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Ephesians Chapter 3, Verses 14-21

All right let's open our Bibles tonight to the Book of Ephesians, Chapter 3, Verse 14 as we continue verse by verse in the Book of Ephesians. Now imagine if you were Paul and you were under arrest in a home in Rome and it had been five years since you left this church. You'd spent three years planting it and you are 60+ years old and you want to write to the churches and you want to tell them that the Lord is good and they should continue to follow. You can't really be there with them but you want to kind of encourage them, you don't have any problems really that you want to write about but you do want to keep them on that track. What do you write? For Paul his message was very clear, he wanted them to make a list of the way that God loved and saw them from Heaven. I don't know if you remember, you tell your wife I love you and she'll say well count the ways. I'd say three million and six today, that's all I can come up with today. Well Paul said to the people in the church, how much does God love you? Count the ways let me help you. For three chapters he writes down the ways that God loved us. In the hopes that by the time you get done seeing yourself as God does and you get to Chapter 4, you'll be more than willing to serve God because man, how could you not when He loves you so much. So Paul has spent these three chapters that we will finish the third chapter tonight writing about God's love for you. What has God done for you? What has God provided, what did He do for you that you might be able to count on and hope in? Then he gets to Chapter 4 and he says okay therefore, now you make sure you walk worthy of that calling and worthy of those blessings. But before that three chapters of what God sees in you and what He wants you to see from His perspective. Last time in Chapter 3 in Verse 1, Paul began by saying for this reason I Paul a prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles and then he was going to start praying and then he goes, oh by the way. Then from Verse 2 through Verse 13 then he says by the way. More things came to mind, here are some more blessings I just thought of. So he's writing them down, I don't know at 60 maybe he just remembered them. But either way he wanted to just talk about this mystery of Christ dwelling in us and we being a body and He being the head and all. He said it's such a cool deal even the angels

are learning from the church God's plan about salvation. But tonight in Verse 14 he gets back to that prayer. Notice if you compare Verse 1 with Verse 14, there you find the verb I bow my knees to the Father our Lord Jesus. He started in Verse 1 got sidetracked and tonight we begin this prayer.

Verse 14

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 15

From whom the whole family in heaven and in earth is named.

So Paul begins to pray, I bow my knee to the Father. It's an interesting thought this position in prayer thing. If you go to Israel today you will find that the Jews firmly believe that prayer requires work. So just to kneel down and pray is not good enough, it doesn't provide enough effort on your behalf. If you go to the Wailing Wall you'll see men and women praying and as they're praying they are continuing to move. If you're on an El Al flight and it's the morning, prayer time the aisle ways are filled with men and women standing up and praying and you can't get by for 45 minutes, you're stuck. Because the idea is it can't be acceptable to God unless there is this work that is put in. Now that's not a biblical teaching that is just a cultural teaching, a religious point of view. Because even David back in Psalm 95 had written, look we should worship and bow down and kneel before the Lord. So prayer is more than just position obviously, you find Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane kneeling. Then prostrate, the Bible says, falling on His face seeking the **Father**. You find Paul leaving the Ephesian elders on his way to Jerusalem figuring this is the last time he's going to see them and they are kneeling down on the beach 30 miles away in Miletus, last prayer let's pray together on his knees. You see Phillip as he's being stoned to death falling to his knees but it seems as if he'd fell down to pray. If they are going to kill him they are going to kill him praying and he falls there in Acts Chapter 7 on his knees. I'm sure we can't be too distracted by the positions of prayer. I remember hearing the story from the Sunday School teacher who always told her class to fold their hands and close their eyes and it kind of stopped kids from moving. All right let's

all close our eyes, fold our hands, now let's pray. Then there would always be one kid saying Johnny was looking and the teacher would always respond, well how do you know? Oh, Billy told me. No, you get caught kind of ratting somebody out. I don't know of one reference in the Bible that closing your eyes when you pray, although it helps me to not pay attention to what I'm looking at. I heard a joke I think it was years ago that if you fell into a well, head first you'd be willing to pray standing on your head and I guess that's true. But I have found over the years and I don't know about you, that positions in prayer can be very helpful in praying. If I get up in the morning and get on my knees next to my bed and lay my head down on the bed, that's a great way to sleep a little longer. It doesn't help me. But if you get into a place that is not so comfortable and you get down on your knees you are very much reminded of what you are doing there. It's hard to be on your knees for anything, isn't it? It is a difficult position to be in, the older you get the harder it is to get up. But on your knees is kind of like, all right I must be praying because there is very few other things I am doing on my knees. It does give a focus of what you are doing it does kind of limit your distractions and I find it interesting so often in the Scripture as you read about folks praying they are on their knees. I know it doesn't mean anything to the Lord, your heart condition not your body condition matters but for the saints you find it a lot.

