

August 22, 2021

## Today's Featured Ministry Is:

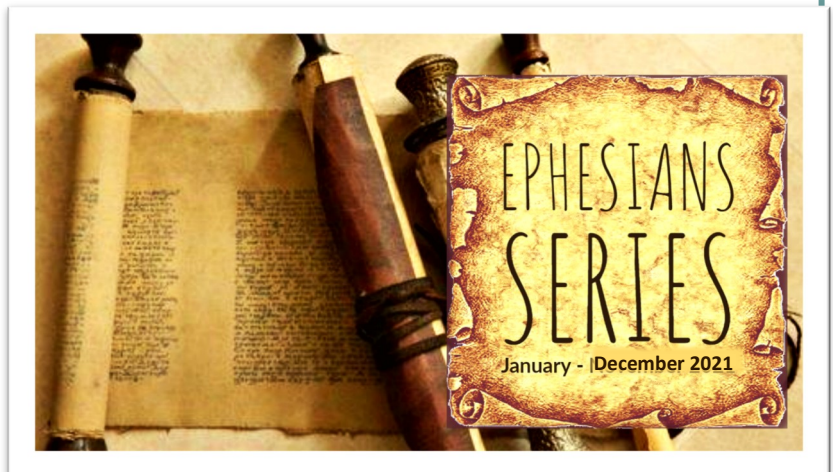
## SERMONS

BY PASTOR DOUG MCMASTERS

“Through this crucial season, God's Word has comforted, corrected, and shaped us. It has motivated our lives and inspired our hearts with the promise that all things—even this pandemic—are being used for His good, eternal purposes in Christ.”

Johann Odendaal said, “In the most challenging times in the history of the world, God raised up great preachers of the Word to stand their ground and provide answers by strong biblical preaching that changed the course of history – men like Chrysostom, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, the Puritans and many others. They had one thing in common: The centrality of preaching.”

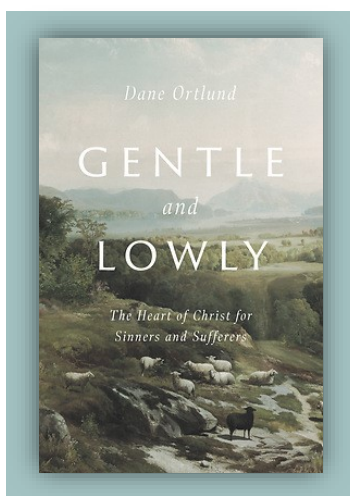
In our challenging season, during a health crisis and amid political instability, we have fixed our attention on God. The word of God stands at



the center of our church life—it is the final authority of our faith and our practice. The preaching of the Word is how God forms and matures the body of Christ. And so, we take special care to ensure that what God says and what God desires is known and applied to our lives as believers and to how we function and relate to one another as a church family. Through this crucial season, God's Word has comforted, corrected, and shaped us. It has motivated our lives and inspired our hearts with the promise that all things—even this pandemic—are being used for His good, eternal purposes in Christ.

In August of 2020, we focused our attention upon John's first epistle. That book helped us to see the importance of Christ as the source of truth, the model of love and the object of our faith and obedience. The study of 1 John took us to the end of 2020 and beginning in January 2021, we launched into the book of Ephesians. Paul's epistle to the believers in Ephesus is unique—he had no error to answer, no problems to fix, no false teachers to rebuke, no disobedience to correct, no breached relationships to mend. And so, his letter to them is a detailing of pure gospel doctrine and genuine gospel devotion.

Our hope and plan is to resume Sunday evening services in the Fall with a look at the ministry of Christ. Dane Ortlund has produced a wonderful book titled, *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers*. Through the generosity of Crossway Publishers, we hope to have copies available to everyone who wants one. Though we won't be studying that book on Sunday evenings, we will be using the passages listed at the opening of each chapter for the weekly messages. So, the series will go something like this partial list of sermon passages and titles:



- Christ Reveals His Heart from Matthew 11:28-30
- Moved with Compassion from Matthew 14:13-21
- Worthwhile Suffering from Hebrews 12:1-3
- Ready with His Grace from Hebrews 4:14-16
- A Gentle Savior from Hebrews 5: 1-7
- No Greater Grip from John 6: 37-40
- Forgiven and Not Forsaken from Hosea 11:8-12

In times like this, it is easy for people to question whether there is anything or anyone in control. But as believers, we know the Lord has everything in hand. And that is why we continue to rely on Christ for guidance and help.

***“All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.***

**-Isaiah 66:2**

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