

Exalting the Lord Jesus through receiving His love, grace, truth and power.

Lesson # 5—Paul’s Prayer that We Would Experience the Love of God. Eph 3:14-21

Introduction

- A. Reminder: Our Father’s plan is to exalt the Lord Jesus through His children—as they experience His love, grace, truth and power—and minister to others.
- B. The weak link in all of this great plan is our difficulty with or slowness in—receiving, experiencing, enjoying and therefore ministering His love, grace, truth and power.
- C. Today’s lesson is designed to show clearly the greatness of God’s love for us and to explain that **receiving and experiencing His love is God’s heart desire for us.**

I. For this reason I kneel before the Father, Eph 3:14

- A. Note 3:1 and 2:19-22. The “reason” Paul prayed was his concern that believers would understand they were the dwelling place of God Himself.
- B. Consider the implications of this great truth: God living in us, His acceptance, possibility for fellowship, unlimited resources, experiencing His love and manifest presence.
- C. Paul praying as He does shows God’s desire that we grow in experiencing this relationship.

II. From whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. Eph 3:15

- A. The word “family” teaches us that we are God’s family and in a family of all believers.
- B. Note the family may be in heaven and on earth. Wordsworth’s poem, “We are seven.”

III. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, Ephesians 3:16

- A. The basis of the prayer is God’s will and “His glorious riches” — not our works.
- B. “Strengthen” means “manifest ability” and “power” means “inherent power as resource.” Therefore “strengthen” is power manifested as in cutting a board with a table saw, and “power” would refer to the power source as the power company.
- C. The divine provision for us and for God’s will to be carried out is the Holy Spirit.
- D. The area God wants to strengthen is our “inner being” or “heart” (V17). Note His concern for how we are inside—how we are in our spiritual life —the condition of our true self.

V. So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. Ephesians 3:17A

- A. This truth develops the theme of 2:19-22. Consider the OT Tabernacle and Temple, See Ex 25:8; Lev 9:24; 1 Kings 9:3; 2 Chron 7:1-3 What do these verses teach?
- B. Note the personal emphasis: “Christ” and “heart” and “dwell” all point to fellowship.
- C. The word “dwell” refers to “being at home” and not “temporary guest.” Our Lord emphasizes by these words His great desire that we experience Him and His presence.

- D. The words “through faith” indicate His desire that we **receive, invite, and respond**. Note the words of faith/receiving in Matt 11:28,29; 26:26; John 7:37,38; Heb 4:16; Rev 3:20. **As much as God would desire—He will not force His presence and love upon us. We must make a choice to receive and do so by faith based on His Word in these verses.**

VI. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, Eph 3:17.

- A. “Rooted” and “established” refer to metaphors of tree roots and foundation of a building.
B. It is God’s love for us that is emphasized here. See Romans 5:8; 8:35-39; 1 Cor 13:1-3,13; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:1; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 John 3:1,10,11; 4:19
C. Love means, in part, that we recognize one another as persons, give one another rightful place in our life, and do what is right by one another, sacrificially, for good & edifying.

VII. (You) may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, Eph 3:18.

- A. The word “power” is “full of strength” a strong word as is “grasp” which means “make one’s own,” “to seize,” to “take possession of.” These words explain “faith” in V 17.
B. This great truth, we are exhorted to “grasp” is by the prayers and help of “all saints”

VIII. And to know this love that surpasses knowledge, Eph 3:19A

- A. The word “know” is “knowledge gained by experience.” God wants us to feel, be assured, be comforted by, be motivated by, and overwhelmed by His presence and love.
B. The experience of God’s love goes beyond anything we could say, know and experience.

IX. That you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Eph 3:19B

- A. His “fullness” means He desires to be in all areas of our life with His love and fellowship and that we experience Him increasingly each day. We need invite Him in by faith.
B. Note: God desires to “fill” us as we receive. See Acts 6:3,5,8; Rom 15:13; Eph 5:18.

X. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, Eph 3:20A

- A. The above exhortation would discourage us without this affirmation: **God is able.**
B. Note: When we respond by faith then God will do “more than all we ask or imagine.”

XI. According to his power that is at work within us, Eph 3:20B

- A. Emphasis here is on the infinite power of God working out His great plan in us.
B. There is no limit to His ability, nor to the transformation or experiences He has for us.

XII. To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Eph 3:21

- A. Paul concludes with the **reason** for God’s love, indwelling and power—the plan of God.
B. His plan and great desire is that all mankind would see His greatness and enjoy Him.