Verse 14

Paul says for these reasons that I am on my knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here is why I'm praying. Now his prayer which runs to the end of the chapter, you can file under four "thats". In Verse 16 that; in Verse 17 the first part, that; in Verse 17 the middle that; in Verse 19 a little bit into the verse, that. Four requests from the Lord for these Ephesian believers that God might do these things in their lives and each one of them beginning with that word, that.

Verse 16

So first of all here's my first request that He the Father would grant you, according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.

In other words Paul's first prayer for the church for the believer is that God might make you stronger from within or that God might change your life. Let me ask you a question. A lot of you are here every week, what difference has it made in your life the last six months? How are you different now then you were last June? Last Easter, you know it's almost Easter again. This is ridiculous, something happened to about half the year this year. It can't almost be Easter, can it? How are you last Easter different from this Easter as you've served the Lord and you got the Bible out and got on your knees to pray and sought the Scriptures out? What has God done in your life? What is the Holy Spirit sought to change? What has He put His finger on and what is now no longer a part of your life because it wasn't pleasing to God and what is now part of your life that wasn't there before? Paul's prayer for the church was that they might continue to grow. That they might continue to seek the Lord in such a way that God's power might change their life. That He might become the source of their strength. Strengthened with might, the word there is **dunamis**, power or dynamite or dynamic. If you are to become what God wants you to be, He is going to have to do the work, isn't He? You can make all kinds of promises but the distinction between religion, which says here are the things you can do for God and Christianity which says, all right so you've arrived not able to do anything for God. It is distinct to the point of on the one hand you do for Him on the other hand He does for you. The religious guy might say now don't be angry but God takes away your anger. Don't lose your temper and God takes away the temper. There is a very distinct difference between the work of God in my life and the religious demands upon my life. One demands I act, the other requires that God act. Paul prays for the church, oh Lord I pray that according to God's strength according to His power He might be able to change you. He might be able to mold and shape you. That you might be different now then you were last week, last month or last year. That you might move forward. Paul when he recognized the weaknesses in his flesh especially

through some of the physical trials that he was going through had the Lord said to him, hey Paul when you are weak then I can be strong and Paul said then I want to be weak in everything. I want to rejoice when I can't do it or know that I can't so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. I'll rejoice in my infirmities and reproaches and necessity and persecution and distress and when I'm weak then He is strong. God's begun to change his life. Paul had written to the Corinthians earlier on that God had chosen foolish things to confound the wise. Well that's us, isn't it? A Christian life at best is a matter of drawing close to the Lord by faith, obediently and then relying on the Holy Spirit to do the molding and to do the shaping and do the changing. I remember as a religious kid in school and I think most kids that go to religious schools or to religious institutions that at some point want to do the right thing. You always make vows, God I'm going to do better, I'm going to change things and you can't. You have that desire but no capacity. Then you get saved and the easy thing is to begin to try and take that same mentality into the church. I'm going to now do the things for the Lord that He's done for me. You can't. God change me has got to be your prayer. Lord form in me Your love; make me love the lost like You loved the lost. Let me see the world like You see the world. Give me a hunger for the things of God like you want me to have. That has to be the work of God in your life. It can't be something you do yourself, that's how religion works, it seeks to change you from without but the Lord comes to change you from within. If He does then your life becomes a testimony to the world. I mean everyone can look at you and like man you are different. You remember that fellow that was sitting there in the tombs possessed of the devil that Jesus ministered to and the demons in this man's life flew into the pigs who ran off the cliff? The people went running into town the pigs are dead, Jesus did it. The whole town came out and what they found was a man who had been possessed by the devil, sitting fully clothes, he'd been naked, right mind, he'd been out of his mind and just quietly talking to the Lord and it says the people were afraid, they looked at this man and they said man, get out of here, get lost, we don't want you around here. They said to Jesus this is too weird. The man said to Jesus, can I go with you? The Lord said no you go home, show people what I've done in your life. Be the witness, be the example. It is one thing to preach it is another thing to live that kind of life, isn't it? Jesus said in the

