

# Ephesians 3:14-21

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 07 January 2024

[0:00] You have your Bibles, you're turning with me to the book of Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 3. Ephesians chapter 3, we'll be finishing up the third chapter this morning, Ephesians chapter 3. We'll be starting at verse 14 and we'll go to the end of that chapter which gets us to verse 21.

Now if you know, and you've been with us as we made our way through the book of Ephesians, you know that the book of Ephesians is divided up into two very neat compartments, if you will, and that is chapters 1, 2, and 3 deal with theology.

What we know and the truths that we ought to know about God and the things that we ought to hold on to concerning Christ and our salvation. So the first three chapters are rich in theology.

The last three chapters are very rich in application. Paul tells us what we need to know so that he can reinforce for us what we ought to be doing. He gives us the theology and then he gives us the application of that theology.

When we get to the fourth chapter, we'll see things fleshed out like how in the second chapter it tells us that we're united in one body. The dividing wall has been broke down. The theology of the church is that we are one.

[1:10] Ephesians chapter 4 starts out talking about how the church is connected and since we are one, each one has to do their part, right? Within that, there's an application. There's something that each one of us ought to do.

That's the application of it. And then we transition from the church to the home because since salvation has a direct impact on it, we ought to be different fathers. We ought to be different mothers. We ought to be different children. We ought to be all of these things should be different because of what we know about God and what we understand about our salvation.

And then it even goes into the workplace and the marketplace and how we ought to do these things. And then how we ought to battle spiritual battles, right? There's all those applications. The things that really, if we're honest, while we're studying the book of Ephesians, this is what we're waiting on.

It is great that the word of God can tell us what we need to know, but the heart cry of man and women are, Lord, tell me what I should do. And he cautions us and knowing is better than doing, but knowing without doing really means nothing.

So we ought to know the truths and then we ought to live out the truths. Sandwiched in the middle of that theology and application is our passage this morning and it's a prayer. It's this deep-rooted prayer of Paul concerning the believers.

[2:20] And I want you to understand that because I read so if we don't understand that, if we just read this like, okay, he just stops doing what he's doing and prays for the church or he prays for the people he's writing to, then we're really not catching the weight of it.

We understand that when Paul wrote this, this is one continuous letter and it would have been written and read in one sitting. They would have got together as a church and read the letter which came from Paul. We have broken it up into chapters and verses, right?

We've broken it up into six chapters and each of those chapters has a verse. That's not how they would have done it. They would have started in chapter one, verse one, started reading. I did that this week in my studying.

I know this is a long introduction and it's astounding when you do it that way because you're just reading what Paul has to say to the believers. And then all of a sudden, Paul just stops saying it, prays for the believers, then he begins to tell the believers how they ought to live.

So it's there for a purpose, right? That prayer is hinging on the theology, but it is praying for the power to do the application. So I want you to see this morning, empowered to display his glory.

[3:24] And if you are physically able and desire to do so, would you join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God found in Ephesians chapter three, starting in verse 14. He

says, For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, and that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.

Amen. Would you pray with me? Lord, thank you so much for this day. Thank you that we have the opportunity to gather together as brothers and sisters in Christ and friends and family.

And Lord, just to worship your name and to lift up your name in song. But Lord, we just praise you for the opportunity we have to hear the word and read the word. And God, we pray that by the power and presence of your spirit, you'd help us to understand it.

God, give us an ambition. Give us a desire to know you and to know your word deeper than we ever have, so that we may live according to it. We ask it all in Christ's name.

[ 4 : 53 ] Amen. You may be seated. We see here in the prayer of Paul, the desire and the ambition of Paul as he prays for the individuals, really for the purpose of their empowerment.

He wants them to be empowered to display the glory of God. Now, if you remember, when Paul started the third chapter, he started with the same statement for this reason.

And then he kind of got off on what some say is a tangent. Some say it was his whole goal from the very beginning. Either way, however we read it, Paul begins to speak of his imprisonment, his calling to be an ambassador to the Gentiles.

