

# Ephesians 3:14-21

Good morning, Symphony. Today, we'll be reading through the second half of Ephesians 3, verses 14-21, and I shall read that for us.

By the way, although it's good to do this every morning, I think today's devotional will be especially aided by having your Bible or Bible reading app open in front of you to the passage.

Anyway, Ephesians 3:14-21.

***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.*

***20** 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, **21** to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*

If you're familiar with Paul's letters, you know that he loves his run-on sentences, and our passage today contains a legendary one. There are clauses upon clauses and they all point to one thing.

This morning, we're reading through a prayer that Paul offers up on behalf of the Ephesian church, and it is a prayer of equipping. It's not so much that Paul just forgot to stop going and end his sentence, but he packs in as many different requests as he can to the Lord in this prayer. You really get the sense that he is excitedly, passionately bringing these requests to God out of a burning desire to see the Ephesians run hard for the Gospel.

Throughout this letter, Paul shares how encouraged he is to see the growth of the church in Ephesus, and how they are being united in Christ. And now, as he spurs them on to do more works for the Kingdom, he bows his knees and prays to the Father that the Ephesians be given everything they need.

To be specific, Paul prays for the following things: He prays that the Ephesians be strengthened with power through the Spirit according to the riches of His glory. He prays that Christ dwells in their hearts through faith. That they be rooted and grounded in love. That they have strength to comprehend the breadth and length and height and depth of Christ's love. That they know the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge. And that they be filled with all the fullness of God.

All these different ways for the Ephesians to be equipped before they go and live out the Gospel, Paul deems necessary to share. Each of these things, Paul considers so important to impart upon the Ephesians and to request from God on their behalf. And I think it's because he wants to do everything he can to ensure that their ministry is completely and wholly centered on Christ.

Every part of Paul's prayer orients the Ephesians to Christ. He prays that the Ephesians be strengthened through Christ. He prays that the Ephesians know and root themselves in Christ's love. He prays that Christ dwells in their hearts and that they're filled with Him. And over and over again, Paul repeats that the source the Ephesians must look to is none other than Jesus.

It's a great reminder for us, who in many ways are following the footsteps of the Ephesians. As we seek to live out the Gospel in our daily lives, and as we serve and love in accordance to the faith we have in our hearts, it's so important that we receive these things from Jesus. To be strengthened by Him, and to be transformed and made new by His love as we experience it more and more.

As simple a prayer as this might seem, not Paul's prayer specifically but a prayer to be centered on Christ, it's so important that we pray this regularly. Every day. After all, as redeemed children of God, born again and bought with a price, we are no longer living this life for ourselves. We're living it for Jesus and for His Kingdom. We are part of a new reality, with new goals and new endeavors that go beyond what makes sense to us.

And because we are living this new life with Jesus that requires more of us than we can muster up ourselves, it's undeniable that we have to always be receiving from Him and relying on Him. It's Christ's love that teaches us humility and servitude. It's Christ's strength that gives us the ability to run hard for the Gospel. It's Christ's presence that fills us with peace and steadfastness, even when our circumstances are rocky and uncertain.

We look to Christ and pray to receive from Him, because He can do what we cannot. Paul gives glory to Jesus and marvels at how He "is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think". And he observes that that abundant power is the same power at work within us.

We are filled with the power of Jesus Christ, who can do far more than we can imagine. And as we go out and live today, we can count on Him to supply us with all that we need. Let's pray for His blessing and sustaining love to cover us today. Let's pray.