

## Sermon Notes – July 26, 2015, Pastor Alan Smith

### “How Deep and Wide”

“The Depths of My Love”

Written by Millette Addison

*Rivers of my love run deep, Into the valleys of your heart,  
Neither height, nor depth, Nor mountains too wide,  
Could show you, The depths of my Love,  
Way beyond the seas, Throughout all eternity,  
Could never show you, The depths of my love,  
Into the sun, Far beyond the sky,  
A thousand tears, That I have cried,  
Could never show you, The depths of my love,  
Forgiveness beyond measure, Memories to treasure,  
Love written as a lullaby, Enchanted dreams of you and I,  
Could never show you, The depths of my love,  
Miles and time, Song and rhyme,  
Money or gain, life or pain,  
Could never show you, The depths of my love,  
Loving me, embracing me, Eternally, Will show you the depths of my love.*

Ah yes Love. Every young couple that falls in love thinks that no one loves as deep as they do. Some couples even want others to experience the love that they have. I even do that when I have pre-marital sessions with couples. I tell them that my hope is that they have a marital relationship like I have.

In our scripture Paul is praying for the believers at Ephesus. He first prays that God will empower them with inner strength through His Spirit. Paul wants the Ephesians to receive that inner strength that comes from God.

**14 When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father,\* 15 the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth.\* 16 I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.**

We need that strength too. It is that strength that pulls us through the hard times. I think of the Nigerian women at National Conference that faced many horrors of the Boko Haram. Hearing the

stories as they fled the attacks they would say this person was gone or another was never heard from before. Yet they have the strength to continue in their faith. Continue to tell others. Continue to rebuild the churches. Do we have that strength? We would like to say yes but we don't know until we face a similar situation.

We need to pray for them, but not only those in Nigeria, but all that face persecution! We need to pray that the church in America will have the inner strength to go where God has called them. We need to be empowered to do God's will in our lives.

Paul continues in his prayer.

**17 Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong.**

When I see a scripture that talks about roots. I think of how some trees will have very deep roots so they can get moisture, nutrients, and to have a good hold of the soil so they don't topple over. We need to be like those trees. We need to be rooted in God's love. It is when we know that we are loved we can mature as Christians. When we grab ahold of God's love for us it is that love that gives us strength!! It is His love for us that is our source of nourishment. It is that love that refreshes and strengthens us.

Paul continues his prayer.

**18 And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.**

The root of a tree only goes so far to get its nourishment. You can only go so far in the ground until you hit bedrock. Then the soil is no longer good for growing when you get that far. With God there is no limit to His love for us. John 3:16 tells us that loved the world so much that He gave His son to save the world. God's love is without condition.

*Agape - to have love for someone or something, based on sincere appreciation and high regard*

Let's look at a definition of love.

1 Corinthians 13:4–7,13 (NLT)

**4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud 5 or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. 6 It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. 7 Love never gives up, never**

**loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. 13 Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.**

It is that kind of love that God has for us. It is that love that we need to hold on to and draw our strength from.

Paul continues in his prayer.

**19 May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.**

The love of God completes us; makes us whole. When a young couple talks of love, sometimes they will say he/she completes me. I will tell them that no one can complete another because we are not perfect. We will fail each other at some point in our relationship. God is perfect and will never fail us and that is why His love completes us.

I was mentoring a young man that is going through a divorce and he asked me how do you get past the humiliation? I told him that the humiliation comes from the situation that happened and his self-worth is damaged. The way to deal with this is to deepen his relationship with God. We need to get our self-worth from Him and not the world. When we realize and experience the love God has for us it is that love that makes us whole. We are children of the most high! When are brothers and sisters to the King of Kings!!

As Paul writes in Romans 8:31–37 (NLT)

**<sup>31</sup> What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? <sup>32</sup> Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup> Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. <sup>34</sup> Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.**

**<sup>35</sup> Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? <sup>36</sup> (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") <sup>37</sup> No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.**

Nothing can separate us from that love!

Paul has a benediction. Listen to these words.

**20 Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. 21 Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.**

All glory goes to God. It is through His power that we will be able to do more than we can imagine!

When a task is before us and we think that we can't do it. We can't get through it. We are too weak! Remember that it is through God's power we can do anything!