And how he was encouraging them. And how the church was to be encouraged by it. The church was to declare the glory of God to the angels in heaven. That salvation is such a glorious event. That the plan of God foreordained before the foundations of the world. The eternal is what he calls the eternal purpose of God, which was fulfilled in Christ Jesus, which is the redemption of all mankind.

[ 5 : 56 ] Not just Jews, but Jews and Gentiles alike. There is no longer Jew, nor Gentile, nor male, nor female, nor free man, nor slave. Right? All in all in Christ.

That Christ came and paid the ultimate price of redemption for all. And that's the glory of salvation. And Paul said the wonder of the church is that the church embraces and knows that mystery.

He knows that mystery so much so that it can declare the glory of God. You know, this week I'm reading and studying in this passage. And I get a text message from a brother who's a pastor up in Wisconsin.

Not only geographically are we different. Demographically we are different. Because I know where he's at. Demographically he's in the major metropolitan area between two mega cities. And he says, so what city are you in?

And I said, ha, funny, you should ask. And I told him this big long, you know, try to explain war trace to someone who's never been there. And I gave this long discourse and I said, that's just an easy way of saying I'm in the middle of nowhere.

[ 6 : 52 ] Right? So geographically we're different. Demographically we're different. And even racially we're different. We don't look the same if you look at us. But one thing that is so glorious is that my wife and I met, he and his wife, in Texas of all places.

We were in Dallas, Texas and shared a wonderful meal with them in Dallas, Texas. So a pastor from nowhere in Tennessee and a pastor from somewhere in Wisconsin meet in Dallas, Texas and go eat barbecue.

That's a pretty good story, right? But we are dear brothers in Christ. And one of the glories of the gospel is that even though he's not even pastor in the same church denominationally, there's so much differences.

The glories of the gospel is that in his message, in my message, we're speaking about praying for one another's family. And we can both at the end of that conversation in all sincerity declare, I love you, my brother.

And mean it. That there's something from the depth of the heart and the depth of the mind that says the union between us has nothing to do with where we live. It has nothing to do with the people

around us.

[ 7 : 59 ] It has nothing to do with how we look. It has nothing to do with even the domination of the church. That's the glory of the gospel, right? And Paul says the church has the opportunity to declare that glory to the host of heaven.

And that's our responsibility. That's our wonderful God-called responsibility. Now we need to be empowered to do that.

Because naturally, we can't do that. How are you and I going to ever display and declare the glory of a holy God to a watching world?

In our own abilities, in our own strength, we can't. I mean, we just can't. It's just impossible.

But Paul prays that we would be able to. That we would be empowered to. And the answer to all of that is found in this prayer. And he prays that they may be empowered to do it.

[ 9 : 01 ] Why? Because the glory of God rests on the reality. It's not that his glory is diminished because we don't do it. But his glory is lacking in the world when we won't do it.

Okay? The problem with the world is not that the world is lost in sin. The world's been lost in sin ever since Adam and Eve decided to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

It's been lost in sin ever since after in the beginning, right? We didn't get but a chapter and a half into it. And it's lost in sin. And we don't know how long time goes by in that chapter and a half.

But we're not very far into the history of God's interactions with mankind before man is lost in sin.

The problem is not the world's lost in sin. And the problem is the world's not sin, the display of the glory of God. And that, my friend, rests at the feet of the church.

Because that's our calling. That's our joy. But we must be empowered to do it. And Paul prays that they would be able to do that. The first thing we see here is this, the petition.

[ 10 : 02 ] It's very easy. Look at the petition. Now, I don't know how many times I've read this. I read it over and over and over and over again. And just to be honest with you, it really just resonated within me. Paul says, for this reason.

King James says, for this cause. The Jewish translation says, for this cause. Or for this reason, I bow my knees.

Paul here is speaking of a prayer and a petition he's making for the saints. You say, well, sure, that's all nice and good. Well, wait a minute. Let's back up. And let's see where Paul is at when he is making this petition.

Right? Paul is, according to his own testimony in the verse that preceded this, Paul is imprisoned in chains in a Roman jail cell. He has a centurion who's keeping guard over him.