Sermon on the Mount to the Disciples, let your light so shine that when people see your good works they might turn and glorify God. Look at my life, look what God has done in my life. I got a long way to go but look how far we've come. That's a witness that the Lord then can use and Paul's first prayer is that God would grant us, by the riches of His glory, that strength in the inner man, in the spiritual man. I always liked that story in John 12 there where as the Jews gathered for the Passover feast there were a lot of folks who came to see Lazarus. Because the story in town was he'd been dead and now he was alive. Though they were there for the feast, a lot of them got sidetracked up to Bethany, up the hill a couple miles. Let's go check out John, let's go check out Lazarus I hear that he's alive. You read there in Chapter 12, Verse 11 of John that as the people came many of the Jews went away believing in Jesus. His life had been changed, his life had been touched and because of that, they believed. Isn't it awesome that no matter how much you go to share your faith, I'll tell you what will work the best, your life being changed. People that watch you, in and out day in and day out, watch you coming and going and you're changed and you're growing and you're becoming more like the Lord. Oh man people see that. Much more than a bunch of words which are easy to dispel. Paul said we would be living epistles that would be read of all men and especially in a world today where the self help section of the book store is the largest. Ten steps to this, twelve ways of that, thirteen ideas you got a step for everything, don't you? I'm so amazed now that the drug companies have decided on television just to market to you. They are just bypassing the doctor now. They sometimes don't even tell you what the drug is for just ask for it by name. So you go, you men and it's a menopause drug, you didn't know but it looked good, everyone was smiling in the commercial. Well I guess I don't need that one then, gosh who knew? They just market right around, it's that self help. Whatever it is that you need and then sometimes honestly you've heard the commercials, the potential risk is so bad that no matter what they heal, I'm not going for it. I saw a Saturday Night Live little skit, may cause permanent disability, death, brain damage and it is supposed to just get you out of depression. I'm thinking that's not worth it, I'll just be depressed and healthy otherwise. I'll work on the mind but hey I'll tell you what, Christianity is for people who can't help themselves. Jesus said I didn't come for the well, but for

those who know they need a physician, that's who I came for. That's why God wants to change us and every one of these Apostles and Disciples stand around as changed lives, Jesus of course, the best example. Even Paul he writes to the Corinthians in that second letter, he said you know we're just looking through a glass dimly but as we look and as we watch day in and day out we are being changed by that same Spirit of the Lord from glory to glory. You ought to show progress within, without is easy, we can all look the same next year. We'll act the same way, everything is great but from within that God would do that work within. That was Paul's prayer. According to the riches of His glory that God can make me an overcomer within. Not the outer man is gone but the inner man, that we would receive that work.

Verse 17

Second of all, that Christ would be able to dwell in your hearts through faith.

That's an interesting prayer for the church because once you get saved the Lord has come into your life. In fact he has just got through writing about the fact that you know the minute you are born again this miracle begins of God moving in to dwell in your life. Jesus had hinted at it in John there in 14, He said you know the Holy Spirit, you've heard of Him, He's been with you, and He's going to be in you. Later on He said to the Disciples, if you just obey my commandments My Father and I will come and abide with you. The word means to dwell, or to live or to settle down. But it hadn't been a truth that had been known for long and then now the Ephesian church born again, now Paul says my prayer for you is that God would find a place in your home or in your life that He can call home. That He can settle down. In other words, that your saved in such a way that your whole life belongs to God. That apparently is a different place than just being saved. There are a lot of folks that are saved but are very uncomfortable around a lot of -----.

