

Ephesians 3:14–19

“Knowing Trinitarian Love in Christ: the Hardest, Surest Thing”

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For what does the apostle pray for such almighty working? Pastor leads his family in today’s “Hopewell @Home” passage. Ephesians 3:14–19 prepares us for the opening portion of the morning public worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these six verses, the Holy Spirit teaches us that God’s eternal purpose to bring us into His own Triune fellowship is accomplished by almighty, Triune collaboration to make us know the love of Christ.

Tuesday, August 31, 2021 ▫ Read Ephesians 3:14–19

Questions from the Scripture text: What (v14, cf. 2:14–22) does the apostle now pick up from v1 as the reason for this prayer? What posture does he take for this prayer? What does He call God, Whom he addresses (v14b-15)? According to what does he pray that this request will be granted (v16)? With what does he pray that they will be strengthened? Through Whom does he pray that they will be strengthened? In what does he pray that they will be strengthened? What does he pray that the Spirit will do in their inner man (v17a)? In what will this root them and ground them (v17b)? What would this enable them to do, with whom (v18)? What is the thing that he prays that they will begin to know the measure (or, rather, immeasurability!) of (v19)? With what will such knowledge fill them?

Next week’s Call to Worship, Prayer for Help, and Song of Adoration all come from Ephesians 3:14–19, so that we will see that we are singing God’s thoughts after Him with *Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee*.

Heaven has been reconciled to earth, with God making redeemed sinners the trophy in which He displays His grace even in glory to the angels (2:6–7; 3:10–11). Paul began to say “for this reason” in v1, and now he picks the train of thought back up in v14, having uncovered and displayed several more facets of this glorious, multicolored diamond of the wisdom and the grace of God.

It is the glory of this mystery that we can call God Father—not only are all of the ethnicities of believers being brought together into one family on earth, but in heaven they actually appear in glory, the same glory that was being accomplished even through Paul’s imprisonment (end of v13).

Of course, a part of the blessedness of our glorious adoption is access to the family estate, the riches of God’s glory. And it is in realizing that God is building this family that the apostle now bows his knees and requests access to the family treasure. The fatherhood of the Father. The strengthening of the Spirit. The indwelling of the Son.

It must be a great request indeed! And what is all of this being requested to do? To enable the Ephesians to comprehend (to take hold of) by experiential knowledge something that our brains can’t wrap around.

He has been reflecting upon the fact that the love of Christ goes widely through all the earth to all of its families, that the length of the love of Christ began before all things hidden in God Himself and continues for all eternity, that the love of Christ reaches down all the way to those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and that the love of Christ takes us up onto even the highest throne of the highest heaven.

How could we come to take hold of such a thing? How could we come to take hold of something that will fill us, continually, abundantly, forever? Filled with all the fullness of God! It would be blasphemy if the Holy Spirit had not been the One to say it. What a glorious way to say continual, abundant, and forever fullness. It is not the fullness of that which is finite but the fullness of God.

No wonder, then, that the apostle makes this great Trinitarian prayer when coming with such a request. And, how much we need to consider the great necessity and glory of the church that such knowledge must come together “with all the saints.” Shall we not bow our own knees for this?

How do we grow in the love of Christ? Who must make those activities effective? Ask Him!

Sample prayer: Father, according to the riches of Your glory, grant unto us by Your almighty Spirit to know the love of Christ. We have no fullness of our own, so fill us with all of Your own fullness in Christ, which we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP45A “My Heart Is Greatly Stirred” or TPH491 “Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Ephesians 3. versus 14 through 19. These are God's words for this reason. I bow my knees to the father of our Lord. Jesus Christ from him, the whole family and heaven and earth is named that he would grant

you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might through his spirit.

In the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love, maybe able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the width and length and depth and height to know the love of Christ? Which passes knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent worked.

God's plan for his people for his family is that we would participate in the nature and fellowship of that family are very, probably character is better. The character and fellowship of that family. He begins verse 14 for this reason, I bow my knees to and the name that he uses for God.

In this particular case is the father of our Lord. Jesus Christ. He reminds us that God is trying that God is father and son and Holy Spirit which you know, because the name into which you were baptized, when you were added to the covenant household of God, is your baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

And he ties as the Bible. Often does Jesus's only begotten sonship to our adopted sunship. So, just like Jesus rose again from the dead and he said, he go, he goes to his god and our God, and his father, and our father highlighting, not only has incarnation that. He's become fully man, but also that by his incarnation, by his becoming man and dying for us, and rising again from the dead that we who believe in.

Jesus, may know God as our father, and it is, especially his holy spirit that teaches us to know Jesus as our Savior to know Jesus, as our God to know. Jesus, as the only begotten son, our elder brother and therefore it is the spirit to the Bible calls and one place the spirit of sunshine and in another place, he calls the Bible calls.

The Holy Spirit, the spirit of his son and in, in those two places in two in Romans 8, then again, in Galatians, it tells us that the Holy Spirit makes us call God. Our Abba, our father, this is something that Jesus was praying for. And John 17 when he was talking about the fellowship that he has with the father from all eternity and then he's praying that we would be brought into that fellowship.

That we would be not just one with one another but one with him as he and the father are one that that that unity and fellowship and love and delighting in one another that God, the father, son and spirit have had from from everlasting and too everlasting that we would have that not just with one another, but with him.

And so he starts in our passage, in verse 14, for this reason, I bow my knees to the father of our Lord, Jesus Christ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. And the fact that there are saints on earth, who know God's love imperfectly and that marvelous everything, you know about the love of God for you.