We know Paul's story, right? We've read it in the book of Acts. We see it in church history. Paul is awaiting his own execution. You know, you can tell a lot about what's important to an individual by what he talks about at the end of his life or her life.

[ 11 : 06 ] You can tell a lot about what matters when a person begins to declare things in moments of crises. And being imprisoned in a Roman jail cell, awaiting your execution is a pretty big trial.

And Paul begins to pray. The first thing we notice is what he doesn't say. He doesn't say, I pray that you would ask God to release me from these chains, or I pray that I would be free from this suffering and persecution, or I pray that things would get easier for me, or I pray or ask you to pray. We don't see any of that. As a matter of fact, in the early church, we go through the book of Acts, and we open up Acts chapter 12. Peter is in prison in Acts chapter 12. If you remember, that's where there's a prayer meeting going on at the church.

Peter shows up, knocks on the church's door, and the church doesn't believe God answered their prayers. You remember all that, right? But what astounds me, even before Peter is released from prison, in Acts chapter 12, now, James has just been beheaded.

Not James that wrote the book of James, but the other James has just been beheaded. And Herod thought, well, that made everybody happy, so now let's put Peter in jail, and we'll behead Peter next. And he was going to wait and do it the next day.

[ 12 : 06 ] So Peter is literally sitting in prison, waiting on his head to be cut off. I know that sounds kind of harsh, but that's what's going on. But when you look at Acts chapter 12, it says, Peter was asleep. And the angel had to kick him in the side to wake him up.

Now, he's awaiting his death because of his profession in Christ, and he's sleeping. That's a wonderful picture. Why? Because that's contentment. There's no anxiety.

There's no worry. He's sleeping. Peter is sleeping. We go a couple pages over, and we get to Acts chapter 16, and we meet our man Paul. Paul spent a lot of time there. Paul and Silas are imprisoned in a Philippian jail.

Remember that? All right, so they're in this Philippian jail, and Acts 16 declares to us the conversion of the Philippian jailer and all those things. But while they're in prison, they're sitting there, and they don't know what's going to happen.

They know the crowd's upset at them. They know that Paul just cast a demon out of a girl that was making money for their people, and so everybody in the city's in riots and uproars about it. You remember all this stuff? And here's Paul and Silas in jail, and we find them at the midnight hour, and Paul and Silas are singing and praying.

[13:10] Peter is sleeping. They're singing. There's no worry. There's none of that, right? And then the great earthquake happened, and they didn't even leave. They just stayed there. Not only did they not leave, but nobody else left, right?

All the other convicts stayed too. That's probably the greatest miracle on all that account in Acts 16. It's not that Paul and Silas were still there, but Paul declares to the jailer, nobody has left, right? And everybody's still here. So what we see is imprisonment wasn't a problem for the early believers. And while Paul is imprisoned, he's praying for the church, but he's not petitioning the church saying, please pray that it goes easier for me.

Now, listen to this modern Christianity. The request is not the ease of suffering and pain and discomfort. The request is for a greater knowledge of the glory of God through his son Jesus Christ. Paul, who looks like he ought to be prayed for, is actually praying for the believers that they would know what he knows. That they would know something worthy of being joyous in prison.

[14:19] That they would understand and comprehend what he knows and what he has grasped, so much so that he can declare to the whole praetorium guard the glories of Jesus Christ.

So much so that he writes some of his greatest theological works while in a prison cell. He wants them to know and to comprehend what he knows. Why? Because the glory of God is declared even in the toughest of places.

The petition is not that it may go easier, but that you would go deeper. And he's petitioning the saints, and let's just be honest, in American Christianity, this is what scares us.

He's petitioning that the saints would know enough to joyously suffer. Because if it's not worth suffering for, it's really not worth holding on to.

And he declares that this is his petition. And he's asking that God would do something wonderful for this reason. I bow my knees. Now, we move from the petition to the person before the Father.

[15:30] Look at who he's praying to. Before the Father. Don't you love that? That here is the one who may have been on the brink of saying, well, I've been abandoned and forsaken. But as a matter of fact, from one of his letters, he said, none are with me.

