Ephesians – “God’s Plan for Every Believer”

Chapter 3:14-21

This prayer can be called “The Big Ask”

Paul has a very intense spiritual passion for these Ephesian believers

He’s not just praying for ordinary, common things but is instead asking for the most exceptional, amazing spiritual realities to become a certainty within their lives

His prayer serves as a model for you and me now

It’s important to pray for the “little things” but we should also ask for the much greater things God longs to give us

**3:14**: Since the Lord Jesus Christ has brought reconciliation and open access to God for each person who is a believer, Paul now prays for those in the family of God to maximize the great blessings God has for them

Bowing one’s knees can have both physical and attitudinal implications

The Jews of Paul’s time would usually prayer standing up with their arms stretched up toward heaven

However, actually kneeling in prayer was practiced by numerous saints of God throughout the Bible

 2

Solomon – 1 Kings 8:54; Ezra 9:5; Psalm 95:6; Daniel 6:10; Peter – Acts 9:40; Jesus – Luke 22:41

Praying this way shows submission, reverence and earnestness

**3:15**: God is a globalist and a universalist

Not many Christians give this enough thought

Psalm 24:1: “The earth is the LORD’s, and all its fulness, the world and those who dwell therein.”

Ephesians 1:9-10: “Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth – in Him.”

It is His intention to bring all believers together for eternity who comprise the kingdom of God, those previously departed from the earth including the one’s presently here

It’s God’s grand, eternal plan to accomplish this

Furthermore, we can have confidence it will most certainly happen

Since we know of this future certainty, there’s many incredible blessings God wants us to lock into as we’re living now

 3

**3:16**: God has unending resources, i.e. an unlimited supply

He has enough divine wealth to spread it around equally and fully to each recipient

Listen to the words from this song called “He Giveth More Grace” by Annie Johnson Flint

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase,
To added affliction He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary known unto men,
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half-done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father’s full giving is only begun.

The fact believers need to be strengthened implies a propensity we have toward experiencing weakness

It is relatively easy to be weak in our commitment, weak in our obedience, weak in our resistance to sin, weak in our responses when facing injustice, weak in courage when encountering persecution

 4

We daily need the strengthening power of God’s Holy Spirit within our soul

Paul already referenced this in his prayer in Ephesians 1:19: “And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.”

The fact this surpassing power is available is a huge comfort and reason to have optimistic hope

But are we tapping into this availability of supernatural power?

Hebrews 4:14-16 also points to what we have available to us through Christ: “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Notice how receiving this power isn’t a guarantee of removing all of our earthly trials and troubling challenges

Rather, it is the power to think, communicate and act in godly ways no matter what we are going through

Let’s make a commitment to pray more intentionally for God’s almighty power to be our constant experience

 5

**3:17:** Dwelling speaks to “being at home,” i.e. taking up permanent residence without resistance

How often do we consciously acknowledge this?

“Faith” is knowing and believing the Spirit of Christ lives within me and behaving according to this reality

“Rooted” pictures a tree with its roots growing deep into the soil so as to provide nourishment and stability

“Grounded” refers to a building’s foundation which is built with careful planning and precision so as to remain strong through any potential adverse circumstance

Colossians 2:6-7 are parallel verses: “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

Our lives are to be anchored in love of Christ, nothing else

**3:18:** To “comprehend” is to intellectually grasp the full significance of a spiritual truth

“Width,” “length,” “depth” and “height” refer to the vastness and completeness of Christ’s love

The words of the song, “Your Grace Still Amazes Me,” beautifully capture this (Phillips, Craig & Dean)

 6

Your grace still amazes me
Your love is still a mystery
Each day I fall on my knees
'Cause your grace still amazes me
Your grace still amazes me

It's deeper, it's wider
It's stronger, it's higher
It's deeper, it's wider
It's stronger, it's higher
Than anything my eyes can see

“God’s love is wide enough to include every person, long enough to last through all eternity, deep enough to reach the worst sinner and high enough to take us to heaven.” (David Guzik, BLB)

What greater love can there be than this?

**3:19:** The love of Christ supersedes human knowledge apart from God’s enlightenment through His Holy Spirit

Knowing more of this love will be an unending process throughout eternity

What would my life look like if I was truly filled with all the fullness of God?

This may be the most important question I can ever ask myself as a Christian

 7

Let’s remind ourselves, if this was not achievable, such a statement would not be in Scripture

Can you imagine the eternal benefits resulting from Christians being filled with God’s fullness around the entire world?

The place to begin living this way starts with me right now

**3:20-21:** Paul concludes his prayer with a doxology of praise

It is a statement of tremendous faith characterized by great expectation

We serve the God who is able to do exceedingly more than we can ever ask or think

Even more amazingly He accomplishes His eternal plan through His indwelling power in every believer’s life

The bottom line is all of this is to the glory of God

How often do we pray this way for others?