

NOTES FOR THIS COMING WEEK: 8/17-8/18 2020

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: *Ephesians 3:11-18*

Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 ptwente@gmail.com

7 PM MONDAY NIGHT & 7 AM TUESDAY MORNING ONLINE BIBLE STUDY MEETINGS: CONTINUING IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Mon pm; 85309150746 Tues am!

Topic: Monday 7pm Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/tZMlcuGuqj8tHNeJYqMIZbE8IKiMqtpYL88G/ics?ics>

Token=98tyKuGvpj4iHNCRTx-

ERpwEGo_4We7wiClago1Ytib0LixpYCauOslLH6NrAOH8

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Topic: Tuesday 7am Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

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Weekly:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/tZEud-CpqzstHtJOOKSAdUVq16dSqlryu7Iw/ics?ics>

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OPENING PRAYER

THE LOVE OF GOD – *F. Lehman – Phelps, Penrod & Gardner*

*The love of God is greater far Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star, And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled, And pardoned from his sin.*

Refrain:

*Oh, love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure— The saints' and angels' song.
Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill, And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though stretched from sky to sky.
(Refrain)*

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Ephesians 3:14-18

Prayer for Spiritual Strength

Eph 3:14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Eph 3:15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

Eph 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

Eph 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph 3:18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—

Eph 3:19 (and) to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Eph 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

Eph 3:21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Eph 3:14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

- **One of the great mountain peaks** in the Scripture. maybe the highest peak of all in the entire glorious range of Scripture truth and divine revelation. We cannot examine it too closely!
- ***for this reason, I bow my knees to the Father*** – continuing from verse 1, understanding the supernatural miracle of making the Jews and Gentiles into one man in the church, Paul tells these believers he is praying for them, which is a great example for us!
- **For this reason!** Although he is a prisoner, unable to visit or preach to them, the enemy cannot prevent him or us from praying! Men may forbid us to speak or even stitch our lips together, but we can still keep on praying to God.
- **Whatever circumstances**, sickbed, or men may do to us, there is always this ministry and activity open to us! You can still pray! You can pray, which is so important, for yourself; for the persecuted; for the lost!
- ***I bow my knees to the Father.*** Posture is not all important, but what it indicates and represents is! Bowing the knees is an indication of reverence, indicative of an attitude of worship and of adoration and praise.

Eph 3:15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

- **Our Father** - God is the Father of every family, the Father of all. Gentiles and Jews are now one, having been brought into the great family of God. This is most precious for us to realize this glorious truth, as we too, are members of this same “*whole family*”!

Eph 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

- **No change in circumstance**, but **exclusively spiritual**. It is the spiritual condition and welfare of these people that is uppermost in his mind, and in his heart, how they are dealing with problems of life.

- **‘would grant you’.** The feeblest saint can lift up his face even when he cannot stand on his feet. He just looks and says—‘Lord have mercy upon me’, ‘God strengthen me’. And he will *‘grant’* you the strength you need.
- **Yet more wonderful,** *‘that He would grant you according to the riches of His glory’.* The *glory* of God is the sum of all the attributes of God, His might, His majesty, His holiness, His purity, His righteousness, His justice, God in the totality of His being. The *glory* of God! It is according to *the riches*, the fulness of the *glory*, that God is able to *strengthen us with might*.
- **Praying** that in the inner man they may be *strengthened with might through* the Spirit of God. Praying this way because the experience of forgiveness and of salvation is merely the beginning of the Christian life, the first step, into the Kingdom of God.
- **Great and glorious possibilities** for Christians - *‘that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;* may come to know about God’s love in its *‘breadth and length and depth and height’;* indeed that they *‘might be filled with all the fulness of God’.* Paul is praying for them, that they may experience all these blessings, which is not only a possibility for all Christians, but it is the duty of all believers.
- **C. H. Spurgeon,** dealing with this matter, once said, *‘There is a point in grace as much above the ordinary Christian as the ordinary Christian is above the unsaved’.* If we believe that Christ can dwell in our hearts, that we can know the dimensions of this love of God, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God, which is as much above the ordinary Christian level as that level is above the non-Christian.
- **How** can we reach the higher level? We must be *‘strengthened with might through (God’s) Spirit in the inner man’.*
- **The reasons!** Initially the Christian is only a babe; weak, ignorant, innocent! Difficulties arise, problems come; and he is bewildered, and often he falls. Because of the existence of the devil, the adversary, the accuser of the brethren.
- **The very greatness** of that which is offered to us, demands that we be strengthened in order to receive it, lest we might be shattered by it. We thank God that He can and will *strengthen us in the inner man* - the innermost, spiritual, part of our being, the heart, the mind, the soul, and the spirit of the regenerate man, the man that is ‘in Christ Jesus’. Build up the *inner man*. *Strengthen* our resistance.

