

**"The Revelation of God's Mystery"**

**Ephesians 3:1-21**

**Part 6**

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of Ephesians we started to look at the prayer which Paul offered on behalf of the saints at Ephesus. We looked at how Paul makes 4 requests in this prayer and each one of the requests relates to the other.

Paul prays for:

1. **Them to be strengthened in the inner man.**
2. **Jesus to dwell within their hearts by faith.**
3. **The believers to have a solid foundation.**
4. **Them to be filled with the fulness of God.**

**Paul's Prayer**

**Part 2**

So far, we have looked at:

- I. **The Invocation**
- II. **The Request for Strength**

**Notice Ephesians 3:16**

Paul's request here is that these believers and you and me as well, would be strengthened by might according to the riches of God, in the inner man. This is a request for spiritual strength so that we are able to stand against the temptations, and the trials of this world.

On Wednesday evening we started into the practical section of the book of Romans and we looked at a verse that fits into our thoughts here in this section.

**Romans 12:2**

<sup>2</sup> ***And be not conformed to this world:*** but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

R. C. Trench defines the word "WORLD" as:

*"All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, impulses, aims, and aspirations at any time current in the world."*

The "world" can be defined as that which is against God. It is the movement today that we are seeing which is striving to bring about a global economy and that is striving to promote evil and division. It is the philosophy that says abortion is a woman's right and that same

sex marriage makes a family. It is the philosophy that tells us we need to fear global warming. Here is a verse for you to keep in mind.

**Genesis 8:22**

<sup>22</sup> *While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.*

Back to our thought again, Paul is praying for strength to be able to stand against all we face. Satan wants brainwash us we the lies that are promoted by the world's system. He wants to get us to fear so that we will compromise the Truth. He desires to get us to the point where we will just go with the flow of society instead of standing for the Truth of God's Word.

**Notice Ephesians 3:11-12**

Paul desires that we as believers will have the same BOLDNESS in service and CONFIDENCE in our ACCESS to God as what he had so that we can stand up for the Truth regardless of the cost.

The emphasis in Paul's request is on the INNER MAN not the physical part of man. Many believers spend much of their time and energy on the physical body and very little on the INNER MAN. The outward man is decaying every day, but the inner man is renewed day by day.

**2 Corinthians 4:16**

<sup>16</sup> *For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

<sup>18</sup> *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

This strengthening of the INNER MAN is done by the Holy Spirit working in our lives. That brings two thoughts to mind:

1. **We must not quench the Spirit.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:19**

<sup>19</sup> *Quench not the Spirit.*

To quench has the idea of putting out a flame. There are times when the Holy Spirit desires to light a fire in us for a specific mission and we must not quench that fire by following our own desires.

**2. We must not grieve the Holy Spirit.**

**Ephesians 4:30**

*<sup>30</sup> And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

To grieve the Spirit is to suppress His teachings in which He desires the best for us. It is important that we submit to the Holy Spirit in order to be strengthened in the INNER MAN.

**III. The Request for Surrender**

**Notice Ephesians 3:17a**

Paul now prays that Jesus Christ would dwell in their hearts by faith. The word "DWELL" means "TO SETTLE DOWN and to FEEL AT HOME". We know that the Ephesians already had Jesus as a Resident in their hearts for they were believers. But the request here is that they would enter into a deeper relationship with the Lord. It is a request to surrender every area of their lives over to Him so that He would feel perfectly at home in their hearts.

**Illustration:**

When you have people come to your home there are probably certain rooms that you will not permit them to enter for one reason or another. They are welcome in your family room and your dining room but not in the other rooms.

This is the way many people are with Jesus. They have "rooms" of their life which for one reason or another they will not allow the Lord to enter.

- It may be a room where there is a favorite sin is kept and you are reluctant to give it over to Him.
- It may be a room where you keep unforgiveness and you refuse to let Him in that room.
- It may be a room where anger is kept, and you will not allow Him to enter.
- It may be a room where arrogance is kept.

The list could go on and on.

Let me ask you a question, "Do you have a room or rooms where Jesus has not been permitted to enter?" The strengthening of the inner man will not happen until Jesus is at home in your heart. Let me show you two examples of what Paul is requesting here.

**Genesis 18:1-5**

*And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;*

*<sup>2</sup> And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,*

*<sup>3</sup> And said, My LORD, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:*

*<sup>4</sup> Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:*

*<sup>5</sup> And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.*

The Lord was at home where Abraham dwelled. But it was different with Lot.

**Genesis 19:1-2**

*And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;*

*<sup>2</sup> And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.*

The Lord would not go to Lot's house, so He sent two angels and they did not want to go into his house.

**Which of these two men represent your life?**

**IV. Request for Stability.**

**Notice Ephesians 3:17b-19a**

This request is going to be for a deeper knowledge of the love of God for them. As Paul works up to this request there are some points we must look closely into.

**1. The declaration.**

**Notice Ephesians 3:17b**

Paul begins this 3<sup>rd</sup> request by declaring that believers are rooted and grounded in love. The word "rooted" is from the plant world and it means that our roots are in the love of God. The word "grounded" comes from the building world and it has the idea that the love of Jesus Christ is the foundation for our eternal life.

Our salvation has come out of the love which God has for us and our security is based upon the love God has for us. Let me use some verses to show you these Truths.

**a. Our salvation came about because of the love of God.**

**John 3:16**

*<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*<sup>17</sup> For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

**Romans 5:6-8**

*<sup>6</sup> For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

*<sup>7</sup> For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.*

*<sup>8</sup> But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

**Titus 3:3-4**

*<sup>3</sup> For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*

*<sup>4</sup> But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,*

**1 John 4:9-10**

*<sup>9</sup> In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.*

*<sup>10</sup> Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

**1 John 4:19**

<sup>19</sup> *We love him, because he first loved us.*

Getting back to the point, our roots are found in the love of God. Our eternal life all began out of His love for us.

**b. Our salvation is secure because of the love of God.**

**Romans 8:35-39**

<sup>35</sup> *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

<sup>36</sup> *As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

<sup>37</sup> *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

<sup>38</sup> *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

<sup>39</sup> *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

We are secure in Christ because of His finished work which comes from His love for us. There is not one person or one thing that can separate us from the love of our Lord.

Let us notice what Jeremiah writes concerning the love of God.

**Jeremiah 31:3**

<sup>3</sup> *The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*

**2. The Request**

**Notice Ephesians 3:18**

Paul desired that his readers would be able to "comprehend" the breadth, the length, the depth, and the height of God's love for us.

The word "comprehend" means "to apprehend". Paul wants his readers to "lay hold of" the vastness of the love that God has for us. To get our minds around the love that God has for us will make a great difference in our lives. Paul references God's love as being four dimensional.

But there is a paradox here.

**Notice Ephesians 3:19a**

The love of Jesus Christ passes knowledge. It is not possible in our minds to know all the vastness of the love that our Lord has for us. But this does not mean we cannot grasp on to some of the knowledge. It simply means that no matter how much we understand about the love of God there is much more that we do not know about it. It is a lifelong process to lean of the love of God.

**Conclusion:**

Next week we shall look at the 4 dimensions of the love of our Lord.

As I close out today, I want to just let you know that if you are not saved God loves you and wants to save you. It does not matter how sinful you are He will still forgive you if you repent and trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior.

**2 Corinthians 6:1-2**

*We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.*

<sup>2</sup> *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*

**Do not delay! You may not have tomorrow! Hell is full of people who thought they had more time.**