

Episode #3-03 – Ephesians 3 Part 4 - To Know His Love

I. The purpose of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians is to tell us what God's present purpose is in all His work today. This includes His work in the world and in the individual believer. Ephesians is the book of God's present purpose, the book of being "in Christ," and the book of God's grace.

II. In Ephesians 3:12, we saw one of the most staggering truths about our position "in Christ": that we have boldness and access with confidence to God through our faith. Now, as he did in chapter 1, Paul prays in light of the glorious truths he has just revealed.

III. Ephesians 3:13. In the light of boldness and access with confidence, afflictions that Paul was facing should not cause them to lose heart. These are for their sake, and are their glory, that God gives Paul (or anyone else) the grace to suffer for the sake of His grace.

IV. Ephesians 3:14. Having finished the long parenthesis (verses 2-13), Paul continues his statement from verse 1.

A. The word is not "cause," but Greek *charis*, means "grace." What else could bring sinners to a place where we could have boldness and access with confidence to God?

B. Because of this grace Paul prays the Progenitor of all this wonderful grace.

V. Ephesians 3:15. Out of the Father, every family in the heavens and on the earth is named.

A. The Greek word for "family" is related to the Greek word for "Father," so make it "Progenitor" and "progeny."

B. It is "every," for there are various families: families of angels and men, like the family of Israel, or the tribes within Israel, or believers today in the dispensation of grace.

VI. Ephesians 3:16. Paul's request of the Father is that He gives us, believers "in Christ" today, in accord with the wealth of His glory, to be made staunch with power.

A. Not for the purpose of our working miracles or becoming supermen. Why then? We will see in upcoming verses.

B. The power must come through His Spirit. The power he wants is not external strength, but internal power.

VII. Ephesians 3:17. He wants it first of all so Christ can dwell in our hearts by faith.

A. We talk about "asking Jesus into your heart," but really it is the Holy Spirit Who seals us when we believe. Christ only dwells (has a home) in our hearts when we make Him at home there by exercising faith to bring our very inner beings into line with God and His truth. This is not automatic for the believer! We need to be staunch with God's power to make a home for Christ within us.

B. We also need His power to root and ground ourselves in love in a world where it is much easier to hate.

VIII. Ephesians 3:18. We need to be staunch with His power in order to grasp firmly, with all other believers, how broad, long, deep, and high Christ's love is. His love is so contrary to the "love" of the world that is familiar to us that we need His power to ever understand it.

IX. Ephesians 3:19. It is the surpassing love of Christ that he wants us to be strong to know.

A. In many ways, he desires us to know the unknowable, for Christ's love is beyond our understanding! Yet it is through getting to know His love, as much as we can, that we are completed for the entire complement of God.

B. What is this complement? Perhaps, as we get to know more of His love, we will start to have more understanding of it.

X. Ephesians 3:20. Paul has completed his inspired prayer, and now offers this doxology.

- A. God is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask Him to do, or even can conceive of Him doing. God's plans go far beyond what we know or can imagine!
- B. He will do these things according to the power that is even now operating in us. How is it operating? To produce faith! Remember Ephesians 1:19-20.

XI. Ephesians 3:21. To Him be glory in the Ekklesia, the Out-called.

- A. In this case, I believe the outcalled IS Christ Jesus, for He is the One positioned by God as His Son.
- B. A generation is a thing generated or produced.
- C. An eon is an outflow. We imagine God's works as many eons outflowing. Those eons produce a resulting eon of God's future kingdom.
- D. What that kingdom produces are many generations. But this flow and its results will go on farther into the future than we can see or know about, always producing greater and greater things beyond our imagining. For all these untold glories, we offer praise.

XII. Conclusion: Paul prays in the light of God's grace set forth in the first 13 verses of the chapter. He wants us to be empowered for Christ to dwell in our hearts by faith, and for us to grasp the unknowable love of Christ. How great that love is for us! Praise God for His grace.