

Sermon Supplement

Ephesians 3:14-21 – *How God Prays for Us*

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

1. **Main Idea of the Passage:** In this second intercessory prayer, Paul prays that God would strengthen the church by His glory through the work of the Spirit so that they would understand His will, be filled with His will, and glorify Him. He prays that the risen Christ would be near them, giving them His power and love and ruling in every area of their lives.
2. **Melodic Line of the Letter:** The two become one for His glory. God the Father, through God the Son, by the power and presence of God the Spirit, is making a multi-ethnic people for the purpose of His glory, based in his eternal plan, in this final age.

KEY WORDS/THEMES

1. **Power** – capability or strength; the potential for functioning in some way; God is the ultimate source of all power and He is all powerful.
2. **Race** – 1) the Fatherhood of God over all humans (biological race), and 2) the race of the unredeemed and the race of the redeemed (spirituality).
3. **Heart/Inner Being** – our deepest part, the seat of feeling, impulse, affection, and desire.
4. **Fullness** – the absolute wholeness, the fullness, of God; the goal of the discipling ministry of the church, that people might become mature, attaining to “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (4:13).”
5. **Glory** – the reality of God’s presence as the supreme ruler of his people manifested in power, splendor, and holiness; it is only natural that God’s people want to ascribe “glory” to him.

STRUCTURE/OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE

1. Power to be filled with the presence of Christ (vv. 14-17a)
 - a. A prayer of reverence with a good theology of race (vv. 14-15)
 - b. Request (v. 16)
 - c. Purpose: So that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. (v. 17a)
2. Power to understand the love of Christ (vv. 17b-19)
 - a. Request (vv. 17b-18)
 - i. To be rooted and grounded in love.
 - ii. To have strength/power to comprehend the grandeur of that love.
 - b. Purpose (v. 19)
 - i. To know the love of Christ, that surpasses knowledge.
 - ii. To have the fullness of God fill the church.
3. Power to behold the glory of Christ (vv. 20-21)

GOSPEL CENTRALITY

The unbelievers sin is the suppression of the knowledge of the glory of God (Rom. 1). The believer has had their heart opened by the power of God through the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The veil has been removed. We have beheld the glory of God. We have heard the First and Greatest of His promises: I love you! Believers then respond in faithful obedience, knowing and trusting the love of Christ.

KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN

- What has been the content of your prayers this week? What is that revealing about your desires? Whose purposes are your prayers connected to? Your's or God's?
- Do you believe God gives you gifts according to the riches of his glory? How does that relate to your understanding of the love of Christ?
- Take some time for silent reflection: Draw to mind where you experienced Christ dwelling in your heart. Share that with each other.

RESPONDING IN PRAYER

- Pray for God's goals for your life using the model of the Lord's Prayer.
- Pray Ephesians 3:14-19 over the church, your family, and yourself.