



## Ephesians ch 3 : Love Beyond Measure

Quick review of Chs 1-2

In Chapter 1, Paul introduces us to the amazing spiritual inheritance we have as believers in Christ.

- ✓ We are called saints
- ✓ We are blessed with every spiritual blessing
- ✓ We are chosen in Him
- ✓ We are holy and without blame, always covered with His love
- ✓ We are redeemed
- ✓ We have an inheritance (abundant blessings)
- ✓ We are accepted in the Beloved
- ✓ We are recipients of His abundant grace and glory
- ✓ We are sealed by the Holy Spirit
- ✓ We have the guarantee of future inheritance and redemption
- ✓ We belong to the One who is above all, and hence we draw our authority from Him
- ✓ We are filled with Himself
- ✓ We learned what to pray for believers, four important revelation that we need to keep growing in.

In Chapter 2, Paul continues to teach us about what is our because of our life in Christ:

- ✓ Know you position because of being in Christ
- ✓ Live out of this life in Christ by grace through faith.
- ✓ Know that you are His workmanship - God is at work in you
- ✓ Walk into the things God has prepared for you
- ✓ Know that you belong - you are in Covenant with God, you have access to the Father, you are part of the family of God
- ✓ We are a dwelling place of God. God wants to dwell among us, walk among us as a community of believers. Let us "host" God's presence.

Chapter 3

**Ephesians 3:1** For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles--

**Ephesians 3:2** if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

Grace in the New Testament is used in at least 4 different contexts.

**Divine favor** : God accepts us as we are and bestows on us what we do not deserve or merit. Everything we have in Christ is because of His divine favor.



**Divine character** : This is God's character which He calls us to walk in and grow in (John 1:14, 2 Peter 3:18)

**Divine empowering** : This has to do with God imparting to us His strength that enables us to live victorious, overcome, accomplish things beyond ourselves (2 Corinthians 12:9)

**Divine gifting** : These are gifts of grace that have to do with ministering to other people and serving in our function in the Body of Christ (Romans 12:6). The gifts of the Spirit are 'charisma', meaning gifts of grace (1 Corinthians 12:4).

So when God extends His grace to us we need to understand the 'full package', all the dimensions of what that grace brings into our lives.

- ✓ dispensation Greek '*oikonomia*' meaning 'stewardship' or proper administration or proper management of a household.
- ✓ We are stewards of the grace of God given to us - we are to properly administer and manage God's grace given to us.
- ✓ The grace of God was given to me for you - God's grace is given to you to serve people, often a specific kind of people. E.g. someone may have the grace on their lives to serve the poor, or to serve slum children, or to serve in a particular country or community, etc.

**Ephesians 3:3** how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

**Ephesians 3:4** by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

Although Paul was not part of the 12 apostles of the Lamb, he was one of the 'founding apostles and prophets' whom God used to lay the foundation for the Church. Paul received by divine revelation the mystery (knowledge which now has been revealed) of Christ. For instance, although Paul was not present at the Last Supper, he describes in detail what happened and he received this from the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

The Epistles that Paul wrote now contain what the Lord gave to Paul by revelation. Hence, these are not his own ideas, but truths given to Him by the Lord.

**Ephesians 3:5** which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

**Ephesians 3:6** that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,

This mystery of Christ was not know in times past, but has now been revealed. What is this mystery?



Part of this mystery is that the Gentiles, the non-Jewish world should also be made fellow-heirs, of the same body and people of covenant, in Christ through believing the Gospel.

God always had in mind the salvation of the whole world and this is what he was working towards, although this was not very apparent in the Old Testament times.

**Ephesians 3:7 of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.**

**Ephesians 3:8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,**

3:7 An important insight from this verse is that, what you **become**, should be aligned to the **gift of grace** given to you, because that is where you will have the **power of God** working effectively in your life.

3:8 Often God extends His grace to the most unlikely people to release something very extraordinary.

3:8 It is also very touching to see that Paul said he was less than the least of all the saints, indicating that he walked with such humility and recognition of the work of God's grace in his life.

3:8 'the unsearchable riches of Christ' - other versions render this as: *'inexhaustible riches, infinite riches, unending wealth, blessings that cannot be measured, These riches are too great to understand fully, immeasurable wealth,* - meaning that what God has now given to us in Christ is immeasurable, so infinite, so great.

