

God-Filled Ephesians 3:14-19

Introduction

NJFK—an empty glass (filled with air); only way to get all the air out is to fill the glass with something else (water)

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every 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.

1. Prayer because of God's Gospel (14-15)
2. Prayer for Inner Strength (16)
3. Prayer for Pervasive Love (17-19)

1. Prayer because of God's Gospel (14-15)

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,

For this reason—what reason? The good news that he's been writing about in this letter.

3:7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace—unsearchable riches—plan of the mystery—manifold wisdom of God—your glory

Same words in 3:1

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—

Paul is a prisoner not so much because of the power of Rome as for the cause of Christ—hence a prisoner of Christ. And he's going through all this because of his commitment to getting the gospel to the Gentiles.

See 2:19-22

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, **21** in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. **22** In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

This profound, extensive, amazing good news that takes in Jews and Gentiles into the kingdom of the Messiah sets Paul praying for what only God can do in keeping with God's gospel promises.

Every family in heaven and on earth—every patria or the whole patria
The whole family whose father is God.

I bow my knees before the Father—I am coming to God in prayer on behalf of His family, children born of Him.

God the Father

2. Prayer for Inner Strength (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,

According to the riches of his glory—in keeping with—infinite riches, divine shining splendor

Strengthened—to fortify, brace, invigorate; verb form of *kratos*—e.g., autocrat, democrat

Power—*dunamis*; miraculous ability

How? Through His Spirit

Where? In your inner being

Because we so often feel the weakness and limitations of our own human strength, it is easy to forget that God's Spirit who dwells in each believer gives that believer supernatural power. This is the Biblical explanation for how and why true Christians undergo such a

transformation from what they were naturally.

God the Holy Spirit

The power of the Spirit looks toward a divine development in the hearts and lives of believers:

3. Prayer for Pervasive Love (17-19)

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.

Paul's readers are already believers, so he's not praying for their salvation. They are in Christ, and Christ is in them.

But what he pictures here is Christ taking full influence and control of every part of the believer. Picture someone moving into a broken-down house filled with junk. Over time the new owner clears the junk and renovates the home to make it totally his home.

Rooted—without roots a plant dies

Grounded—without a foundation a house falls

In love—love for God and love for others drives everything that's right to do in life; God's love for us generates our love for Him and our love for others.

Strength to comprehend—apart from God's help we don't even get it.

With all the saints (holy ones, those who belong to God)—this is a community wide phenomenon—ALL of them

Length, height, depth—all the dimensions of a cubic area—3-D; still using language consistent with our being the temple of God (Ephesians 2:21)

To know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge

Has already talked about God's surpassing power (1:19); God's surpassing grace (2:7); now Christ's surpassing love (3:19)

God the Son

Ultimate purpose—in order that you may be filled with all the fullness of God—like the temple being filled with the shekinah glory of God's presence

Compare Ephesians 2:21-22

21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. **22** In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Our ultimate destiny of completed sanctification—glorification—when we are completely sinless and immortal.

We will never be God. But we can be filled with God.

A cup can't hold an entire ocean, but a cup can be filled completely with the ocean.

Conclusion

1. Prayer because of God's Gospel (14-15) God the Father
2. Prayer for Inner Strength (16) God the Holy Spirit
3. Prayer for Pervasive Love (17-19) God the Son