

# Power for the Most Important Things

Ephesians 3:14-21

August 31, 2025

## Here is a brief review of Ephesians:

Eph. 1: God chose you. God redeemed you. God seals you. God empowers you.

Eph. 2: Man's dire predicament. But God. God saved you....and even us!

Eph. 3: God uniting people, people knowing God, people loving people

## DAY 1

*Eph. 3:14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, <sup>15</sup>from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. <sup>16</sup>I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup>so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup>may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup>and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

*<sup>20</sup>Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, <sup>21</sup>to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

## Paul's prayer

1. Paul ended Ephesians 1 with a prayer and now ends Ephesians 3 with another prayer.

*Eph. 3:14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, <sup>15</sup>from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.*

2. What strikes you about each of his phrases as he introduces his prayer.

"I kneel ..." –

"...before the Father..." -

"...from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name" –

3. Is there something in Paul's approach or attitude to prayer that you would like to change in your approach or attitude toward prayer?

## **DAY 2: Request #1: Strength in your inner man**

1. Paul's prayer in Ephesians involves three requests. Here is request #1:

*Ephesians 3:16 I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit,*

2. Paul is praying that divine strength may be poured into you. Imagine a large football stadium filled to the top decks with God's power. It is an enormous amount of power.

3. Paul's prayer is that this strength may be "according to the riches of His glory." It is an enormous reservoir of strength from which to draw, enough for your entire life!

4. The literal Greek text reads: "with power strengthened". It is written in the superlative!

5. Where is this strength directed?

6. Our "Inner being" is the real you, that which makes you, you. Your inner being is composed of components like your mind, will, heart, head, emotional capacities, and purposeful capacity, etc.

7. Paul refers to our inner being (inner nature) in 2 Corinthians 4.

*2 Cor. 4:16 So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day.*

8. What does Paul say about our:

a. Outer nature?

b. Inner nature?

9. Paul and Silas had been arrested and whipped for sharing the gospel. They were then thrown in prison.

*Acts 16:25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.*

10. In spite of terrible outer afflictions, what is happening in their inner being?!

11. This is the strength Paul prays for to strengthen our inner being!

### DAY 3: Request #2: to be rooted in the love of Christ

*Eph. 3:17 And that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.*

*“And that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith...”*

1. As Christians we know that Christ already came into our hearts at our conversion. This is a fact. So why does Paul start this verse off by seemingly praying for something that has already happened?
2. The key word is “dwell.” Here, “dwell” is not used as a noun, like a place, or a dwelling. Instead, Paul uses “dwell” as a verb! We might put it this way, that Christ may be ALIVE in you, REAL to you, CENTERED in you, in your daily life.
3. And how does that take place? “Through faith...”

*“...as you are being rooted and grounded...”*

4. **Rooted**: rhizōō (Greek word). Literally, an agriculture, gardening term. Figuratively it is used to become stable.
5. Several years ago Melanie helped us transplant three young magnolia trees in our back yard. Transplanting flowers, shrubs, and trees requires more than digging any kind of hole. The hole must be in the right spot for full sun, partial sun, or shade. It must be deep and wide enough to hold water and allow the roots to easily grow past the root ball and into the surrounding soil. Once the potted roots attached themselves to the soil surrounding the root ball, you’ve got rooted trees that can withstand furious winds and storms.
6. **Grounded**: thēmēliōō (Greek word), a building term. The word means to lay a foundation. Figuratively it means to be settled or be stable.
7. These two metaphors for the basis for understanding Paul’s prayer that they may rooted and grounded in the love of God. May there never be any catastrophe or tragedy that rocks your inner man, that loosens and uproots you from the love of God.

*<sup>18</sup> I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge...*

8. Paul describes the EXTENT of God’s love.
9. **Comprehend**: Katalambano (Greek word) to *take eagerly*, i.e. *seize, possess*, etc. (lit. or fig.):—apprehend, attain, come upon, comprehend, find, obtain, perceive, (over-) take. Not just to know or comprehend but to assimilate as your own.

How will this happen? “...with all the saints!” The way we comprehend the astounding love of God is not in isolation, but in community! This is not solo learning. Each real Christian in the larger church community tells us something of the amazing love of Christ. This is the invisible curriculum at work. As we connect with our brothers and sisters, we learn, almost by osmosis by the examples of others.

10. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

#### **DAY 4: Request #3: to be filled with the fullness of God**

<sup>19</sup> *and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

1. “Fullness of God” – What does Paul mean? The attributes of God are thought of in two categories: communicable and uncommunicable.
2. Uncommunicable attributes of God are attributes that cannot be replicated in a human being. For example, God is omnipresent—He is present everywhere at the same time. God is omniscient—He knows everything. God is omnipotent—He is all-powerful. We are none of those. None of those attributes of God can be part of what Paul prays that we may be filled with all the fullness of God.
3. Paul is thinking of the communicable attributes of God, attributes that can be replicated in a human being. God is loving, just, holy, faithful, tender, forgiving, righteous, merciful, just, and full of grace. We have the capacity to exhibit these attributes of God.
4. The fullness of God indwelling us would impact our character, attitudes, dispositions, inclinations, values, relationships, personal life, etc.!!!
5. There is a colossal difference between exhibiting God’s pure character traits versus us trying to exhibit these same traits on our own, under our will and power.
6. For example, there is a vast difference between exhibiting the love of God in and through us versus a human being trying to be loving on their own power. Jesus said, anyone can love those who love you. There is no virtue there. But loving people is hard when someone ignores you, argues with you, criticizes you, complains about you. The best a human can do is love those who love them first.
7. Now there is an enormous paradox at work here. On one hand, thinking about the character of God alive in me is quite dwarfing. “Seth, do you mean to say that the dispositions and inclinations of Jesus can be displayed in and through my life? The attitudes of God can transform my dirty rotten attitudes? It makes me feel like the nine-year-old boy I was the first time our family camped in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. During the day we were surrounded by majestic mountains, thick evergreen and aspen forests, and Rocky Mountain streams cutting their way through the forests. And at night, looking up into the panoply of stars, millions of them spread out across the black sky. This nine-year-old boy felt very small.
8. This is heady stuff! What strikes you from the fullness of God dwelling in you?
9. Pray this same prayer for yourself, especially noting the beginning of his prayer and this ending!

## **DAY 5: Wow!!**

1. You may have finished yesterday's devotional about being filled with the fullness of God with a reaction of— "Mind blown! Me? Really?"

2. I think Paul was too! Notice what he writes next...

*Ephesians 3:20 Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine,*

*<sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*

3. You and I can be astounded at the idea of God indwelling me to such an extent that the very inner me and inner you can have such a dramatic and thorough revolution.

4. And that just leaves Paul with the necessity and response of these last two verses, a doxology to the wonder and glory of God.

5. You may wonder why what we've read this week doesn't move you more than it has.

"It's been said that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. But, we've turned this completely upside down. We say the chief end of God is to gratify me! We become indulgers. Indulgers focus on God as little more than a predictable supplier of all their needs."  
Larry Crabb

6. As we finish looking at Paul's prayer, what things resonate with you the most? What do you want to remember?