



Ephesians Week 6 - [Ephesians 3:14-21]

October 15, 2023 - Pastor. Rafael Aristy

Last week PJ covered the first part of Ephesians chapter 3. Today we will finish chapter. We are now halfway through this incredible letter.

If you've been gone any of the last few weeks, I encourage you to go back and listen to the messages you've missed.

- You can listen on GoodNews.church or on our Podcast.
- You can also listen to additional content on the Podcast, "Now What?" Where we go a bit more into these verses.

- We have had 6 Sunday messages on the book of Ephesians so far, and we're just about halfway through. What do you see as the driving message through the book so far?

Ephesians 3:14-21 NIV

14 "For this reason I kneel before the Father, **15** from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. **16** I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, **17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, **18** 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, **19** and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

20 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, **21** to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

Paul was A MAN OF PRAYER

- Jesus modeled prayer to His disciples.
- This is the second time in 3 chapters that Paul tells the churches in Ephesus how he is praying for them.

We continue in Paul's letter with verse 14:

14 "For this reason I kneel before the Father"

For what reason? We can't start a conversation saying, "for this reason" without first giving the reason. Paul has given us the reason in verse 12.

Ephesians 3:12 "In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence."

Because, through faith in Jesus, we can approach God with confidence...FOR THIS REASON I kneel before the Father...

- If today you can say you've placed your trust in Christ, you too can approach God with confidence that he will hear you.

There's another "FOR THIS REASON" comment from Paul in verse 1 of chapter 3.

3:1 "For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles..."

And here is that reason in a nutshell...

Ephesians 2:15-16

15 "by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, **16** and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility."

Paul understood that ALL he was doing had a purpose, that all he was doing was part of the MISSION. God's mission is to bring reconciliation between humanity and the Father, and to bring unity to those who are call by His name.

PJ said last week, "After 100 years, there's only ONE mission that will matter. God has invited us to His mission!" I don't know if you caught that last week, but this is significant...

The God of the universe, the one who keeps all things working in harmony to allow life to exist, has given you a PERSONAL INVITATION to help accomplish His MISSION so that other humans can know Him!

At the end of the day, NO other mission will matter, but the mission of Jesus!

14 "For this reason I kneel before the Father, **15** from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name."

ONE mission, ONE family, UNDER one Father! Our Mission Statement begins by saying "We are **a family** committed to seeing lives changed".

Whether we like it or not, agree with it or not, we are a family. Dysfunctional at times, but a FAMILY nonetheless!

- What are some of the internal battles that you have in attempting to be united with the body of Christ?

Paul continues:

16 "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,"

Once again, as he prayed in chapter 1, Paul is again praying for the Christians in the churches of Ephesus.

Out of God's **glorious RICHES** may he strengthen you

- God lacks NOTHING! Paul is asking that out of God's ENDLESS resources he may provide the necessary strength they will need to walk united in Christ Jesus

With **power THROUGH His Spirit**

- Once again, Paul highlights the importance of Holy Spirit working in our lives.

- The power of Holy Spirit is NOT ONLY speak in tongues (which is fantastic), or to prophecy (which is necessary), it is ALSO to provide you with inner strength you wouldn't normally have.

In your **inner being**

- This is not superficial. This is the you that NOBODY sees but God
- This is not for show, it is for an inner work of transformation. *What's inside will eventually come out!* And if Holy Spirit has been doing this inner work, what comes out is more like Jesus.
- This INNER STRENGTH provided by the Spirit of God has a purpose...

17 "so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love"

SO THAT Christ may dwell in us...in our hearts - in the place where desires flow from, the place where good and evil flow from, our frustrations, fears, dreams...

Jesus said,

Matthew 15:18-19 NIV

18 "But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. **19** For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander."

Proverbs 4:23 NIV "Above all else, **guard your heart**, for everything you do flows from it."

It is the Spirit of God dwelling in us that brings transformation to our wicked hearts. It is with Christ dwelling in our hearts that we can "guard our heart."

- What are ways that you personally guard your heart?

But Paul doesn't talk about Christ dwelling in our hearts nearly as much as he uses IN CHRIST (or in Him). Before this verse (3:17), Paul references IN CHRIST or IN HIM, 9 TIMES!

1:3 - Blessed us with every spiritual blessing **in Christ Jesus**

1:4 - He chose us **in Christ**

1:10 - Brings all things under one head **in Christ**

1:12 - The first to hope **in Christ** might bring God glory

2:6 - Raised and seated in heavenly places **in Christ Jesus**

2:7 - His grace expressed **in Christ Jesus**

2:10 - We are His workmanship **in Christ Jesus**

2:13 - You've been brought near **in Christ Jesus**

3:6 - Gentiles became heirs and share in the promise **in Christ Jesus**

All we NEED and all we ARE is found IN CHRIST!

- As Christ dwells in our hearts, we are able to be strengthened in our inner being!

You are in need, lost, don't know who you are, or what to do, and are trying to find what you're looking for elsewhere, it's not going to work...You're WASTING your time!

17 "so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being **rooted** and **established** in love, **18** 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, **19** and **to know** this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be **filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**"

Paul prays that you, being **rooted** and **established** in love, **18** may have power

When something is ROOTED, it is very difficult to move.