That if you had to look at it from Jesus' standpoint He's still like a visitor in your house He's free to visit but not to stay. He can't really roam around. This word dwell means that, to make permanent residence. There is a Greek word for visiting or like if you go to a hotel and you're going to stay for a couple of nights, there is a different word for that. This word means I've moved in it's a permanent

move. It is a, we're moving in all the furniture, we're planning on staying and it's one of the glorious truths of the Bible. Behold I stand at the door and knock if you open the door, I'll come in and I'll sup with you, I'll have dinner, I'll spend time, I'll live with you. That's the Lord's promise. You remember the Old Testament when the Lord with the angels came to Abraham's on his way to Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham ran out and said oh I'm so glad to hear, would you stay, I'll get the wife cooking, I'll kill a goat, we'll eat some food it'll be great and the Lord said sure, I'm stay. He was so happy to be welcomed home there but the angels that appeared there to Lot's, had to have their arm twisted to stay one night in their house. Stay, no we'll stay out here, no we'd rather just stay out here, **come on its late here**, alright we'll stay then. They weren't home, they were staying but they weren't at home. It's so different isn't it, this idea of the Lord coming to dwell and then staying at home and you know the difference, and you've visited places that you wouldn't feel at home. In fact the weirder the place, the harder it is to feel comfortable. You can't open drawers, what's in the drawer? Do you ever want to raid somebody's refrigerator, you can't do that. Put your feet on the table, channel on the TV, oh you hate I hate that show. You can't do that at somebody's house. Hi, can I use the phone? I've got to call Ecuador. Just doesn't work, you've got to ask permission for everything. Well you can't say hey, I'm coming over and I'm bringing some friends. You could do it if it was your house, Dorothy was right, you Wizard of Oz fans, no place like home. Paul said man I am praying for you church that the Lord would find a home in your heart. That He would be so welcome to open the drawers and raid the refrigerator and put his feet on the table and run around the house. Is the Lord at home in your life? How about in your mind? It is an interesting comparison this whole idea of the Lord making Himself at home. The mind is usually that place that is very small with thick walls. Is Jesus in control of your thoughts, do you worry about Him seeing what you think? I remember the first time as a Christian learning that the Lord knew what I was thinking. I think I knew it all along but just to come to that conclusion is a pretty eerie thought, isn't it? That you think, oh I wonder if the Lord knows? No He already knows. It's too late He just knows. It was kind of embarrassing but it can also be a good thing if He's at home with you. After the flood when Noah made the altar of sacrifice, the Lord says I will no longer again

destroy the world with the flood because I know that man's thoughts are evil from his youth. In other words the flood hadn't cured sin, it had punished the sinner but it hadn't cured sin, man was still sinful. His thoughts were still evil but now I'm saved and one of the things that God wants to do in moving into my house, He wants to take over the thought department. Paul said Romans Chapter 12, I think its Verse 2, isn't it? That we should have our minds renewed. That we should think on the things that are of the Lord. He had written to the Philippians the good things, the holy things, the honest things, the pure things, the virtuous things, the things that have praise that's what God wants to fill our minds with. Well, is He the Lord of the house? Or is your mind filled with junk? You have a hard time getting on to the word because you are everywhere but there. Are you meditating on the word, is it becoming the delight of your house? When Paul wrote to the Corinthians he said in Second Corinthians Chapter 10 the warfare is for your mind and the Lord wants to captivate every thought. So if the Lord is at home in my life then my thought life will be that place where God is honored. I'll think good thoughts, I'll think the things that honor the Lord, in fact I think it is James in Chapter 1 that says that's where the permission for sin comes from, my thoughts. I decide there, whether I'm going to follow God or not. So when it comes to the books on the shelf, the library if you will, if that's your mind, is God's word at the top of the shelf or to the lower shelf where we seldom look and never dust? Is He at home in your thoughts? Most houses have a kitchen or a dining room where you go to eat and you have your appetites, how is the Lord there? Who is cooking, what's on the stove, what are you craving for, what's on the menu? I look at those guys that were running around with Moses when they came out of Egypt and the Bible only describes them as the mixed multitude. In other words they had hearts in a hundred different places; they had a hundred different ideas; nobody had a real solid commitment to the Lord but that group had the most negative impact on the two and a half million that of any group around. Whenever you read about the mixed multitude they were always reaching back, lusting for the things in Egypt. Wanting to go back, oh we had it good in Egypt. Yet, as a Christian I know that the world and you know that the world doesn't satisfy, does it? Ecclesiastes, isn't it Chapter 6, Verse 7 which says man will work his whole life for his mouth and still his appetite won't be filled so