Eph 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- **For believers** This prayer is offered for believers, albeit they are immature, where Christ is already present as Savior. They know the Lord Jesus Christ at an initial level, but in a deeper sense they do not know Him. They are not controlled by Him. He is not in the center of their lives, not really in their hearts, not ‘dwelling’ there, not ‘settled down’, has not ‘taken up His abode’ there.
- **The difference?** The difference between this, and just being saved, is found in the word ‘*dwell*’, which means to settle down and be at home’, as distinct from merely paying a visit.
- **Further intimacy!** Paul longs for them to realize what is yet possible for them, especially this further, much greater, intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This cannot happen until they have been *strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man*.
- **Jesus said, (Joh 14:20-21,23)** *At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. [21] He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."* [23] *Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.* -- ‘settling down’, ‘taking up permanent residence’, being there permanently!
- **Intimacy beyond initial salvation** - Paul’s desire is that Christ may also *dwell* in the whole of their life, controlling it and directing it. To be at the very center of their lives.
- **Special, closer intimacy!** It is here then we come into that rarefied atmosphere. **If Christ is truly in your heart**, then Christ has manifested Himself to you. When Christ manifests Himself to us it is real, it is actual. Do you really know the Lord Jesus Christ personally, as a person? How real is He to you? Has He manifested Himself to you in that sense?
- **Praying for a special, specific blessing**, where we say, ‘Up to this moment I have not really known Christ personally, but now He has manifested Himself to me and I know Him. He has become real and living to me. It is a supreme moment of my life.’ The Holy Spirit brings Him to us, and through the Spirit He manifests Himself so that He becomes real and living and true to us. It means that He Himself in some mystical sense, that we cannot begin to understand, really does dwell in us!

- ***Eph 3:17*** *that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,*
- ***Through faith*** – We are given a description of what the life of faith really is. It is not passive, but active: (***Heb 11:13***) *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*
- **I must see it!** *‘having seen the promises afar off’*, These men of faith ‘saw’ it. Noah, hearing God’s message of a coming flood, ‘saw’ that message and responded! Others not seeing it, ridiculed, laughing at him for building his ark.
- **They saw, were assured!** Not only did these people “see”, they were ‘assured’ of them. They recognize the type of experience described and see it’s Biblical, recognizing that for all believers!
- **They embraced** the promises, taking a further step. The moment these people were *assured* of the promises they desired to lay hold of them. They began earnestly to desire their fulfilment.
- **Are we too busy** to be *assured* of, and to embrace, things that we desire in life in this world? Have we seen the possibility? Do we desire it? Have we sought it, and have we felt that while we cannot find it there is no peace? Have we seen it so clearly that we can say that we shall never be happy again until we have it?
- **They ‘confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth’.** They began to act. If we fail to act on what we have embraced, all is in vain. We find that their whole life and outlook was determined by this and was controlled by it. Abraham leaving his country, went out, not knowing where he was going.
- **Controlling motive** - Once we *see* this, and are *assured* of it, and *embrace* it, this becomes the controlling motive of our life and the center of our being. To desire Christ in the heart makes us ready to give up everything until we have Him!
- **Meditate on His Word, think about it!** We have to take is to keep this matter constantly in our minds. We need to read our Bible, to meditate upon it, to think about it frequently and to deliberately cause your mind to turn to it. We have to do this deliberately, and to be ruthless with ourselves.

