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Filled With the Fullness of God

Ephesians 3.14-21

Series: Near to the Heart of God

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The Village Church at Shell Point

Evening Service

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I. **Prayers of the New Testament**

A. Motivation for series

B. Prayers

1. **Jesus**

a. “Lord’s Prayer” – Matthew 6.9-13, Luke 11.2-4

b. High Priestly Prayer – John 17

c. Gethsemane – Matthew 26.36-46

2. **Paul**

a. Completing the Work – Philippians 1.3-11

b. Walking in a Manner Worthy – Colossians 1.3-23

c. Knowing the Hope of His Calling – Ephesians 1.15-23

II. **Review – Knowing the Hope of His Calling**

A. **Ephesians 1:15–23 (ESV) —**

1. 15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints,

2. 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,

3. 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

4. 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

5. 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

6. 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

7. 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

8. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,

9. 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

B. **Petitions**

1. **Give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation**

a. In the knowledge of Him (to know God better)

2. **Have the eyes of your hearts enlightened**
 - a. Know the hope to which He has called you
 - b. Know the riches of His glorious inheritance
 - (1) In the saints
 - c. Know what is the immeasurable greatness of His power
 - (1) Cf resurrection and ascension power
- C. **Theological Context**
 1. Began with “For this reason...”
 - a. Refers to Ephesians 1.3-14
 2. Theological concepts
 - a. Chosen to be holy and blameless
 - b. Predestination
 - c. Adoption
 - d. Redemption
 - e. Forgiveness
 - f. Sealing of Holy Spirit

III. **Filled With the Fullness of God**

- A. **Ephesians 3:14–21** (ESV) —
 1. 14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,
 2. 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
 3. 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,
 4. 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
 5. 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
 6. 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
 7. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,
 8. 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.
- B. **Theological Context**
 1. “For this reason”
 - a. Here we go again!
 2. Cf **Ephesians 3:2–13** (ESV) —
 - a. 2 assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you,
 - b. 3 how the **mystery** was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly.
 - c. 4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the **mystery** of Christ,

- d. 5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been **revealed** to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.
 - e. 6 This **mystery** is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.
 - f. 7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.
 - g. 8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,
 - h. 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the **mystery** hidden for ages in God, who created all things,
 - i. 10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.
 - j. 11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,
 - k. 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.
 - l. 13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.
3. **Stewardship of God's grace**
- a. Aka, **Mystery of Christ**
 - (1) Made known by revelation
 - (2) Not made known to other generations
 - (3) Now revealed to apostles and prophets
4. **Mystery**
- a. Through the gospel, Gentiles are heirs with Israel
 - b. Members of same body with Israel
 - c. Partakers of the promise in Christ through the Gospel
 - (1) Cf promise to Abraham
5. **Paul's Role**
- a. Minister of this gospel
 - b. Called to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to Gentiles
 - c. Bring to light the mystery hidden
6. **God's Intent**
- a. Through church the wisdom of God would be made known
 - (1) To rulers and authorities in heavenly places
 - (2) According to God's eternal purpose
 - b. How does this happen?
 - (1) In Christ
 - (2) Through faith
 - (3) In boldness, access God with confidence

IV. **The Prayer**

- A. **Ephesians 3:14–21** (ESV) —
1. 14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,
 2. 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
 3. 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,
 4. 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
 5. 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
 6. 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
 7. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,
 8. 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.
- B. **Paul's Position**
1. **"Bow my knees before the Father"**
 - a. Even though we can approach God with freedom, boldness, and confidence, Paul knows who he is and who God is
 2. **"From whom every family in heaven and on earth is named"**
 - a. Paul prays to the One who's got the whole world in His hands!
- C. **Petitions**
1. **Strengthened with power**
 - a. First prayer – that the eyes of hearts would be enlightened so we would know power
 - b. Source – according to, out of, His glorious riches
 - c. Agent – His Spirit
 - d. Location – inner being
 2. **Purpose**
 - a. That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith
 - b. Cf **Romans 8:9–11** (ESV) —
 - (1) 9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.
 - (2) Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.
 - (3) 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
 - (4) 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.
 - c. Christ is already in hearts
 - d. Means that the life of Christ would manifest itself, beginning in hearts, (inner being)
 - e. Dwell – make His home there; be comfortable there

- (1) No divided affections
- f. Means of appropriation – faith
 - (1) “May dwell in your hearts through faith”
- g. Foundation of walk – rooted and grounded in love
- 3. **Knowledge**
 - a. May have strength to comprehend
 - b. Community – together with all the saints
- 4. **Ultimate purpose**
 - a. Comprehend what?
 - b. Breadth
 - (1) From all nations
 - c. Length
 - (1) Abraham till now (from 1900 BC)
 - d. Height
 - (1) Seated in the heavenly realms
 - e. Depth
 - (1) Were dead in sins and trespasses
 - f. Know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge
 - (1) Play on words – gnosko the love that surpasses gnosis
 - (2) Knowledge of love of Christ surpasses all other knowledge
 - g. Ultimate purpose – filled with all the fullness of God
 - (1) Characteristic of godliness

V. **Doxology**

A. **Ephesians 3.20-21**

- 1. 21 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,
- 2. 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

B. **Prayer to Doxology**

- 1. Loftiness of prayer leads to doxology
 - a. “Prayer turns wholly into praise”

C. **Glory to God**

1. **Recognizing**

- a. Ability to do the unimaginable
- b. According to His power at work within us

2. **Location**

- a. In the church!
 - (1) Earthly manifestation of Christ
- b. In Christ Jesus

3. **Duration**

- a. Forever!

VI. Pray through the prayer

A. **Ephesians 3:14–21** (ESV) —

- 1. 14 For this reason

- a. I bow my knees before the Father,
 - b. 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
2. 16 that according to the riches of his glory
 - a. he may grant you to be strengthened with power
 - (1) through his Spirit in your inner being,
 - b. 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—
 - c. that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
 - (1) 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints
 - (2) what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
 - d. 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,
 - e. that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
3. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think,
 - a. according to the power at work within us,
4. 21 to him be glory
 - a. in the church
 - b. and in Christ Jesus
 - c. throughout all generations,
5. forever and ever.
 - a. Amen.