that's not it. The Lord wants to be the Lord over the kitchen. Remember what we read back here in Chapter 2? That in the olden days we were driven by the lust of our flesh and the desires of our mind and whereby the nature of the children of wrath and now I'm saved. Now the Lord says to me, when I read His word, take no thoughts for your life. What you're going to eat, what you're going to drink, what you're going to wear? Hey the world worries about that, isn't life more than food and your body more than clothing? He tells me in Psalms 107, Verse 9 that if my soul will long for Him, He'll fill me with goodness. There is a difference between the Lord being a visitor and being at home. It depends on what drives your appetite. We're warned again and again by the Lord to not labor for the meat that perishes but rather just to labor for those things that last to everlasting life. Paul said I'm just praying that Jesus can find a home in your heart, that you and your faith in Him will welcome Him into your home. Most people have a den in their house where they go to relax, maybe the TV is in there or the comfortable chair or the fireplace or the quiet atmosphere. Interesting isn't it you go there to rest and I always like that picture of the Lord coming each day to sit with you in the den. Have fellowship, start the day off, He's got the Bible out and He's waiting for you and what do you do you run right by the den. Is the Lord at home here? Oh He's at home He's in the den. He may be waiting just to visit with you. Yeah I know but I got to go, yeah I got to go. He's got stuff to teach you and stories to tell you and love to share with you and you need that time to learn of it and yet life's demands and the pressures of life so drastically reduce the time that you spend with God and yet, you're the one who invited Him into your house. He knocked and you went oh yeah come in. I'd like to be saved. I'll come in. Good. Go ahead wait in the den I'll be right in. Now it's been five years and every day when you run by, if you look in the den and you see a chair there I would remind you the Lord I'm sure, is sitting there waiting for you and He'll wait. He's faithful even when you're not. It's not hard to convince people that there is great benefit to spending time with the Lord. It is sometime harder to convince people that God looks forward to it as much as you do. Yet Revelation 4, Verse 11 says it is for this reason you've been created for His pleasure. You love to spend time with God when you can make the time and do it, it's blessed. God is more blessed than you. All right, I can't wait to tell you all that I've learned or all that I want

you to learn and God longs for fellowship. That ought to be our greatest motivator but if the Lord is at home in your life then He's not sitting alone in the den. If He's welcome you've got to spend time with Him. There is always that one little sentence I remembered about this particular verse and it's this. Where He dwells, He has to reign. Where the Lord lives He got to rule. He comes to rule. How's the den? Is the Lord at home or how about in the garage? I like the garage. I'm the only one who has a garage and I don't know what it is for. I don't fix nothing, I don't have any tools, I've got no clue, I'm an absolute imbecile with those kind of things. My car doesn't fit in there so I don't know what in the world you need a garage for. I got me some serious power tools they are brand new they are beautiful. They are supposed to fix stuff and I have no idea but garages for most people, I'll leave myself out of the equation are for producing fruit. I love that because here's the house I want the Lord to be at home in your life. I always remember as a kid when I did try to do stuff that my dad would grab my hands and hold them and do it with me. Oh do it like this, you know? Now I get saved and I get the same promise from God that He'll stand behind and put His big hands, He'll grasp my little hands and He'll use my life. He'll go out and He'll minister through my life and He'll use my life and guide my steps and produce fruit and abide in me and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide, so neither can you. Then He tells me to go out into the fields that are **wide** into the harvest and I'm to work with Him and I wonder, if the Lord is really at home in my life then I ought to be out working with Him. Not saying hey, I'm going to get to that witnessing thing as soon as I finish those other important projects. I'm going to get into that serving the Lord thing as soon as I get done with the other things in my life and if He's the Lord of my home, He should be the Lord of the garage. Lord of the fruit department. He should be able to produce that fruit in my life. But so often for many of us we don't have time for that. Yet we say the Lord is at home. What do you do with your spare time? Is He the Lord of that too? Do you run out of the house and go places that if the Lord were to just appear and say hey, I'd like to go with you, you'd say that's not where I'm going tonight. I'll be back before 2 however and then we can visit all morning long in the den. But if you're involved with it and the Lord couldn't be involved with it, should you be involved with it? The Lord wants to be at home in your life.