- **It's the Lord Jesus Christ!** Above all we have to remind ourselves constantly that a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ is involved. We are not dealing with some 'It', but with Him, Christ in the heart, and the experience which flows out of an intimacy with Him. We therefore have to ask ourselves deliberately whether Jesus Christ is real to us. Do we know Him in this sense?
- **Pray!** The next step is the step of prayer. We must realize our utter dependence upon the Lord. We must heed the exhortation, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling* realizing our full dependence upon Him. Spend time in talking to Christ, asking Him to come. Plead for it! Yearn for it! Prayer is essential.
- **Persevere!** Finally, there must be perseverance. We must continue and persist as there will be many discouragements. You may well feel much worse than you did before. You may find things in your own heart such as you had never imagined were there. You may feel that you are going further from God.
- **God answers** our prayer, and the Holy Spirit so strengthens us, and works in us, moves in us, that we are able 'to will and to do', and to prepare the place for the Lord Jesus Christ in our hearts. Then He will fulfil His own promise: *I will manifest Myself to you. I will come and take up My abode in you. I and the Father will dwell in you.*

Eph 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- **Rooted and grounded in love** - Our whole life must be firmly based upon love; it must draw its life, its strength, its power, its nutriment, its everything from this Christian principle of love. If Christ dwells in our hearts then love must be in our hearts, at the center of our being.
- **Rooted in love** Think of a great oak tree and its roots. The ground and the soil of our Christian life is to be love. Love is that which alone builds up the Christian life and really makes it like the life of Christ Himself. Believers are meant to be like Him. The only way to become like Him is to be '**rooted**' in love. It is only as we are *rooted in love* that we shall manifest these glories and be a joy and a pleasure and of value to others.
- **Power, energy!** Love alone which can give us real power to live the Christian life and to work and labor in this Christian life. Love energizes and sends a man out upon a task; it urges him and drives him out and on.

- **Love is the motive** – It is the only true motive for work and activity in the Christian life. Why do we call ourselves Christian? Why do we partake of bread and wine at the Lord’s Supper? The reason for it all is that we know that ‘*God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son*’. We are to be like Him! We are to follow in His steps, to be reproductions of Him! As men and women in the world look at us, they should see Him. This must be the compelling motive in our Christian life in every respect, in every aspect of it.

Eph 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- **Grounded in love** – Turning now to those aspects of this matter which are illustrated by the picture of a building. We are not only to be rooted in love, but also to be ‘*grounded*’ in love, just as a great building requires a deep and solid foundation. The Christian’s life and activity must be built upon the foundation of love, for love is an essential and inevitable part of the life of all in whose hearts Christ has taken up His abode.
- **Foundation** – First is the importance of making sure that the foundation is well and truly laid. The Apostle is praying concerned that the Ephesian Christians may reach a great height in experience, being filled with ‘*all the fulness of God*’. If that is to be realized, time will have to be spent in preparing an adequate foundation. You cannot build to that height hurriedly.
- **Preparing the way** for ‘*the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge and that you may be filled with all the fullness of God*’. As that is to be the character of the building, do not rush your foundation. Spend time on it, make sure that it will be adequate.
- **Jesus said** – That if you really want to be His disciple, you must dig deep and lay a solid foundation upon a rock. There are no short cuts in the spiritual life. These things take time. Paul does not merely pray for these people that *they might be filled with all the fulness of God*; he knows that it cannot happen suddenly and without any preparation.
- **Dig deeply** - We must be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man and proceed to lay a solid foundation. We must dig deeply and then pour in the concrete in order to lay a solid, a massive foundation, bearing in mind the weight of the superstructure that is to be erected.
- **How is this foundation laid?** The first answer is that all relationships in the Christian life must be based upon love. Everything is to be grounded,

founded in love. Our relationship to God. I shall never know the love of God unless my relationship to Him and to the brethren is one of love.

- **Build your foundation** - You will never know *the breadth and length and depth and height* of the love of Christ which passes knowledge until you are on this foundation - the argument of this prayer which Paul offers.
- **Love strengthens and sustains** -Nothing but a deep love to God can stand up to the trials and the stresses, the hazards and the strains of life. Belief alone is not enough. Belief is essential and can take you a long way. But when the real storms come, belief alone is not enough. Love alone enables us to stand up to the storms.
- **His love passes knowledge** -When I cannot understand, when I cannot explain, love still holds me up. Take time with the foundation and make sure of being '*rooted and grounded in love*'. It is only as our lives have this foundation that the Apostle's prayer, '*that you may be able to comprehend with all saints ... this love of Christ which passes knowledge*', will truly apply to us. Let us make certain that the foundation is truly laid.

