

Practicing the Way

Vision 2023: Part 1

Sunday message from January 8th, 2023

~ Notes & Reflections ~

- **Paul stops in the middle of his challenge to the church in Ephesus to unity with a prayer. It is a prayer focusing on the importance of the inner life and being rooted in the love of God.**
 - ❖ Your inner life, your soul matters.
 - ❖ We are being formed into the likeness of Jesus – spiritual formation.
 - ❖ Read [Ephesians 3.14-19](#) slowly. What stands out to you as important? What does this passage show that Paul values? Why might Paul have interjected this particular prayer statement into his letter about unity?
- **“...as you are being rooted and grounded in love...” (Ephesians 3.17)**
 - ❖ Rooted – nourishment What are we being nourished by?
 - ❖ Grounded – stability What are we being grounded in?
- **The aim of the church is to create space for people to experience the love of God in their inner being.**
- **Your formation is actually a passive act. You are being formed, not the One doing the forming.**
 - ❖ Take a moment to reflect on your life—what do you focus on and think about? How do you spend your time, etc. What is forming you? What is nourishing you? (Consider not just the “good” but also the negative influences.)
- **Something is always forming you.**
 - ❖ You may not be able to control whether you are being formed, but you can control what forms you.
 - ❖ What do you desire to be formed/disciplined by in 2023? What shift or change might you have to make to create space for that kind of formation?
- **Our formation requires us to actively engage in practices that create space for Jesus’ love to invade our hearts.**
 - ❖ We must choose to open our hearts to the right agents of formation—the way of Jesus (teaching and way of life).
 - ❖ What might it look like for you to regularly create space to experience the love of Jesus? What practice would help with that?
- **Our hearts long to be nourished by the only One we were designed to consume, to find our stability in the only One we were designed to build upon.**
- **What does it look like for UCCC to create space to be formed by Jesus?**
 - ❖ We can be formed both individually and corporately as we practice the way of Jesus together.
- **We want to empower you to organize your own spiritual practices in a way that works for your spiritual formation.**
 - ❖ We all live in different spaces and creating space to be formed by Jesus looks different for each person.
 - ❖ Take some time asking God to highlight a particular “way of Jesus” He wants you to practice in 2023. What might your next step look like in this?
- **Every year, we want to call all of us to three specific practices that will guide our year as a church.**
 - ❖ Stay tuned next week to find out what those three practices for 2023 are...