- The deeper and bigger the roots, the stronger the tree
- The deeper and bigger the roots, the more necessary nourishment that tree receives

Establish - Themelioó (Greek), Verb - 'to lay the foundation of'

Paul says, I pray that you, being rooted and laying a FOUNDATION of LOVE, may have power. **LOVE is the foundation of our Christianity!**

Matthew 22:36-40 NIV

36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" **37** Jesus replied: " '**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** And the second is like it: '**Love** your neighbor as yourself.' **40** All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Love God, AND love others. This is the foundation. Neighbor is not ONLY your friends next door that you like and get along with, but ALSO those who may not like you, those who get on your last nerve. Jesus answered, who is my neighbor in the story of good Samaritan? (Luke 10:25-37) They were asking Jesus, what's the greatest commandment? Jesus' response: Love God, love others.

1 John 4:7-10 NIV

7 "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Whoever does not love does not **know** God, because **God is love**. **9** This is **how God showed his love** among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. **10 This is love**: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

God is love! **Verse 8** "Whoever does not love does not **KNOW** God, because **God is love**" **Ginosko** (Greek)- to know, to experience firsthand, sexual intimacy.

If you have intimacy with God, then you will love!

9 "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son"

Love is not just a warm and fuzzy feeling. It could include that, BUT love is action! Love is sacrifice!

- Don't TELL me you love me, SHOW ME you love me.
- God took action and displayed His love for us in sending His son to die on our behalf.

"that you, being **rooted** and **established** in love, **18** 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,"

Love and Power - two very strong forces in our world.

- As believers, IF we want POWER, we MUST be ROOTED and STABLISHED in love. In our world, there's a LOVE of POWER. That's not the way of the kingdom of God, that's the way of this world.

How do I walk in love? By walking in the power of Christ.

Who makes power available to the believer? The Spirit of God!

The Spirit of God is the one who gives us power to grasp, TO GET A HOLD OF, all of the DIMENSIONS of God's love.

- It doesn't matter how far LEFT, or how far RIGHT you go
- It doesn't matter how high you go
- It doesn't matter how low you go

The Spirit of the Lord is the one who helps you grasp how WIDE, LONG, HIGH, and DEEP is God's love.

It is the Spirit of the Lord who helps you grasp that God's LOVE can reach wherever you are!

- Why did Paul present four-directional dimensions of God's love?
- How do we receive and walk in this love?
- What's a practical way I can show my love for others?

I understand the TENSION some may be feeling...You may say, "If my life sucks right now, why does God's love matter?"

In this verse, Paul wants you to have something TO HOLD ON TO...

- It doesn't happen overnight.
- It is REVEALED by God's Spirit

Pastor Rafael shared a story about how the Lord reminded him of times in his past, throughout his life, and said 'I loved you there, I loved you there, and I loved you there.' **God loved you before you came to Christ, God loved you when you were in sin, He loves you now.**

- This is a poignant testimony of God loving him through moments of doubt. What has God loved you through?

19 and **to know** this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be **filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**

The Spirit helps us to KNOW (Ginosko) this incomprehensible love.

- On our own we can't really understand the love of God
- Perhaps you've had people tell you they love you and then they left you
- You've had people tell you they love you and they betrayed you
- Maybe you've had people tell you they love you and they abused you

NO WONDER why it's so difficult for us to understand love. God's love is not like that. This is God's LOVE:

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 NIV

4 "Love is **patient**, love is **kind**. It does **not envy**, it does **not boast**, it is **not proud**. **5** It does **not dishonor** others, it is **not self-seeking**, it is **not easily angered**, it keeps **no record of wrongs**. **6** Love does **not delight in evil** but **rejoices with the truth**. **7** It **always protects**, **always trusts**, **always hopes**, **always perseveres**. **8** Love **never fails**."

*Paul prays for believers to be rooted and establish in love, to receive power to know the **incomprehensible love of Jesus**, so that they may be **FILLED** with the fullness of God!*

LOVE+ POWER + KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST'S LOVE = FULLNESS OF GOD

20 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, **21** to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

*Love + power +
knowledge of
Christ's love =
fullness of God.*

This is what's called a **doxology**. The dictionary defines doxology as "an expression of praise to God." The word *doxology* comes from the Greek *doxa*, ("glory, splendor, grandeur") and *logos*, ("word" or "speaking").

The things that Paul has learned about God, he has been teaching these believers in Ephesus. *He is giving GLORY and declaring the splendor of KING JESUS!*

As he did in chapter one (1:19-22), Paul is once again, is letting these believers know the power/authority that Christ possesses.

- He wants them to now that **God can do things they cannot EVEN imagine**
- AND he wants them to know that **the power to DO these things is in them**

As Paul moves on to the next phase of his letter where he'll talk to them about **how to live**, he is letting them know that **they have the power inside of them** to accomplish what God has for them to do and the power for them **to live how He desires for them to live**.

Remember, Paul was calling the church to UNITY. Years of separation and hostility. Years of judgment and potentially hatred. He is calling them to do what seemed impossible...

Paul is speaking not only for UNITY, but also for COMMUNITY...

- God was calling them to be ONE
- God was calling them to know Jesu's LOVE and ACT on that love
- God was calling them to walk in His power

You have to sit with these verses...ask God questions...it is a lifelong journey.

Today, take time to pray this as your prayer:

16 "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, **17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, **18** 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, **19** and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

- What part of our passage today do you need to bring to the Lord in prayer?
- What questions come to mind that you need Holy Spirit to reveal to you?