**Ephesians 3:9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;**

**Ephesians 3:10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,**

**Ephesians 3:11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,**

3:9 to help everyone understand that God has called all of us to 'fellowship of the mystery', that is to share in this wonderful riches in Christ, extended to all of us. This mystery was kept as a secret from the beginning of time, till now.

3:10 God through the Church displays His wisdom to the angelic world. The angelic beings and other spirit beings are looking at Church and beginning to understand the wonderful work God has done and the wisdom with which He has brought this about



3:11 this was all in accordance to His plan even before time began ('eternal purpose') which He carried out through Jesus Christ

**Ephesians 3:12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.**

3:12 Paul reiterates what he has previously shared in 2:18 that both Jews and Gentiles, all of us can now have access with boldness and confidence to the Father, through faith in Jesus Christ.

3:12 also teaches us that we need to come before God with boldness and confidence. God is for us not against us. He made it possible for us to come to Him in this manner.

**Ephesians 3:13 Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.**

3:13 seeing the greater, grander purpose that God has been unfolding, and all that He has done, don't get discouraged with my imprisonment, which is for your benefit.

**Ephesians 3:14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
Ephesians 3:15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,**

Paul now shares another prayer that he prays for the Ephesian believers recognizing that all of us belong to the same Father. His Fatherhood envelops His entire family. Part of this family is in heaven, and part of this family is on earth.

**Ephesians 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,  
Ephesians 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,  
Ephesians 3:18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height--  
Ephesians 3:19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**

3:16 Paul prays knowing that God's resources are unlimited in who He is, in Himself: 'according to the riches of His glory'. Remember that familiar verse in Philippians 4:19 where Paul declares that God will supply for our needs according to His riches in glory. Same phrase.

Important lesson: When we pray we pray 'according to the riches of His glory'. Pray not based on what we can see possible here in the natural realm. We pray according to what God has made available to us in Himself.

Paul makes 5 important requests for the Ephesian believers, something we can all pray for ourselves and also pray for us as a local church:



*#1, be strengthened with might (Greek 'dunamis' divine power) by His Spirit in our inner man.*

Our inner man (spirit man) needs to be strengthened with impartation of power from the Spirit of God. This impartation of Holy Spirit power becomes ours as we fellowship with Him, as we wait upon Him, as we pray in the Spirit, as we feed on His Word.

*#2, that Christ may dwell (to house permanently) in your hearts through faith.*

Now of course Christ dwells in every believer by His Spirit (Galatians 4:6). So why would Paul be praying for something that Christ is already doing? I feel the real focus is on "Christ being formed in the believer" and not just Christ dwelling in the believer. We understand this from what Paul shared with the Galatians when he told them that he labored in birth again until Christ was formed in them (Galatians 4:19). We can say this with some confidence based on Paul's writings in other Epistles (e.g. Colossians 1:28)

*#3, being rooted and grounded in love.*

Love should be our foundation, our motivation in all we do.

*#4, be 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.*

We are loved beyond measure. As Paul describes it Romans 8:35-39, His love for us is limitless and intensely strong.

Interesting, that we are called to comprehend something that is immeasurable and to know something that is beyond knowing.

comprehend = to take eagerly, to seize, to possess

to know = to be sure of, to know absolutely

we need a revelation of this love - a knowing that is imparted to us by His Spirit, so that His love becomes personal and something we know by personal encounter and experience.

When we personally experience this love, we are able to love others in a similar manner. We love because we know how much we have been loved.

*#5, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God*

That we may be full of Him, manifesting Him.

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16 May He grant you out of the riches of His glory, to be strengthened and spiritually energized with power through His Spirit in your inner self, [indwelling your innermost being and personality],  
17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through your faith. And may you, having been [deeply] rooted and [securely] grounded in love,  
18 be fully capable of comprehending with all the saints (God's people) the width and length and height and depth of His love [fully experiencing that amazing, endless love];  
19 and [that you may come] to know [practically, through personal experience] the love of Christ which far surpasses [mere] knowledge [without experience], that you may be filled up [throughout your being] to all the fullness of God [so that you may have the richest experience of God's presence in your lives, completely filled and flooded with God Himself].

Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,  
Ephesians 3:21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Believe and worship Him who works through us beyond all we ask or think.