

The Unsearchable Riches of Christ

Almost 27 years ago, Teren and I moved to Colorado Springs to begin our married life together. We were both working for Christian ministries at the time so we were not rich. But over time we were able to scrape our pennies together to place a down payment on a cute little home. We were pretty excited because we had a lovely view of Pikes Peak through one of our windows, a few aspen trees in the front yard and a pretty little park right across the street for our two young boys to play in. Because we moved into our new home in November, we had no way of knowing the surprise that was waiting for us come spring.

Sure enough, the season turned from winter to spring and little saplings (or so we thought) began popping up in the front yard. We thought it a bit odd, but didn't think much of it. Perhaps the aspen trees had dropped a few seeds in the prior year that had survived the winter. All we needed to do was pluck them out and all would be well.

So we plucked...and plucked, spending untold hours in a futile attempt to rid ourselves of the never-ending sprouts. You see, when we attempted to uproot the tiny growths (and there were a lot of them), we realized they were connected to a root system that ran deep. Our laboring was in vain. Small roots led to thicker and deeper roots that ultimately were part of a grand system that had permeated the entire yard. After a little research, we discovered that the handful of aspen trees in our front yard was very likely a small manifestation of a single (but much larger!) organism that likely meandered throughout many other neighborhood properties. It turns out that a single aspen grove can cover as much as 100 acres. The little sprouts in our yard were merely the tip of an underground iceberg.

I was reminded of the aspen when reading in Ephesians this week. In Chapter 3, verse 8, Paul speaks of how he was called to preach to the Gentiles, **“the unsearchable riches of Christ,”** and in verse 9, **“to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things...”**

Paul, when proclaiming Jesus and his gospel message, was not preaching an unknowable Savior, he was shining light on the immense canvas that was the riches of Christ. He was the literal embodiment of God, the most particular image of God made known to mankind since Adam and Eve walked with God in the garden. God *could* be known in the person of Jesus Christ, but He, infinite God, *could not* be fully “unearthed” in finite space and time. In a sense, He is like the aspen grove we discovered in the spring of 2000.

The spirit of Christ is made alive in us just as the sprout springs forth from the root of an aspen grove in springtime. Yet the more we dig into the Gospel of Jesus Christ, more of his expansive root system is exposed. As time progresses, the riches of Christ burst forth to the light of day and grow larger before our eyes. Yet at the same time, we recognize that we simply cannot unearth the full magnitude of his riches. The enormity of His root system is beyond our ability to measure.

Paul says something similar in Rom 11:33-36,

33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

**34 "For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor?"**

**35 "Or who has given a gift to him
that he might be repaid?"**

36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Our finite minds cannot fully comprehend all that we have been given when we were grafted into the family of Christ.

So if your sprout has been bent low by the weight of sin this week, remember to whom you have been joined. Jesus is wildly greater to you than the aspen grove is to the individual aspen sprout. He gave life to every aspen grove throughout the world. He is the creator of the world and everything in it. He upholds the entire universe by the word of his power. If it is true that from him and through him and to him are all things, then surely he can uphold both you and me, two little sprouts among his unsearchable root system!

Spurgeon, when commenting on Ephesians 3:8 said this,

"My Master has riches beyond the count of arithmetic, the measurement of reason, the dream of imagination, or the eloquence of words. They are unsearchable! You may look, and study, and weigh, but Jesus is a greater Savior than you think Him to be when your thoughts are at the greatest. My Lord is more ready to pardon than you are to sin, more able to forgive than you are able to transgress...Never tolerate low thoughts of my Lord Jesus."

Can we not blossom anew if we are rooted in the bounty that is Christ? I am praying that we do just that so that others might see the unsearchable riches of Christ through us.

To him be glory forever!

Amen.

Pastor Brad