

March 17, 2024

# MY NOTES:

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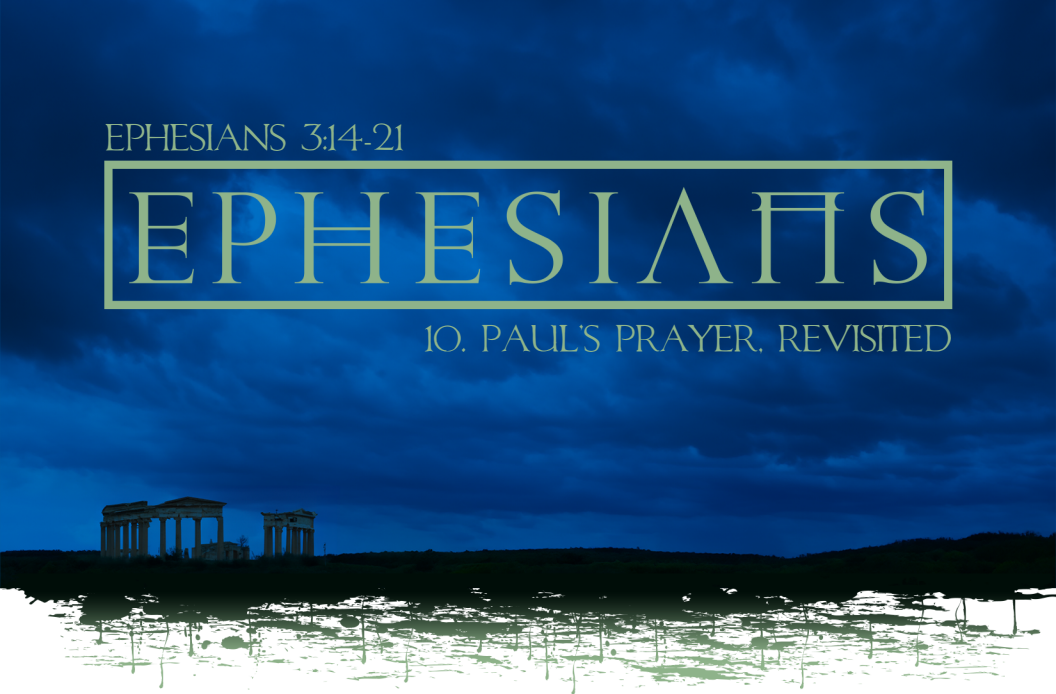
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EPHESIANS 3:14-21

# EPHESIANS

10. PAUL'S PRAYER, REVISITED



## TODAY'S VERSES:

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ephesians 3:14-21 | Colossians 2:9-10 |
| Ephesians 2:22    | Psalms 103        |
| Ephesians 1       | Mark 11:25        |

What does it mean for all of your life to be conformed to the Gospel?

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# EPHESIANS

## 10. PAUL'S PRAYER, REVISITED EPHESIANS 3:14-21

In the second half of Ephesians Chapter 3 Paul prays (again) for us to walk in power and love. Most of the first 3 chapters of Ephesians is about doctrine, but that doctrine is shown to us through Paul's prayers. Paul continues to praise God and pray for this church. For Paul, prayer and action are not opposite ends of the scale of Christian activity, he saw much of his actions come directly out of his time in prayer.

Read Ephesians 3:14-21.

- ♦ **How would you describe your prayer life?**
- ♦ **Not that you have to pray exactly like Paul, but what do your prayers tend to focus on?**

Paul speaks more often of Christians being 'in Christ' than of Christ being 'in Christians' because we need to see our individual experience within the larger picture of our membership in God's family. Christ's power is what strengthens and renews us in our inner being (verse 16). Paul prays in verse 16 "*that Christ will dwell in their hearts,*" (inner being), in 3:18-19 he says, "*I pray you'll know the love of Christ,*" and in verse 19 he prays that they would "*...be filled with all the fullness of God.*" It is one thing to believe in and trust the love of Christ, and it's another thing to experience the love of Christ in your ***inner being***.

- ♦ **What is something you have heard Paul speak about in Ephesians that you have a hard time believing?**
- ♦ **What is something that Paul has said is true of Christians (being seated with Christ, salvation being secure, God looking upon us with joy, we are in His family) that your mind grasps, but your heart questions?**

This prayer is important for us because the phrase "*inner being*" means the very center of our consciousness and personality, it is what makes you YOU (or us US). It's one thing to know about the love of Christ; it's another thing to experience in attachment this love so deep in our core so that it changes us. Paul prays that God's Spirit would bring this change in our understanding.

## DISCUSSION NOTES

- ♦ **What is something right now that you pray God would confirm in your "inner being"?**

Paul prays that we would comprehend, "The love of Christ that surpasses all knowledge *and* my ability to describe it..." and then He goes on to TRY to describe it.

- ✦ **The length:** From all eternity and for all eternity.
- ✦ **The height:** How great and intense His love is for us.
- ✦ **The breadth:** In His sovereignty He will bend all things for His glory and our good.
- ✦ **The depth:** How far God went to save us.

- ♦ **Try to put into your own words the length, the height, the breadth, the depth, of God's love.**

Paul shows us 3 things:

1. **What we need** (He kneels before the Father).
2. **What life-changing spiritual experience results in** (Strength to comprehend the fullness of God).
3. **Life change happens communally** (He says: *comprehend with all the saints...*)

Paul is saying, "I know you are going to underestimate God, that's why I am praying the way I am. Never doubt God's love, sovereignty, or His ability to bring about all that He intends." God is not a cosmic bystander; He wills and works in all things.

- ♦ **In what areas of life do you feel like God is simply a bystander?**
- ♦ **Encourage one another in areas where they may have fears or doubts about God's sovereignty and love.**

Charles Spurgeon remarked in amazement that when Jesus was on the cross, He saw humanity, "*denying him, betraying him, rejecting him, mocking him, and in the greatest act of love in the history of the world, he stayed.*" Meaning: stayed on the cross for us.