

Ephesians
The Love of Christ
Ephesians 3:14-21
May 18th, 2025

I. Introduction: Roots & Fruit

In this passage, Paul calls upon God to send us the strength we need in order to rise up to meet the high calling God has placed upon our lives when He united us to His Son, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. If we miss this and skip over what Paul says here, we will find ourselves like a tree with no _____, like a building without a foundation. We will not last long, and we will not be able to carry out the calling we have received. But likewise, we cannot simply stop here. If we refuse to get to all the *doing*, then we are a tree without any _____. In that case we are the fig tree that Jesus found on His way into Jerusalem. It had leaves, but no fruit. We must have both. Just as the tree with solid roots bears much fruit, so the Christian rooted and grounded will walk in a manner worthy of the calling he has received.

II. The Text – Ephesians 3:14-21

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 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, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints 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. 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, 21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Paul prays for us that we, the Church of God, would be filled with the fullness of God as we heartily believe and trust the great _____ God has for us: His love made known in Jesus that surpasses any measurable dimension, even knowledge itself.

III. Theology & Obedience

Theology and obedience roughly cover what we are as humans. We are _____ creatures, and we are _____ creatures. As such, the goal of our existence is to know God and to walk with Him; in other words, our aim is to think well about God (_____) and to walk rightly with God (_____). What Paul says in our passage must color all of our thinking, all of our doing. For we are not just creatures of God, we are *beloved* creatures. We are creatures loved by God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, redeemed by His blood, and filled with His Spirit. Our theology, therefore, is *knowing* the love God has for us. Our obedience is *walking* in that love.

IV. Knowing the Love of God

Theology is knowing the love of God. It is seeing all things in the light of God's love for His people made known in Christ. Commenting on this passage, in particular on the dimensions of God's love, John Calvin said this: "In whatever direction men may look, they will find

nothing in the doctrine of salvation that should not be related to this. The love of Christ contains within itself every aspect of wisdom. . . [This is] what is necessary for us to know, and what the Lord desires us to contemplate, above and below, on the right hand and on the left, before and behind. The love of Christ is held out to us to meditate on day and night and to be wholly immersed in. He who holds to this alone, has enough. Beyond it there is nothing solid, nothing useful, nothing, in short, that is right or sound. Go abroad in heaven and earth and sea, you will never go beyond this without overstepping the lawful bounds of wisdom.”

First. Knowing God’s love for us must color the way we see _____, broadly speaking. The love of God must transfigure how we understand God’s creation of the world. He made all things in Christ. And He made it all because He loves us. This means that reality is our friend: the way the world works, the way we work, the way nature works, is all good, for our loving Father crafted it. The world, in its rebellion hates reality. It hates biological reality. It hates social realities. It hates the family. It hates marriage. It hates how God made men and women different. It hates how we have to work. It hates how we are not our own – but that we are made for God, and were made to obey Him. But as Christians, we receive all of this from the loving hand of our Father. It is a gift from Him. Good theology recognizes the love of God in everything we see around us.

Second. The love of God in Christ is to color how we think about _____. Of course, this includes how He made us. But also how He views us in our sin. Good theology drives the sinner toward God, not away from Him. God our Father does not delight in our sin. Far from it. He hates sin. He is angry with sinners. But it is the compassionate anger of a loving Father.

It is because God loves us that He cannot make peace with our sin. Instead He pleads with us and woos us to return to Him so that we might be blessed and made happy in Him. (See Matthew 11:28-30.) Good theology means thinking of our sinfulness in the light of the love of God made known in Christ. He wants all of our sin so that He can sink it down to Hell on the Cross, and lift us up into the heavens to be seated in His presence.

Third. Good theology means thinking of the _____ in the light of God’s love. Paul prays that we would “be able to comprehend the love of Christ *with all the saints*.” This pursuit is not a solitary thing. Instead it is carried out together before God, here, among the people of God. This is where we come to comprehend the love of God with brothers dwelling together in unity, speaking the truth to one another in love, bearing with one another in love, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave us. (See James 3:13-18.) True theology is knowledge taught by the Spirit of God who is the Spirit of love. (See 1 John 4:8-11.)

Fourth. Good theology views this whole cosmic _____ in the light of God’s love. It was all made by God in Christ. It is all being united to Christ. It is all for Christ. It is all a theater displaying the love of God in Christ Jesus. And good theology means seeing all things in that light: it means learning to read the story we are in; learning to view it with eager anticipation, wondering what God is doing in *this* scene. This includes politics and world affairs as much as the minutiae of each day. This includes the good stuff and the hard stuff. God is the Master Storyteller, and His story will be surprising. But we know what the overarching drama is about – and we know how it ends. (See Rev. 19:1-10.)

V. Come & Welcome to Jesus Christ