

“Christ Our Only Love”
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.”

Introduction:

- Encouraging / exhortation: Exhausting time of year / life and we naturally pray for strength. This prayer for you is a prayer for my life and my family's as well. We need strength, but NOT merely to make it through. We need strength from the author of life and faith to more deeply understand and treasure God's love for us. Our aim is not merely enduring this life, it is overcoming in this life. That overcoming has NOTHING to do with achieving wealth or health, it is more in line with the resurrection of Christ, that is that our understanding of the nature of God's love will place in us a fullness of God to be realized by a greater affection for Him and greater glory in His name
- YOU CAN BE THIS STRONG! But where I differ from others who may try to build you up by making you feel good about your self, I want you to feel deeply about the love of God, effectively loathing your own sinfulness and treasuring Christ above ALL!!!

- THE GOAL TODAY... is not to get you to love God and others more. It is to comprehend God's love for you more, enabled by His strength to do so, which will result in you glorifying God in deeper affection for Him, His church and His purposes.

The Context of Christ's Love (vv.14-15)

- A) “For this reason...”
 - a. Eph.2:19-3:13
 - b. Paul prays for their strength to understand God's love in Christ because God is making for Himself a new people
 - c. This helps us see that God's sovereign, saving (even electing work) is all in love and is designed for our deeper love for Him!
- B) Prayerful Petition
- C) The Presence of the Sovereign God of the Universe
 - a. Maker of all things
 - b. Shaper of all things
 - i. Denotes design and purpose
 - ii. Naming (biblically) was in line with purpose
 - iii. Romans 9 stuff

The Source of Christ's Love (v.16a)

- A) According to...
 - a. In accord
 - b. Conjoining God's glory with His strengthening (basically, everything that God requires of you for His glory, He will strengthen you to do it!)
- B) Riches of His glory...
 - a. God's manifest presence
 - b. God's sovereign work is in keeping with His desire to show Himself as great!

The Foundation for Christ's Love (vv.16b-19)

- A) Strengthening
 - a. Flowing from the Sovereign God ("...he may grant you")
 - b. Flowing through the Spirit (Eph.1:13)
 - c. 2 Cor. 4:16
- B) Christ's Indwelling
 - a. Continual Presence
 - b. Through Faith
 - c. Rooted (botanic) and Grounded (structural)
 - i. Rooted: Grafted in and growing (this is agape love)
 - ii. Foundation: Foundation for the building of God's temple, the church
 - d. Empowering...to comprehend
- C) Comprehending (the result of the previous 2 infinitives)
 - a. In community
 - b. Fully dimensional
 - i. Object uncertain
 - ii. Denoting fullness
 - iii. God-enabled
 - iv. Job 28:12-22 (language of mystery of wisdom)
 - v. Romans 11:33-34 (leads to doxology like here)
 - vi. Nothing direct, except that we find the source as God's wisdom fulfilled in the ***love of Christ!***
 - c. Experiential Love (agape)
 - i. Possessed by
 - ii. Surpasses knowledge
 - 1. Does NOT disparage knowledge
 - 2. Eph.3:3-5
 - 3. Exceedingly beyond us
 - iii. Filled with
 - iv. Fullness of God

- 1. His perfection
- 2. Trinitarian view
- 3. Increasingly become who you are!
- 4. Love is the Foundation and expression of a Christ-centered life

The Enabler of Christ's Love (vv.20-21)

- A) Glorious God
 - a. Ascribed Strength
 - b. In all Humility
 - i. Knowing our limits
 - ii. Trusting His limitlessness
- B) Attributed Glory (showing His radiance...can't "add")
 - a. In the church
 - b. In Christ
 - c. Generational
 - d. Eternal
- C) How do we increase in our understanding of God's love for us in Christ? PETITION THE MIGHTY, SOVEREIGN GOD OF THE UNIVERSE...HE IS ABLE!
- D) How do we increase in sharing Christ's love with others? PETITION THE GOD WHO DWELLS IN YOU WITH THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION IN CHRIST JESUS...HE WILL DO IT!
- E) The REAL practical outworking today is to pray that you would more deeply comprehend the love of God in Christ Jesus in the GOSPEL, and it will radically change your life!