You know, they've all left me. Everybody's there, save for a couple of them. There's a couple that hung around. There's always the good time saints, right? The ones that will be there when things are going pleasant.

But the moment somebody shows up with a spear in a club and want to throw you in prison, they leave you, right? That's Jesus. He knows all about it. But anyway, he says, you know, most of them have left me. A lot of people have done me much harm. But it's okay.

And he calls out to the Father. And he wants the Father to do something. He's not only just doing this petition, but he's speaking to a particular person. And that person is the Father. And I love how he declares who he is.

In the 15th verse, it says, from whom every family in heaven on earth derives its name. You know, the reason I love that is because that is really parallel to what he declared in Athens concerning the Godhead of the Father of Almighty God over all of creation.

[16:30] You remember when he's in Athens and he's declaring the reality of God and he declares this thing. He says that whom every family on earth comes from him and is appointed a certain day and a place where they should live.

And he's just declaring, really, this is a sentence that proclaims the sovereignty of God. To name it is to own it. Right? If you name it, you own it.

And this is why, you know, one of the rules on the farm life is don't name the animals that you're eating. You can name it if you want to. I mean, you can name it hamburger or steak or...

That's okay. I don't personally have a problem with that. Some do. But you don't name what you're going to do. Because then once you name it, you kind of own it and you've taken a little ownership of it and then you get a little close to it and all these other things.

Right? But we understand here that from whom every family on earth derives its name, whether they acknowledge it or not, God is sovereign over all. And this is the person that Paul is petitioning. [17:32] The one who is sovereign over all. And he says that he would grant you. And just stop right there. For this reason I bow my knees before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that he would grant you.

If there was any doubt that he could or that he would, we notice the person he's asking. He's not asking a great man. He's not asking a great woman.

He's not asking a great king. He's asking the Lord God Almighty, the Father in heaven, who is sovereign over all, that he would do something. Because the person petitioned matters. And he has this person that he's bowing before and saying, oh, Father, I want you to do something. By the way, you just stop for just a moment and just bask in the glory of being able to call out to Elohim or Yahweh or Jehovah Jireh or Jehovah Nissi or, you know, you just declare all these names of God in the Old Testament and then to get to this place where you can say, Father. Father. Father. Because we know the Bible tells us through the spirit of adoption, we cry out, Abba, Father. That we have access to the person.

[18:53] And Paul knew he had access to the person that he could make his petition to and he was doing it on behalf of the saints, which is us as well. Right? He calls out to this person.

But we notice, if you're trying to keep up with the third thing, the power that he's requesting. Exactly what it is he wants to happen. And it has to do with power.

He says that he would grant you, verse 16, according to the riches of his glory. Oh, this is good. Philippians 4.19 is the parallel to this passage that I can do, you know, you know all that, that he would enrich you according to his riches.

We see here that he declares that God would grant you according to his riches. I love this. I read it somewhere. I can't remember where or who said it.

But it was this way. The truth is this. God does not give you from his riches. God gives you according to his riches. Think about that just for a moment.

[19:53] He does not give you from it. He gives you according to it. I heard on the radio this week of an individual that was fined X amount of money. It was like \$300,000. He was fined \$300,000 for something he'd done at a sporting event.

I don't even really know what happened. All I know is he was fined \$300,000. And I went, man, that's a lot of money. And then they began to declare the net worth of that individual and said, if you'd calculate the math, the fine that that man was given was the equivalent of \$1.65 to the average individual.

He gave \$300,000 from his riches. If he had been fined according to his riches, it would have been a different ballgame because \$1.65 is nothing.

But if it had been according to what his net worth was, maybe next time he would have thought about whatever he did. I don't know what it was. But when God enriches you and empowers you, he does not give it to you from it.

He gives it to you according to it. That is, he who has riches which surpass all understanding. It's not like he just gives you a little, right?

[21:04] He gives you according to what he has. And according to what he has is far abundantly more than what we could ever fathom. So his prayer is that God would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power.

