



The Gathering message notes

PLANTED - Week 3 - August 19, 2012 / Paul Jenkins

THE BIG IDEA: Our _____ determine our _____.

1. What we do _____ here isn't just about _____ here
 - Paul knew a _____
 - There is something _____ about being planted
 - God wants to make _____ known to _____ powers
 - He does this through the _____
 - _____ sends a _____

2. The message? God is _____
 - Membership in other groups is _____, but will never be good _____
 - The reason? They can't reveal God's _____
 - The church reveals the God is able:
 - to _____ us
 - to _____ us
 - to bring Himself _____ through us
 - That's the _____ God wants from us, and it only happens if we put our _____ in redemptive _____
 - Roots are like _____: they _____ what is around them
 - A "God is able" _____ produces "God is able" _____

3. Turning on the _____
 - It's good to realize how much Jesus _____ the church
 - The church is the only organization on the _____ that God is _____ committed to
 - Why? It's the only organization on the planet that carries the _____ message of _____
 - How committed is Jesus to the church?
 - He _____ for it (Ephesians 5:25)
 - He is _____ and _____ it (Matthew 6:18)
 - He is _____ through it (Ephesians 3:10-12)

We should never be _____ or _____ to be associated with the _____.
_____ isn't!

The Take-Off

You have picked an AWESOME day to be with us at The Gathering!

We're wrapping up a 3 week series called PLANTED where we have examined what it means Biblically to be a part of the local church.

To this point, we've answered a few questions:

In Week One we asked if God even cares if we're planted at all, and if He does, what happens when we're planted?

We found out that **we grow up when we put our roots down**, and that the blessed life is always the planted life.

In Week Two we asked whether or not where we're planted matters, and found out that the little body (the local church) is the best soil for us to grow in. Sadly, we also talked about the reasons many people don't get excited about committing to or belonging to a body and how living independently - while very American - isn't Biblical. In fact, it often leads to negative consequences in our walks with God. We summed all of that up with the Big Idea that **you can't be a part of the body if you live apart from the body**.

Today we want to ask what's so special about being planted in a local church? I mean, people get planted all kinds of places, and so why is it so crucial that they plant in a body of believers? Can't we just join a civic club like Rotary or hang out with others and do stuff we have in common like the running club? Surely that's enough, right, because I feel like I belong in those groups?

That's a lot to chew on and we're just starting. But let's dive in and see what we can learn from 8 pretty powerful verses in Ephesians 3.

When we're done, we're gonna end this series celebrating our first "official" crop of members as well as a group of people who are going to take the next step of baptism.

Like I said, you picked an AWESOME day to be with us at The Gathering!

So, if you've got your Bible turn to Ephesians 3:14-21 and let's get started.

1. What we do down here isn't just about down here

Let's start with the first 3 words: "for this reason"

For what reason? We can read the prayer that Paul is praying for the church in Ephesus in vv. 16-19, but the question has to be, "why is he praying it?"

What was so important that it moved Paul to pray for us to have strength and power and more of an understanding of God's love?

Paul knew a secret. He knew that there is something supernatural about planting yourself in the church.

Verse 10 shows God's will - He wants to make His plan of salvation for the sinner through Jesus known to invisible powers in the "heavenly realms"

How does He plan on doing that? "Through the church"

Do you get that? Our choice to be planted in the body of Christ - simply our attendance at and participation with the local church - sends a message through the invisible realm!

And most people just think the church wants their money!

Membership sends a message

There is something supernatural in the very natural decision to be planted in the body.

2. The message? God is able!

Choosing to be planted in the local body sends a message, and the message it send is simply this: God is able!

What Paul realized and wants us to realize is that membership in other groups - civic groups, activity clubs, bowling leagues - can be good, but it will never be good enough.

Here's the #1 reason why being planted in those places will never be good enough: they don't have the capacity to reveal God's redemption.

What does God want to reveal through the church? That HE IS ABLE!

a. to redeem us (Ephesians 3:10-12)

- the wisdom of God was the cross
- His eternal purpose was us for His glory
- redemption allows us to approach Him free of sin and fear

b. to unite us

- God's plan was greater than individual redemption - He wants the redeemed **together** (Ephesians 3:18)
- The church validates the power of Jesus to destroy what divides us (Ephesians 2:14)

- c. to bring Himself glory through us
 - God wants to do in us what brings glory to Him (Ephesians 3:20-21)
 - His choice for where that glory will be seen? The church! (Ephesians 3:21)

God's desire is that The Gathering would be filled with people so planted in His love and so full of bold faith that the testimony of others in this region about our church would be: God is able!

That's the fruit that He wants us to be known for, and it can only happen if we put our roots in redemptive soil. That's the BIG IDEA this morning, and one that we need not ever forget: **our ROOTS determine our FRUIT.**

The reason is obvious: roots are like straws, and they absorb whatever is in the soil around them. Want to be a person known for the power of God's redemption? Plant yourself in a local body full of redeemed people that celebrate being redeemed more than anything else.

You'll absorb the "God is able" nutrients from that culture and you'll bear "God is able" fruit.

You'll find a growing confidence in God's promises to make all things new.

You'll realize that God is able, period.

That is the redemptive message of God, and it is only found in His church.

3. Turning on the lightbulb

For me, this study has become a light bulb moment.

It has been the moment that I realized just how much Jesus loves the church, how much He gives to the church, and how awesome it is to belong to the church!

It is the only organization on the planet that God is 100% committed to, because it is the only organization on the planet that carries the redemptive message of Jesus.

How committed is Jesus to the church?

- He loved it and died for it (Ephesians 5:25)
- He is building and protecting it (Matthew 6:18)
- He is speaking through it (Ephesians 3:10-12)

We should NEVER BE ASHAMED or EMBARRASSED to to be associated with the church! Jesus isn't!

The Landing

So, let's land this message and this series

As we've looked at the idea of membership, we've all been challenged.

Mainly because in America, independence is celebrated even though it isn't biblical. We talked about that last week.

We've also struggled because belonging to a local body is harder than belonging to the big, worldwide church.

Let's face it: you can be a part of the big body in your underwear on a Sunday morning.

But being planted locally in the little body? It requires something.

It's easy to believe the lie that we don't need the second, but remember 2 important points:

1. If it was about individual salvation, Paul would have stopped his prayer halfway through Ephesians 3:17
2. The only way for Jesus' power to redeem broken people from the sin that divides us is for us to walk this journey together. Believe me, nothing gets the world's attention like very different people choosing to walk together in unity.

So the only questions left to ask are, where does God want you planted, and are you willing to do it?

I know the answer to the first one. God wants you planted here, right here at The Gathering. How do I know? Because you've been coming. Because He has drawn you here. Today is really just about making the unofficial, official! It's you being a seed already dropped into the ground looking at us and saying, "Water me!"

The second question is up to you to answer, and you can do that right now. All it requires is that you say yes to the work that God is doing here at The Gathering by signing the piece of paper you were handed as you came in.