

## **CHANGED #1 – “WANTING IT”**

- The purpose of our lives is to glorify God – “knowing and showing that God is great.” The primary experience of that glory is in having a love-relationship with God, which brings us happiness (in him). This is practically pursued in daily living through three words: “Come”, “Become” and “Love”. (“You & God: An Invitation to Radical Living”, Fred Miller)
- The current sermon series: “Loved”, “Changed” and “Sent”

### **The Centrality of Being Changed**

- Some people think the good news (“gospel”) is all about forgiveness and heaven. They think “saved” means saving from judgment and hell (true). But it sees God primarily as a Judge who pardons us rather than seeing God as a Father who restores us in love to himself. We are called to relationship with God, not just a nice-looking house in a new reality of heaven someday!
- What are we “saved” from - some bad reality in the future, or some bad reality right now? Both – with a strong emphasis on the now.

► *Ephesians 1:3-10* “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.”

► *Ephesians 2:8-10* - we are “saved by grace through faith” . . . “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

► *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.” [He wants to transform our inner being, our hearts.] “And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s 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.” [To have all of God’s heart, mind, life infused into us!]

- God’s transforming work in us is central to the gospel. This isn’t something just for advanced Christians. And it certainly isn’t optional!
- A biblical definition of a Christian is someone who loves, follows and trusts Jesus. We’ve given him both our hearts and our wills – not a mere recognition that Jesus died for our sins. We must recognize that our lives are bent, broken and wounded. We need a healer, a Savior from our condition, a redeemer to restore us to the fullness of God’s love.

- To be changed is central to our happiness – Joy!
  - *Mark 1:15* “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”
    - ◆ Jesus didn’t just come to show us the way to heaven. He came to bring the reality of heaven to earth.
  - *Matthew 6:10* “...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (The good news is heaven brought to earth!)

### **A “Changed” Theme Verse**

► *2 Corinthians 3:18*. “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

#### **1. To be changed is a process.**

#### **2. To be changed is to become like Jesus.**

► *Romans 8:29* - We’ve been “predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” He’s the prototype human – and we are predestined to be like him

#### **3. To be changed is to know God’s glory – which is for our joy.**

• We experience the greatness of God! - his love, holiness, power, wonder. And to experience God’s glory is to experience joy!

#### **4. To be changed is a work of God – and specifically a work of the Spirit of God who lives in us.**

• But that doesn’t mean we sit around waiting for God to change us. (We’ll be exploring this in the weeks to come.)

### **So What Do You Really Want?**

- How enthusiastic are you about being changed? • How much do you want it? • Do you see it as good news – as central to the gospel because it’s the fruit of a relationship with God? • Does your soul delight in the prospect of becoming more and more like Jesus every day? • Do you welcome trials in your life and challenging relationships in your life because they help you see what needs to be changed – not around you, but in you? • Do you pray, “Lord change me – give me your heart” on a regular basis? • Are you convinced that growing in humility and peace and love are treasures to your soul and gifts to those around you? • Are you convinced that unleashing God in your soul is a treasure beyond words?
- On the flip side, are you tired of what your sins do to you and the people you know? • Are you tired of being a slave to the opinions and words and actions of others? • Do you long to be freed from your pride that blocks God’s glory in you? • Do you long to be freed from your fears and worries and selfishness?
  - Do you long to go just one 24-hour period around your family without withdrawing, arguing, criticizing or hurting someone’s feelings? • Are you tired of being a slave to money, approval, sex and prestige? • Do you want to be rescued from all of this – and have Jesus take full control?
- “Lord, change me – for your glory and my joy! Change the way I react to things, the way I speak, the way I relate to people, the way I relate to You.”
- *God’s love accepts me as I am - but he loves me too much to leave me the way I am.* → **What’s on His heart for you?**