

DOCTRINE THAT DELIGHTS
STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS
Ephesians 3:14-21
“LOVE BEYOND YOUR ABILITY TO MEASURE OR UNDERSTAND”

INTRODUCTION: Many things in life are difficult to explain to someone who has never experienced what is being discussed. Some experiences are beyond our capacity to fully explain, and the love of God fits that category. As we study the book of Ephesians, you will see how the Holy Spirit moved the Apostle Paul to use language that is stretched to the limits as he describes what the Lord has done for human beings. We do not deserve any of the love and grace He has showered upon us.

BACKGROUND: Ephesus was the leading city of the richest region of the Roman Empire, with over 250,000 people living there. It was a cosmopolitan area saturated with demonic worship, occult practices, magic, the magnificent Temple of Artemis, (Diana of the Ephesians) and over fifty other false gods. There was rampant immorality, drunkenness, sexual sins, lying and stealing. Christians were being called to holy living in the midst of a culture that celebrated sinful lifestyles.

The doors God closed in Paul's life led to incredible blessings for all of us. He tried to go toward Ephesus on his second journey, but the Holy Spirit blocked them, directed them to Macedonia, and churches were planted in Europe. (Acts 16) Paul wrote Romans because he could not get there when he wanted to and that letter has taught the world the truths of the Christian faith. When Paul was allowed to go to Asia Minor later, he spent over three years there evangelizing and starting churches. While imprisoned in Rome, he wrote life changing letters from prison, one of which was Ephesians.

I. ASK THE FATHER TO OPEN YOUR EYES BEFORE YOU TRY TO DO ANYTHING FOR HIM.
(Ephesians 3:14-15)

A. There is no mandated physical posture for prayer. You can stand, lift your hands, open your palms, sit, lay prostrate, etc. The most important posture is a heart bowed before the Lord. However, it was customary to bow before a king, and one day every knee will bow before the Lord, so find occasions now to bow in prayer. (Philippians 2: 10-11)

B. It is the Fatherhood of God that teaches us the importance of families on every level. There would be no families anywhere if not for Him being the Father. ***Do you realize the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is delighted to be your Father, and have you in the family?***

II. IF YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO PRAY FOR, STUDY THE PRAYERS FOUND IN SCRIPTURE!
(Ephesians 3:16-19)

A. Ask the Lord to give you strength where you need it most, which is your inner man, the human spirit.

1. The Lord gives to us according to his riches, rather than just out of his riches. If a billionaire gives you a hundred dollars, he gave you out of his riches. If he gives you hundreds of millions, he gave according to his riches.

2. God's glory is what uniquely belongs to Him, identifies Him, brings recognition to Him, honors Him, and praise to Him because He alone is worthy. (Psalm 19:1)

B. The human spirit was designed to be the habitation of the Holy Spirit of God. The Fall of Man caused humanity to be separated from God and our soulish activities, (emotions, intellect, reason, self-awareness) along with our bodily needs, impact our spiritual lives in negative ways. When a person is born again, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in the human spirit, and the life-giving power of God can show us life as God intended. (John 10:10)

C. Notice the first aspect of this prayer is for the Holy Spirit to pour strength into the inner man. The outward body is continually dying, but the inner man is being renewed day by day. (2nd Corinthians 4:16) ***Notice how much time, money, and effort is poured into strengthening the outer man, body and soul, compared to the average investment in spiritual growth.***

D. The goal is for Christ to be comfortably at home in our hearts. (John 14:21-23) Take note of how we treat guests in our home, the wanted and unwanted, compared to those we love and want to live with us always. **QUIT TREATING JESUS LIKE SOMEONE WHO PAID FOR A ROOM FOR ONE NIGHT!**

E. In order for a plant to grow strong, it must have strong roots. Think of the roots of redwood trees as an example. (Psalm 1) (Jeremiah 17:5-10) Grounded is a term used in building. Any building that does not have a firm foundation can collapse at any time. No one can build a tall building without a firm foundation. You must go deep if you want to go high. We can only build upon the foundation which is provided by a relationship with Christ. (1st Corinthians 3:10-15) (Luke 6:46-49)
ARE YOU ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE???

F. It is fascinating to meditate on the geometry of God's love, and it is something he wants us to understand as a community of believers.

1. It is wider than anything that needs to be included and wrapped inside of it.
2. It is longer than time or eternity
3. It is deeper than the oceans, and has reached down into the grave and spirit world to bring Jesus and us back to life.
4. It is higher than the heavens, beyond anything we can measure, and has positioned us in the heavenliness in Christ.

G. The Lord wants us to know by experience something that is beyond the human capacity to understand, and it cannot be understood by the intellect of man or machine. All knowledge of God is "Artificial Intelligence" until you are born again and experience His love. (John 17:3)

H. The Lord wants us to be filled with that which cannot be contained by anything. The Lord has no limits and He wants the fulness of His life to be poured and overflowing in our little containers. Have you ever tried to hold the ocean in a sixteen ounce water bottle? Imagine being filled with the Lord of Glory!

III. THE CLOSING PRAYER OF PRAISE (Ephesians 3:20-21)

A. Do you ever meditate on what the LORD is able to do? (Jude 24-25) (Daniel 3:17-18) (Daniel 6) (Hebrews 7:25) He is able to heal the sick, raise the dead, open blinded eyes, cause the lame to walk, raise up stones to be seed of Abraham, walk on water, cast out demons, calm the storm.....

B. Think about what He is able to do...He can do all things.....He can do more than all things.....He can do abundantly more than all things.....He can do exceedingly abundantly more than all things.....He can do exceedingly abundantly more than you can ask for.....He can do exceeding abundantly more than you can ask for or think about!

C. God chooses to limit Himself to what He is able to do in certain situations based upon how we allow His power to work in us and through us. Why do we ask so little and have such unbelief when He has proven to us what He is able to do? (Matthew 13:58)

D. All that the Lord does is for His glory, which will benefit those who respond to His love and grace by faith. He will get the glory through the church forever!

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WANTS US TO KNOW HOW MUCH HE LOVES US AND TO BE STRENGTHENED IN OUR SPIRITS BY THAT LOVE, BEFORE WE TRY TO BECOME ANYTHING OR DO ANYTHING ELSE. HIS ABILITY TO DO EXCEEDS OUR ABILITY TO IMAGINE WHAT HE MIGHT DO, CAN DO, AND WILL DO! WILL YOU RECEIVE THE LOVE OF GOD TODAY?

Dr. Ronald J. Morrison
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