***Eph 3:18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—
Eph 3:19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.***

- **These two verses** – are the real object was in praying for these Ephesian Christians. All the previous petitions prepare for and lead up to this petition. They were essential as preparation, not ends in themselves; they are designed to lead on to this grand objective.
- **Pinnacle of Christian truth** - We find ourselves upon the pinnacle of Christian truth. There is nothing higher than this. May God grant us His Spirit that we may consider it correctly! We are in a rarefied atmosphere; in a place where we are not accustomed.
- Peter said: (***1Pe 1:13***) *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

may be able to comprehend...with all the saints.. the width and length and depth and height!

- ***may be able to comprehend – what?*** One of the highest attainments in the Christian life is to know the love of Christ. Does ‘*the breadth and length and depth and height*’ just refer to the love of God and the love of Christ with respect to us, which we have been dealing with this whole chapter?
- **Christ’s love to us!** - It appears that here Paul goes on to something even higher, not with just our love for Christ, **but with His love to us**. No longer dealing with our love, although that was first necessary in order to bring us to the realization and knowledge of **His love to us!**
- **So much greater** is the love we are now contemplating than this awareness, that all who have ever had an experienced before are tempted to say that they had never known the love of God before. The Apostle is praying that we with them, may discover things which we have never even imagined!
- **Knowledge of love of Christ is the goal** of all our Christian endeavor. How much do we know of this? Is it real to us?
- **Is that true of you?** You may have believed, and you may be learned in the Bible and in doctrine; but the question to be faced is: Do you really know Him? Do you know His love? This is the ultimate object of all Christian endeavor.
- **Wanting more of His love.** Once you know this Person and begin to love Him, you feel that all you have received is not enough, you want more and more. This is what Paul is praying for, longing for them also to know Christ, because to know Him is to know His love. The more we know Him, the more we shall know His love toward us.
- ***with all the saints*** This experience is something which is possible for all Christians: This knowledge is only possible to those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This theme of the *love of Christ* is something of which the man who is not a Christian has no conception at all.
- **The way to this knowledge** - We must be ‘*strengthened*’ or ‘made fully able’. We need strength and power and ability before we can know *the love of Christ*, by being rooted and grounded in love, because of the weight of God’s love which we are going to bear. Love is powerful and weighty. Love is dynamite, love is power. ‘God is love’, and His might and majesty and power are in that love. Thus, when you feel the love of God you are feeling something of the might of God, and the weight and the eternity of God’s glory.
- **A further reason** why we need to be made able to *comprehend* it, is that it is love alone that can recognize love. We need to be ‘rooted and grounded in love’ in order to comprehend this love of God. Love alone recognizes love, understands love; indeed, it is love alone that can receive love.

- **Confusing?** *That you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend love,* This seems confusing. If you are already '*rooted and grounded in love*', what more do you need? The Lord dealt with a similar situation (**Mat 13:12**) *For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.* Notice this example of a biblical paradox – **whoever has, to him more will be given!** But in our wisdom we ask, If he has, why does he need? Only our ignorance that prompts such a question.
- **The principle is,** that the more you have in the Christian life, the more you can receive. You cannot receive this great and ultimate love of Christ without having love already. It is a process which is geometrically progressive. The more you have the more you will get. Indeed, if you have nothing you will receive nothing!
- **Even a little love is hopeful!** If you already have even a little measure of this love to God and Christ in you and love to the brethren, you are in a hopeful condition, and will receive more! The more we love Him the more we shall come to know His love for us! And on and on it will go for ever and forever.
- **Start climbing!** You do not suddenly reach the summit of knowledge of His love, so you had better start climbing at once. Every step you take up that mountain will bring to your experience something new and fresh that you have never known before.
- **Be not discouraged!** It is a very high mountain! The devil will try to discourage you, but the effort is worthwhile! Do not listen to the discouragements of the devil! You are already on the way. Keep on going!
- **Ask God!** We must go on to '*comprehend*' and to '*know*' more about the dimensions of this love. Ask yourself! Do I really know the love of Christ? Seek it from Him! Go to Him! Ask for it! Ask God, '*according to the riches of his glory, to strengthen you with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend this with all saints*'
- **Such a prayer is never offered in vain!** Trust yourself *to know the love of Christ* - we are dealing with *love, the actual love of Christ!* It is personal It refers to personal knowledge of Him and of His *love* to us.
- **Paul's stated this ambition – (Php 3:10, 13)** *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,* And he proceeds to say, **[13]** '*Forgetting those things that are behind, I press forward*'. May we have this same ambition!

- **Next time** we will examine *what is the width and length and depth and height— [19] to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God!*

Closing Prayer