



Praying with power

Eph. 3:14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family (or the whole family) in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

1. Introduction (v14-16)

“You can tell a lot about someone by how they pray”

To the Father: our source is a good God

From whom the whole family: we’re part of something bigger

According to His riches: the success of this prayer is not in my ability to pray but in the extent of His riches

2. That Jesus may dwell in your hearts (v16-17)

he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith

Christ dwells in two ways

a. His presence

(John 14:23 ‘we will love him and we will come to him’)

‘dwell’ → not a temporary lodger but a permanent owner

b. His transformation

2Cor. 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.

JESUS: kindness, presence, power, integrity, boldness, courage, love, compassion....

No longer think of someone OUT THERE but someone IN HERE

My ability to live in the continual awareness of the presence of Christ and be changed into his image comes BY FAITH BY THE SPIRIT

3. That you might know the love of Jesus (v17-19)

That you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Rooted & Grounded: Like the tree & the building - this is the foundation for the Christian life. All gifts, all achievements are as nothing if I cannot love and be loved. Without love there is no God in it because God is love.

Strength to comprehend: It's not easy receiving this love!

Strength = ability

Comprehend = perceive/attain/obtain/apprehend

Literally Paul is praying for 'the ability to receive it'

Barriers to receiving this love:

Shame/Guilt

Pride

Fear

Lack of expectation

Unbelief

Legalism

Lack of desire

Know this love that surpasses knowledge: Know means to experientially encounter and understand.

Filled with the fullness: God's design for you is **to take you to the edge of what it means to be human** – so filled with him that when people see you they see Christ.

'filled up to the limit with that fullness of God which human beings are capable of receiving without ceasing to be human' John Stott

NOTICE THAT THE FULNESS OF GOD IN US IS DIRECTLY LINKED TO OUR ABILITY TO RECEIVE HIS LOVE

4. That the power of God might operate (v20-21)

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think (imagine), according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

No English to express what he is able to do – **Infinitely more**

Ask or imagine: eclipses our desires and dreams

BUT: it is only according (**in proportion to**) the power at work in us

POINT: Your internal reality will become your external reality

*Rom. 1:16 For I am not **ashamed** of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who **believes***

Paul point to 2 limiters that limit even the power of God for salvation:
fear of man and **unbelief**

Faith is the answer to both of these. It's the antithesis of unbelief and the antidote to fear.

FAITH IS THE FUSE IN THE POWER CHAIN OF HEAVEN

To him be glory: Mission exists where worship does not John Piper

'The Holy Spirit wants to fill you like a river not like a lake'

Bill Johnson