

EPHESIANS SESSION 3

Review: Last time we went through chapter 2 where our salvation was laid out beautifully. We were like the rest of the world; we were dominated by the flesh and were influenced by the powers of darkness. But God saved us by His grace and showed us mercy because of His great love for us. We're saved by grace through faith and are now His workmanship unto good works. We are no longer less than the Jews or at enmity with them because Christ has made peace between us and the church is the dwelling now for the presence of God.

Ephesians 3:1-2 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: *Here Paul is going to reveal what this dispensation is all about. In the Bible, a dispensation is the divine administration of a period of time; each dispensation is a divinely appointed age. The Bible is a progressive revelation of God and His purpose. There have been different ages in scripture when God dealt with man differently. After the fall, there was the age of conscience...there was no law everyone was governed only by their conscience. The age of law came in with God giving the law to Moses and that was a new revelation. Paul is getting ready to unfold what Christ has revealed to him about this dispensation we're living in now since the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

Ephesians 3:3-6 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: *The church was a mystery hid in God. The Old Testament prophets did not see it because God did not reveal it to them. John the Baptist didn't know anything about a church or what it was. Even though Christ sent the apostles out to preach the gospel to every creature, at the first they didn't understand the mystery of the church because they preached to none but the Jews only. Paul tells us here that it was revealed to him by the Lord. This dispensation of grace of God has put Gentiles on the same spiritual footing as the Jews. We are co-heirs, members of the same body, and partakers in the promise in Christ by the gospel (we're given righteousness because of faith).*

Ephesians 3:7-8 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of

all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; *Paul was made a servant of this gospel by God's grace and through the working of His power. The Pharisees saw themselves above everyone else because of their self-righteousness, but since Paul experienced the grace of God and it was revealed to him, he now sees himself as the least of all saved people and embraces the Gentiles as his mission field.*

Ephesians 3:9-12 And to make all *men* see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. *When God chose to create a help for Adam, He caused him to go into deep sleep, opened his side and took out a rib to form Eve. Eve was a mystery hid in Adam until he was laid down and his side opened the same way the church was a mystery hid in God until Christ's life was laid down on the cross and His side opened. God's multi-faceted wisdom, grace and power is now made known through the church and put on display for the rulers and authorities in the heavens. God is teaching the angelic realm – both good and bad, as well as their human representatives, His wisdom as He brings sinners from every tribe, tongue and nation into one heavenly community called the church.*

Ephesians 3:13-21 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. *This is the second prayer that Paul records in this letter that he is praying for this church. The first prayer was for enlightenment; this second prayer is for enablement.*

- **To be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man** – When your cell phone is dead, nothing outside the phone can help it. It requires power to recharge the battery which takes place on the inside. The same is true for a Christian. Our inner man needs power given to him to overcome our flesh, the world and the devil.

- **That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith** – Personal intimacy with Jesus Christ is where that power comes from to strengthen our inner man. This is not a call to salvation, but fellowship. For Christ to dwell in our hearts, He must be welcome there and wanted. For Him to be welcome there, He must have access to all the rooms and closets so that He can rearrange and remove what He pleases.
- **Be rooted and grounded in love** – It's important that we grow in depth as well as outwardly. The palm tree can withstand the hurricane because of its tremendous root system that anchors it to the ground. We should be so rooted in the love of Christ that the storms of this life can not uproot us and blow us away.
- **To comprehend and experience the love of Christ** – To have increased comprehension and understanding of Christ's love. We experience more of the love of Christ "with all the saints" because many times Christ displays His love for us through other saints. He prays for them to know the breadth, length, depth, and height...in other words to grasp love that passes knowledge. The more we know His love for us, the more we are filled with God's fullness. The more you know you are loved, the greater capacity you have to love.

The conclusion: Everything is for God's glory. Paul requests these things in prayer for these people that they may benefit and that God may be glorified. God is able to not just do what we ask, but He is exceedingly abundantly able to go above and beyond anything we ask or think. He is able to work according to the power that is already in us. The same Spirit that rose Christ from the dead lives in us. A fire hydrant is small, but an amazing amount of water can gush out of it because of the source it's connected to. Our connection to Christ is what makes power to do the impossible possible.