Everything you have ever been moved to feel by the Holy Spirit. As you thought about the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, giving his only begotten, son for you everything. The Holy Spirit has ever made. You to feel as you thought about the Lord, Jesus, loving you and giving himself for you.

That's imperfect. But there are those who now are in heaven and they know that love in a fuller way and that is where God is bringing us. The end of the passage first 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge that you may be. Filled with all the fullness of God.

So God's plan to bring us into his family. Jesus is prayer that we would enjoy that fellowship with one another and with God that comes from the fellowship and love that the triune God has had in himself from all eternity. It will be answered and it will be answered by our knowing the love of Christ which passes knowledge so that we may be filled with all the fullness of God our growing up into the knowing of Christ's love for us is the way that we become filled with all the fullness of God which if God hadn't planned it and Jesus hadn't prayed for it.

And the apostle here under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit wasn't telling us that he prays for it. We would rightly think it was blasphemy. Wouldn't we to say that people might be filled with all the fullness of God, but that's that's how the apostle talks here. So what needs to happen between now?

And then we trust in the Lord, Jesus Christ, we're part of the family, we have the family name, put upon us, the father's son and Holy Spirit, but we don't yet know the love of Christ. Like we should like we will and therefore we are not filled with all the fullness of God.

Like one day we shall be, which means because God is infinite that for unending ages, we will continue to be filled more and more. What needs to happen between now and then? What is the apostle praying for verse 16? That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might through his spirit, why?

So we can kill four. Listen giants, and even one with 24 fingers and toes like well here in second Samuel, in a couple of days. No, we need power for something, even greater than that, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might through his spirit in the inner man.

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts, through faith. So these praying for the father to the father and he's praying for the almighty powerful working of this spirit. And he's praying for union with Christ in our very hearts that we wouldn't have the greatest strength that we can have, but that we would have the strength that is the strength of Jesus himself.

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love, maybe able, maybe able to what to comprehend to understand to start to get our minds around with all the saints. Even those are in heaven, especially those who are in heaven, what is the width and length and depth and height to know the love of Christ?

Which passes knowledge this tells us two things. One, that one of the hardest things in your life is going to be genuinely to know the love of Christ that the love of Christ for you is such a great limitless thing. That one of the hardest things in our life is to know it.

In fact, if we knew the love of Christ for us then we could endure anything. Right? You remember that from Romans chapter 8 where the love of Christ and the love of God in Christ are tied together?

Romans 8:35, who shall separate us from the love of Christ. And then Romans 8:39, nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. So here's the one thing that if we know the love of Christ which is the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord because Christ is God that we will be able to face trouble.

Persecution death. Demons anything famine plague. Anything, but the hardest thing. Isn't those other things, the hardest thing is to know the love of Christ. It takes the miraculous powerful working of the Holy Spirit and it takes Christ dwelling in your heart. He's the one who perfectly knows the love of God.

Right In the beginning, was the word. The word was facing God and the Word was God. And so, what you need, most of all is the triune God, father, son, and holy spirit. Working on you working in you that you would know the love of Christ and that is what enables you to face anything and walk rightly in anything is that knowledge of Christ love.

So a it's we know that it's the hardest thing. So don't use surprise if you're heart is cold and dull. And if you don't understand it and you go through stretches in your life, where you feel like you barely have any sense at all that, God loves you or that Christ loves you and your theology will rebuke you at that point because you'll say, but remember the cross and you won't feel it, you'll feel the misery and the coldness on the deadness.

But the other thing is not only is it the hardest thing. But it's something that the triune God is committed to in your life. And the he has taught you to pray for. So when the believer feels like he doesn't know the love of God or the love of Christ, like he knows that he should and he wishes that he would.

What can he do? Well, he could do exactly what the apostle is doing here, can't he? He could pray to the Father for the powerful working of the Spirit and the indwelling presence of the Son. So that all mighty God is, as at hand, ready to listen to you cry out and you can know that this is what he is committed to.

And even before you begin to know or feel the love of Christ, you can know that you will know the love of Christ and we can cling to him by faith and until he increases our knowledge until it lasts. We are filled with all the fullness of God with your children.

You may not always feel like you know the love of Christ but you have Ephesians 3 verses 14 through 19. And you can know that you will know the love of Christ, and you can bring that certainty to God and plead that he would do. As he has said as work, let's ask him to do that now.

Our father, how am I the earthly father of these children to press upon them the claims of this word? When So often I feel like I know. So little of graceless love. So I thank you that you have given me this word and you have given them this word to together with me that you've given it to my life for.

This is our greatest need and this is our greatest challenge to know to comprehend to lay. Hold of how much Christ has loved us. And when we start to think what we could do and how we could live, if we just had that knowledge, we are eager for it and yet ashamed that we're not even, as eager as we should be.

So we look to you for all of it grant, according to the riches of your glory, the we would be strengthened with your power, through your spirit and our inner man that he would give us that strength that only

comes by Christ to dwelling in our hearts, that this would be our, the foundation of our life.

We praise you. I'll try you in God, that you have revealed so much of who you are, that we might lay hold of you when we pray, that you would feel us with your fullness. And the way that this passage describes pray, Lord, especially for many of my children who are in one of those seasons of having a hard time, knowing your love for them.

And for when they come into those seasons, grant to them to know that they will know your love for them. Even if they don't know where that the season would be short, the work of your spirit would be powerful. And that understanding and rejoicing in and being strengthened by the knowledge of Christ's love for them.

Would last not only their whole life long, but perfectly in eternity asking Christ's name. Amen.