

A Strong Church Brings Glory to God

Eph 3:14-21 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

I. Paul's prayer: intercession

A. His posture: bowed knees

The Bible nowhere commands any special posture for prayer. (However, this was a common practice in the Bible; Luke 22:41; Acts 20:36; 21:5)

Abraham stood before the Lord when he prayed for Sodom (Gen. 18:22),

Solomon stood when he prayed to dedicate the temple (1 Kings 8:22).

David "sat before the Lord" (1 Chron. 17:16) when he prayed about the future of his kingdom.

Jesus "fell on His face" when He prayed in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:39).

B. Every family in heaven and on earth derives its name from the Father.

That word family can be translated "fatherhood." Every fatherhood in heaven and on earth gets its origin and name from the Father. He is the great Original; every other fatherhood is but a copy.

Adam is called "the son of God" (Luke 3:38), referring to his creation.

Believers are the "sons of God" by rebirth (John 1:11-13; 1 John 3:1-2)

This Greek word is only used three times in the New Testament.

Eph 3:15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,

Luke 2:4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,

Acts 3:25 "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

C. There are five request that Paul makes for the church:

1. To be strengthened with power in the inner man.

"that He would (give to) grant you,
(by) according to the riches of His glory,
to be strengthened with power
through His Spirit
in the inner man,"

2. For Christ to dwell in your hearts through faith.

"so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;"

3. So that you may be able to comprehend the breadth length and height and depth of His love.

"and that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
may be able to comprehend with all the saints
what is the breadth and length and height and depth,"

4. To know experientially the love of Christ.

"and to know (experientially) the love of Christ"
which surpasses knowledge;"

5. To be filled up to the fullness of God.

"that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."

Eph 1:10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

Eph 1:23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Eph 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

Col 1:19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

Col 2:9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

Jn 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

D. The inner man - is a term used to describe our spirit, the new self.

Eph 4:24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Jn 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Jn 3:5-6 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

2 Co 5:17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Gal 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Col 3:10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him

(See also Jer 31:33; Ro 2:29; 7:22-23; Php 3:3; 2 Co 4:16-18; 1 Pe 3:4)

1. We receive strength in the inner (spirit) man.
2. We received strength by the Holy Spirit.
3. Christ dwells in our heart through faith.

E. God wants us to comprehend the (4 dimensions)

breadth of His love

length of His love

height of His love

depth of His love

And to know this love experientially!

III. Paul's praise: doxology

Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Now to the One who is able to do beyond all things, superabundantly beyond and over and above those things that we are asking for ourselves and considering, (Wuest)

A. God is able to do:

Exceedingly (beyond)

Abundantly (superabundantly)

Beyond (over and above)

All that we could:

Ask

Think

B. He does this by the power that works within us.

C. God is glorified when the church is strong!