

PRAYER FOR ENABLEMENT

**Starting the Ignition
Ephesians 3:14-21**

REVIEW

WHAT HAS PAUL UNFOLDED IN EPHESIANS 1-3?

- We have EVERY spiritual blessing IN CHRIST (Eph. 1:3-14)
 - Chosen, predestined, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, made know the mystery of His will, given an inheritance, sealed by the Spirit as the guarantee
- By grace we have been saved through faith (Eph. 2:1-10)
 - Not our own doing
 - So that we may walk in the good works He prepared beforehand for us
- Christ is our peace (Eph. 2:11-22)
 - Reconciliation to God
 - Reconciliation to one another
 - All believers are one body, one household in Christ
- The mystery of the Gospel has been revealed (Eph. 3:1-6)
- The ministry of proclaiming the Gospel has been empowered (Eph. 3:7-13)

WHAT DID PAUL PRAY FOR?

Paul's Prayer for ENLIGHTENMENT: Ephesians 1:15-23

- God may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him (1:17)
- Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened to know:(1:18)
 - The HOPE
 - The RICHES
 - The POWER

Paul's Prayer for ENABLEMENT: Ephesians 3:14-21

The Ascending Staircase

- God may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being
 - So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith
 - That you would be rooted and grounded in love
 - That you would have the strength to comprehend His love
 - That you may be filled with all the fullness of God

INNER STRENGTH

INDWELLING CHRIST

INCOMPREHENSIBLE LOVE

FULLNESS OF GOD

INTERNAL POWER

PRAISE

INNER STRENGTH

Inner Being = Inner Man = Heart

- The deepest aspects of human nature, known completely by God, to be contrasted with the outward appearance or public image of a person.
- Soul, conscience, mind, the affections, appetites, desires

The natural corrupted state of our inner being

- “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” Jeremiah 17:9
- “But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.” James 1:14-15
- “The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” Luke 6:45

The New Inner Man

- “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.” Ezekiel 36:26-27
- “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.” Jeremiah 31:33

BUILDING SPIRITUAL MUSCLE

A Lifetime of Sanctification

- “So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.” 2 Corinthians 4:16
- “For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.” Romans 7:22-25
- A life marked by the fruit of the Spirit
 - “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” Galatians 5:22-23

The Strengthening of our Inner Man

- “But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,” Romans 6:17
- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” Colossians 3:16

With Power through the Holy Spirit

- Strong continual influence of the Holy Spirit in the inner being
- Your mind and meditations are dominated by the Word of God
- Your mind is filled with divine truth and the Spirit is directing through that truth.
- Weak inner man is dominated by sin, frustrations, despair, ineffectiveness
- Strength in the inner man transforms the outer man

INDWELLING CHRIST

- Dwell: to settle down in a home, to abide, remain, reside
- Is He welcome, comfortable, at rest in your inner being?
- Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." John 14:23

INCOMPREHENSIBLE LOVE

Rooted and Grounded

- When Christ is dwelling in you, you will be marked by love
- Love will be the foundation and root system of your entire life
 - The natural outcome of a strengthened inner man and the indwelling of Christ
 - "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35
- Life without love is fruitless and unstable
 - "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned,^[a] but have not love, I gain nothing." 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Strength to Comprehend

- Comprehend: to cease, to grab hold of, to take possession of
- Cannot understand love by definition only. Love is only understood by experience
- God demonstrates His love
 - "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16
 - "...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 8:5
 - "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him." 1 John 4:9

With All the Saints

- "And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us." 1 John 3:23
- "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:11
- "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends." John 15:12-13

In All its Dimensions

Breadth: For people of all nations, Jew and Gentile

- “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” Ephesians 2:13

Length: From eternity past to eternity future

- “...even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.” Ephesians 1:4
- “...so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:7

Height: Exalted in heaven

- “...and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:6

Depth: Into the depths of all of our sin

- “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins...” Ephesians 2:1

To know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge

FULLNESS OF GOD

- Empowered by the Spirit (v.16)
 - To walk in the Spirit
- Indwelt by Christ (v.17)
 - To love like Christ
- Filled with the fullness of God (v.19)
 - To manifest godliness

“For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.” Colossians 2:9-10

“...showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.” Titus 2:10

Someone could look at your life and see something of what God, Christ, and the Spirit are like.

A STRONG INNER MAN LEADS TO PRAISE

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” Ephesians 3:20-21

As the church is sanctified, He receives glory

DISCUSSION

1. How can we seek to strengthen our inner man?
2. Why are our prayers generally more focused on issues of the outer man? How can we transform our prayer life to be like Paul's?
3. What dimension of God's love is most difficult to comprehend? Why?
(Breadth, width, height, depth)
4. How do we comprehend the love of God more fully with all the saints rather than with a few of the saints or with just ourselves?
5. In what ways does the sanctified church bring Him glory?

HOMEWORK

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-19 is the ignition to being able to live the way he describes in the remainder of the epistle in Ephesians 4-6.

How does this prayer prepare you to live in unity with all believers?

How does this prayer prepare you walk in love, light, and wisdom?

How does this prayer prepare you for Biblical submission within marriage, family, and work?

How does this prayer empower you for spiritual warfare?