

**A PRAYER REQUEST FOR COATS BAPTIST CHURCH // Ephesians 3:14-4:24**

*Homecoming Message from Dr. Hollie Miller*

To celebrate Homecoming Sunday, Dr. Miller both encouraged and challenged us as a church by presenting a prayer from Paul to the church in Ephesus. Dr. Miller reminded us that although this prayer was originally written for the congregation at Ephesus, it is applicable to the modern church as well. As such, he applied this four-part prayer to our congregation, praying that we would be:

**1. Strengthened by His Spirit (v. 16)**

- a. We have the same Spirit of Christ within us that was within Paul.
- b. We have no power apart from the Spirit.
- c. We invest so much in the outer man, but how much do we invest in the inner man?

**2. Indwelt by His Son (v. 17)**

- a. To dwell means to settle down and be at home. This means that Christ wants to make Himself at home in our lives.
- b. Letting Christ make Himself at home in our hearts comes with a challenge: He *will* make changes, and we must allow Him to make those changes, even if they are uncomfortable, if we want Him to be Lord of our lives.

**3. Secure in His Love (vv. 17-19)**

- a. In order to be secure and rooted in God's love even when the storms come, we must understand all of the dimensions of God's love.
- b. In order to understand the love of God that surpasses all knowledge, we must allow the Holy Spirit to reveal God's love to us through the progressive renewal of our minds as we grow and live out our faith.

**4. Filled with the Fullness of God (v. 19)** The goodness of God's nature shapes our lives. This prayer desires that we would be filled with all that God is, including His entire nature.

After presenting this prayer and encouraging us as a congregation, Dr. Miller went on to provide a series of commands and challenges from the very next passage of Scripture. These challenges explain how we ought to act in response to the prayer in the previous passage:

**1. Guard the Unity of the Church (4:1-6)**

- a. Lowliness/humility, gentleness, longsuffering/patience.
- b. Unity is synonymous to oneness, which includes theological oneness.

**2. Engage in Ministry in the Church (vv. 7-12)** When we begin to serve, we begin to grow.**3. Walk in the Purity of Christ (vv. 17-24)** We cannot live like the rest of the world.**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What might it be like to allow Christ to truly make Himself at home and dwell within us?
2. In what ways can you help to guard the unity of the church?
3. Think about the ways that you are involved in ministry in the church. How have you seen your faith grow through serving? If you are not serving, in what ways could you serve and utilize your gifts?
4. Why is it important for us to live differently than the rest of the world?