I remember hearing this story of this being at home at the storage closet under the stairs and I remember reading the fellow write, it is usually the last place we give the Lord. That junk in my life I don't want Him to mess with. Lord I'll give you my whole life, just stay out of the closet. That's mine and you know where God wants to go if you say that. He wants to go right in that closet, doesn't He? You come home one day and He's outside on the porch with the fumigation department telling you the house stinks and He ain't going in till they can clean up that closet and you tell Him about how much you've done for Him and how faithful you've been and couldn't you just have something to yourself and He tells you He's going to sleep on the back porch because He's nauseated and all right, come on, You can have the whole thing. That Christ might dwell in your hearts that He might find a home with you. Oh how different it is to be saved and then to come to that place where God owns the house. Where He has the title deed, where you've been bought with the price and if you'll just go Lord, just do with me whatever You want, fill my heart, fill my thoughts, use my time, take my life and the Lord will do that but He'll be beaming from ear to ear because that's what His desire is, to be at home in your life. Good prayer that Paul prayed that you might be changed day by day by the inner man through the Spirit of God. That Jesus might find a place to find Himself at home, truly at home in your life through faith. Thirdly in Verse 17, that you would be rooted and grounded in love.

Verse 18

And be able to comprehend with all the saints what are the width and length and depth and height.

Verse 19

And to know the love of Christ which passes all knowledge.

Now he uses a mixed metaphor and Paul is real good a mixing his illustrations. The word rooted speaks of plants and trees in the ground. The word grounded speaks of a building and how stable the building is but both of them are tied to the words, in love. Then he goes on to say that our depth and our stability in our

relationship with God is going to be determined by how well we understand how much God loves us. In other words, the affect and the ability as a believer to walk with God is going to be drastically touched by how much you are aware of God's love for you. Not just in your head but in your life. He uses some real kind of infinite type of wording, the length and the breath and the width and the height that you might be able to comprehend and the word there literally means to lay hold of. How broad is God's love? It'll cover the Gentiles and the Jews and the murderer and the liar, every culture, every person it's about that wide, isn't it? It really goes that far. That's how broad God's love is. Whoever will let him come drink freely of the water of life. Yeah, I don't know if He'll love me. No no you're within that broadness. How long is God's love, what is the length? Well, Chapter 1 says before we were born, before the world was created He was loving me. Then I read down the road that from everlasting to everlasting He's going to love me more. It started before I even comprehended and it's going to last forever, isn't it? That's a lot of loving. How deep is your love, that's a BeeGee's song. I should write stuff down and just stick right to the note. That's really awful. How deep is God's love? Well it got to you that are pretty good. You were down there pretty far, weren't you? Some of you were way down there. Able to reach to the guttermost to the uttermost, Hebrews Chapter 7. How high is His love? Well the Bible says Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father, far above all principalities and powers so that there is nothing that can keep God from loving you. There is nothing that can keep God from showing you His love. What's going to separate you from the love of God. Paul said nothing, nobody, nothing can touch this. That's a real assuring thing to me that His love is so vast that anyone can come, it has an eternal affect, it will reach down to even where I am and it is granted from a position where I become more than a conqueror through Him that loved me. Paul's prayer for the church was that they might find their strength and stability in depth; in that love that God has for them to be able to comprehend what cannot be comprehended apart from revelation. In other words, that you can grab a hold of the love of God for you, apart from just what you might be able to reason and rational and understand but that God might show you how much He loves you. You know there is a vast difference between saying well God is love and He loves everyone and then for you to be able to get on your knees and say God loves me.