So what is he praying? He's praying that the saints would be strengthened with power according to the riches of God's glory. But where are you going to be strengthened? Through his spirit in the inner man.

So here's what Paul is requesting. Is that the believers would be strengthened with power through the presence of the Holy Spirit in the inner man. See, he's dealing with the realities of the inner man, not the outward man.

The outward individual may be decaying. The outward individual may be suffering. The outward individual may be failing. The outward individual may be falling. But the inner man can be strengthened and empowered more and more and more each and every day.

The inner man is that which is needed to declare the glory of God. See, what we are externally matters little compared to what we are internally. The inward person is that which declares the glory of God, not the outward person.

[ 22 : 14 ] Now, surely the outward person is a reflection of what we are internally. And that is why we have to be careful how we live. And I think about these matters a lot. And I don't ever want to be a bad testament to the gospel based on the way I live and the way I look and all these other things.

And I know I've had to really, at times of really, when I'm working, I don't really, like I said, I know I don't look like it, but I'm a pastor. And, you know, I kind of try to ask people's forgiveness for sometimes, you know, because when I'm working, I don't wear this.

You know, I remember one individual, she told me, she said, well, my grandfather's a pastor and I never saw him wear anything but dress pants when he mowed the yard. And I said, well, evidently they paid him better than they paid me. I don't wear dress pants when I mow the yard.

I'm sorry, I just don't. You know, I keep them clean. And his wife was a lot more gracious than mine because if I was out weed eating in these pants, I'd get in trouble. So I just don't do that, right? But we always want to make sure that externally we reflect what we are internally.

We understand that. But the display of God's glory is really the inner person of the heart. And what Paul is praying and requesting is that the Holy Spirit would empower us to do that. So now we're depending not so much on who we are and what we know, but according to his riches, that the presence of the Holy Spirit would be within us and dwell within us so that we may be empowered to display the glory of God.

[ 23 : 35 ] See, this is the power we need. We don't need to be more determined and say, God, I'm going to do this, and I'm going to do this, and I'm going to do this, and I'm going to do this. We don't need that. We're saying, Lord, what I need is, oh, God, I need the power and presence of your spirit in my life.

I need it more than ever. I need you to take over the inward person that I am, and I need you to change me from the inside out so that I can declare your glory. And this is what Paul is praying for. And he moves from this power to a purpose. Why do you need that? And I know I'm going fast. The reason I'm going fast for your sake is I have five this morning, right? So if you're keeping up with it, we're on number four. You need the power because of the purpose.

Now, keep in mind, here's the reason. Why is this even here? Because the very next thing Paul is going to be declaring to the church is that you're going to look different as a church.

I mean, you're going to, each one of you is going to take a part and do your work, the effective working of each individual part. That's what Ephesians 4 says, right? You're going to effectively work together as a church, and you're going to be gears that go with one another, and you're put together as a body.

[ 24 : 42 ] And he says you're going to work and labor in such a way the church is going to grow in love and numbers, and the church is going to be effective to reaching the world. And not only that, but your homes are going to look so different, and you're going to be different husbands.

You're going to be different wives, right? You're going to be different parents. You're going to be different children. And then when you go to the workplace, I mean, your boss isn't going to take notice, right? Or if you're the boss, you're going to take notice, and you're going to do things a little bit different.

And things are just going to be so different because of who you are. Well, that doesn't happen because you make a decision to change. That happens because the Holy Spirit indwells you and empowers you to change.

And we know that, right? But the purpose, what you need is this. So that Christ, look at verse 17, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts. Where dwell means to be at home.

That Christ may be at home in your hearts. I've said this time and time again. You know, there's a difference in visiting and being at home.

[ 25 : 49 ] There's a difference in having access to and making oneself at home in. It's a big difference. We can just take the pastor's office just a moment.

I may get myself in trouble here. Many of you have been in my office and talked to him in. And we've had great visits. And my wife has done a fantastic job.

And the church did a fantastic job a couple years back. And, you know, we kind of redid it. There's new carpet there. There's new couches and chairs and all there. And we kind of made it a little bit

more conducive to having conversations. And it's good.

