of God's love for us. He delights in us. He wants us to delight in him. He wants us to develop a deep, loving relationship with him that becomes our life focus. He won't make us love him; that's not in his character. He wants us to choose to love him as an act of our will as we respond to his love for us.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Use Paul's model of prayer to pray for your family, your small group, and yourself this week. See what happens.

How do you know you are filled with God's presence?