Me with all of my warts, me with all of my failures, with all of my stupidity God loves me and in the morning when I go to pray and the devil goes, He don't love you today. I might go well, there is a depth and a length and a height and a width to God's love and the devil doesn't know anything about it and he's a liar. He loves me today as much as He did yesterday. In fact, He's going to love me that way tomorrow and there isn't anything I can do to make Him love me more. He just loves me and oh to know that. You wouldn't believe the amount of Christians who spend their entire life struggling in their walk with God because they don't know that. I think I've messed it up, I think I've blown it, I think the devil is out to get me, I think God's given him permission, I think I'm going to be destroyed and I don't know what I'm going to do, I'm lost.... Hey God still loves you. I don't think so, I don't know, I'm not sure, I can't believe it. Well buy it pal, learn it, and know it. Paul prays for the church to understand it because it isn't such a normal understanding it doesn't just come through learning it. It comes by God showing you, by you reading and just coming to the conclusion man, the Lord loves me this much that God would reveal His love to you. He writes notice here in these verses, Verse 18 that you might be able to comprehend this with all the saints. Because it is one thing that you can't really share as much as you can just have to know on your own. You've just got to know it on your own, don't you? The person that knows it, he's at peace. The devil has very little to say to a guy who knows God loves him. You're ugly. I know and God still loves me. You're a failure. You bet I am and the apple of His eye. You're a real loser. I know it but the loser is going to Heaven for all eternity. Ahhh. What a goof. He throws junk at you and you're just, you know. You aren't moved, are you? You aren't moved. I know one of the things with my mom and dad over the years and I got in lots of trouble but I could always count on them loving me. No matter how much trouble I'd get into, what police department called home, my dad, oh he'd be mad but he loved me. I could always count on his love. I mean he never let me down he never failed to be a good father. God's like that too. He'll never fail to love you. To know that is to just stand up tall and when you go to pray and the devil says God's not going to answer you because you're a loser. Hey He will He loves me so much. No one else may love me this much but He does. People change their opinions about you or their love for you but He doesn't. Paul prayed for the

church that you might know this love of God which passes knowledge. It's beyond ability to reason. It grants you victory in Jesus.

Verse 19

Finally he prays there towards the end, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

He just doesn't know what else to add so he says if you can just be filled up to the brim, if you could just not miss out on anything good that God has made available, if you could just live your Christian life only with the best God has to offer. That's what I would want for you. That's a great prayer, isn't it? The peace of God, the joy of God, the rest of God and the provisions of God, I just want you to have all that He has made available, I want the best for you. Poor Paul, 60 years old, chained to some guy watching over him because he's a Christian. He's writing to the church, man I just want God's best for you and he's locked up and chained up and he's an old guy and he may not get out. He will but he doesn't know that. All he can think about is God's people, wanting the best for them. What a beautiful prayer request, don't you think? How we can pray that for each other.

Verse 20

Then Paul ends his prayer by saying now, to Him who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we can ask or think, and according to the power that works in us.

Verse 21

To Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, to all generations and forever and ever.

You know one of the nice ways to pray is when you realize that who you are talking to is God Himself. I think if you are ever challenged in your prayer life about what you're asking then you've probably got to stop and realize who you are talking to. I find that many people see God through their own limitations. In other words if they can't figure it out, God probably can't figure it out. To the

degree that they can't do it, their anxiety level increases as they pray. Oh God, if you could just provide and you don't see a way so your faith is zero. If you can't see a way then how can there possibly be a way. Here's the clue, God is bigger than you. So Paul as he prays these great prayers of faith and blessing upon God's people ends his prayer by saying I know who I am talking to and he reminds himself of the God that he serves. This is by the way the same God who had spoken the world into existence. This is the God of whom Jude wrote, now onto Him who is able to keep you from falling. I like that, don't you? Lord keep me from falling. That should be a good prayer. Those of you who think you can lose your salvation, pray this prayer, Lord keep me from falling and then go to Jude 1, Verse 24 and unto Him is able to keep you from falling. When He fails, then let me know because He can't fail. Paul, I love his words, He is able when I am not. I should never analyze the likelihood of a prayer being answered from the standpoint of my capacity. Paul says He is able to do exceedingly abundantly. Let me ask you something. What can God not do? What limits God's ability at all? See how quiet it is. God can do whatever He wants, can't He? I love when you pray that you would remind yourself of God's ability it's a good practice. So Paul ends in Verse 21 with one of these doxologies, these blessings that God would then find that glory that He deserves through Jesus in the church. You ought to leave here every week singing His praises. The world ought to see you changed by Him. Four "thats" strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, Christ finding a real place of home in your heart by faith. You grounded and rooted in the love that you understand by revelation of how much God loves you. The length and the width and the depth and the height and that God might then fill you with all fullness and He is able to do it.