And many, many, many of you have sat on that couch and sat there. And while I've been in the chair on the other side of that table, and we've had great conversation. And it's good. And many of you have had the opportunity to visit. But not very many of you have ever come in my office, sat down on the couch, and put your feet up on the coffee table.

You know why? Because you're not at home. Don't get upset at me. Every day when I come in here, I go in that office. I usually sit on that couch, and I put my feet up on the table when I study.

[ 26 : 50 ] Because I'm at home and at office. I spend a lot of time in there. My kids, they go in there, and they put their feet up on the table.

Why? Because they're at home. They're a little bit more comfortable. That's not the pastor's office. That's where Dad hangs out a lot of times. What Paul is saying is that you need the power of the presence of the Holy Spirit in you so much that Christ can come into your heart and put his feet up on the table.

Be at home. Not just there for a visit, not just there to talk, but that Christ makes himself at home in your hearts. That he comes in, and he's there.

He's comfortable. There's nothing in your heart that would be offensive to him. There's nothing, there's no part of your heart that is hidden from him. There's no portion of it that you had to shove under the desk, so to say, before anybody came in.

There's nobody that has to run into your heart like they have to in my office before anybody else is coming to visit, straighten up because I left it a mess. There's none of that, right? He's completely and absolutely at home in your heart.

[ 27 : 55 ] That's what dwell means. We need the power of the presence of the Holy Spirit in us so much so that Christ comes. Now, Christ, I mean, this is Jesus Christ, right?

That he makes himself at home there. Why? This is the purpose. Through faith that you being rooted and grounded in love. Why? Listen, how do we stay faithful in the faith, right?

How do we keep from falling off? How do we keep from getting what we would call lukewarm or cold? How do we maintain the flame, so to say? Well, it's by maintaining a relationship with Christ, by having this vibrant, effective relationship with Jesus Christ.

He's our Lord and Savior, right? And it's not just asking him over once to save us and then saying, okay, well, we appreciate the visit. I'm glad you came and you saved my soul, and I'll see you in eternity.

No, it's saying, Lord, I want you to move in. I want you to make yourself at home. You know, you have free reign here. Live as you want to. And then all of a sudden you begin to grow, and you begin to have faith, and you begin to, and your faith is growing, and you're rooted in Christ, in the love of Christ.

[ 29 : 02 ] That means you're burying your roots in there, and you're grounded. Those are architectural terms, right? You have this firm foundation. Why? Because Christ is at home in your life and in your heart. He's there, and he's hanging out with you.

And all of a sudden, you know, one thing I've never noticed in the Gospels, nobody was ever bored hanging out with Jesus in the Gospels. Did you ever notice that? I mean, even, he was a man. He was fully man and fully God. He was asleep on the boat one time. They woke him up, and he calmed the sea. I mean, you can't be bored hanging out with Jesus, right? This is not like it's a boring event. I mean, this is the creator of all, the sustainer of all, who holds the world in the palm of his hand and uses the earth as his footstool, right?

This is he who overcame death, hell, and the grave. And you want to let him make himself at home in your heart so that you can be rooted and grounded in love. Because this is what I found.

When Christ is at home in your heart, he doesn't ground you in guilt or shame. He grounds you in love. You know, most people are afraid to open their heart up and let him just really be at home.

[ 30 : 05 ] It's because they're, but if he knew what I knew about my heart, he already does. You remember when Nicodemus came to him by night? You remember what was right before that, right? Jesus didn't need anyone to tell him about man for he knew the heart of every man.

That's what it says. And then Nicodemus came to him by night. In case I missed it, every means every. And when it says Jesus knows the heart of every man, that means he knows our heart already. And what we're afraid is if we allow him just to come in and hang out and live out there, that he's going to judge us, he's going to guilt us, and he may convict us.

That's okay. He may want us to change, but that's love, right? That's love. And we're rooted in there, grounded in love. And then he keeps going on there about this glory of what's going on and what's happening.

If I would even get to the right book, I was preaching and I went ahead. He says that you may be able to comprehend with all the saints. Let's think about this for just a minute. I'm just going to, let me kind of bridge this for you, okay?

That you may be able to comprehend the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge. So what Paul is asking is that you could understand the understandable. Okay? Look at what he says. That you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and the length and the height and the depth and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

[ 31 : 26 ] The reason there's such a void in so many hearts and minds is because they're not filled up with the right thing, right? That you may be filled up with the fullness of the knowledge of God and may comprehend.

Listen, the love of Christ is beyond knowledge. And what Paul is asking, the purpose of this prayer is that you can grasp a little bit of what you would never understand.

And that is how much Christ loves you. That once he redeemed you, friend, he's got a love for you that surpasses all knowledge. You're no longer sitting in a place of judgment.

You're in a place of forgiveness and mercy and grace. And sure, there's going to be discipline.

Whom he loves, he disciplines. There's going to be correction. Sure. But that's done from love.

Right?

That you could begin to wrap your mind around that. And you would hold on. That's the purpose.

Last, look at the promise. Is this even possible?

[ 32 : 29 ] Is it even possible that you could begin to grasp such a love that is beyond understanding? Look at what he says. This is how he closes his prayer.

Now to him. Look at what it says. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works within us.

Paul is not just praying some hope-so prayer. Paul is praying a know-so prayer because Paul says I'm praying to the Father who is able. That he is able to enable you and to empower you that you could understand the love that Christ has for you.

That the Spirit could so move in your life that you would open your heart and you would let Christ be at home there. He is able to do it according to the power that works within us. Again, we're all the way back to the Holy Spirit, right?

We're all the way back to that Holy Spirit the thing that scares so many Southern Baptists and we're afraid we'll swing from chandeliers if we get too carried away in it but it's okay. A little swing and he never hurt anybody and it's okay.

[ 33 : 32 ] But we see this, right? It's back to the Spirit that's working within us and this power and this presence that's there and it's there for a purpose because God says it's through this that I can do it and I can show you the love of Christ for you because then what he says to him be the glory.

Friend, listen. The more I know of the love of Christ I don't ever and I've never met anyone that could comprehend the love of Christ and say, you ought to look at me. No, they're always going you need to look at him.

You need to look at him. You need to look at him because the more we know the love of Christ the less we see of ourselves to him be the glory. Look at what it says in the church. In the church.

And in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. And then he says, Amen. Amen. Or so be it. Right?

God is able. That's the promise. Friend, if you say, well, I want to be excited about my faith. Oh, I've had people tell me and I don't mean this boastfully.

[ 34 : 35 ] I've had people say, oh, Pastor, I just wish I had a little bit of your excitement. Oh, no, no. You don't need my excitement. What you need to know is you need a little bit more of the Savior, right? We need a little bit more of the love of Christ within us. We need a little bit more of that gospel message.

We need to allow him to have all of us. Not so that we can get worked up in a tizzy and be excited about those things. It's not about excitement. It's about the glory of God and the glory of Christ Jesus to the next generation and to the next generation and to the next generation forever and ever

and ever and ever.

As S.M. Locker says, and then amen. Right? To all generations. That never happens. If the church grows cold and the saints kind of cast it aside, Paul says, I'm in prison and the love of Christ is in my heart just as great in here as it was out there.

What I want is, I want for you to have a little bit of what I have because Paul is declaring to the saints, you have the opportunity. Mine's dwindling, but you still have the opportunity.

All we see, we need to be empowered to display his glory. But the beautiful news is, is that empowerment is available to each and every one of us. Let's pray.

[ 35 : 48 ] Lord, we thank you so much. Thank you for the day you've given us. Thank you for the word you declare to us. Lord, we thank you for the love which you display towards us.

Lord, we pray that our hearts would be open to it, that our lives would be aligned with it. Lord, as we come to this time of invitation, this time nearing the close of our service, we pray we search our hearts and minds, oh Lord.

You would know us and help us to know ourselves as you already do. And Lord, that we would adjust to you rather than asking you adjust to us. May you be glorified in the church and may you be glorified to the generations that follow.

and we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[ 38 : 32 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.