**Ephesians 3:1-6, “**For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— 2 assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, 3 how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. 4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, 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. 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.

**Heirs together with the promise**

* **Isaiah 62:1-5, “**For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. 2 The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. 3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. 4 You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate, but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. 5 For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you”

**Psalm 149:4** For the Lord takes delight (pleasure) in his people; he crowns the humble with victory.

**Zephaniah 3:17, “**The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing”

**Deut 32:10** - Apple of his eye - "He found him in a desert land,and in the howling waste of the wilderness;he encircled him, he cared for him,he kept him as the apple of his eye.

And the description of God’s care for His people in [Deuteronomy 32:10](https://www.bibleref.com/Deuteronomy/32/Deuteronomy-32-10.html) emphasizes Israel’s vulnerability and God’s tender, loving affection. God provided complete protection; His people were a priority. In the “howling wilderness,” God provided [manna](https://www.gotquestions.org/what-was-manna.html) for them to eat, water from a rock, and safety from their enemies. His care was as automatic as if He were guarding the center of His eye from harm. What a loving God we serve.  
  
God held the Israelites as the apple of His eye, rebellious and stiff-necked though they were in the wilderness. Being the apple of His eye, they were most cherished. And God’s care for His people has not diminished with time. He holds His children close, and He can protect us as easily as our eyelids protect our pupils. He does this because He loves us in Christ. He has a parental, protective love for us, and the biblical descriptions of His love are eye-opening, to say the least.

Ephesians 3:7–8 (ESV), “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. 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,

**VIDEO – MY KING**

**Ephesians 3:9–12 (**ESV), “and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, 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. 11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

**Ephesians 3:10 – 11, Pauls shares that the church has implications that reach throughout heaven and the entire spiritual realm – the church made up of Jews and Gentiles is making known the manifold wisdom to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms – these are both good and bad – angels and demons – angels look on and marvel at grace while demonic forces look on with fear and tremble – the evil forces have already been defeated at the cross and they await their final punishment in the lake of fire – the existence of a united church – jew and gentile – one new man in Christ is announcing that their rule in coming to an end once and for all**

**There is more going on with the church than meets the eye – if you are part of the church, then you are part of a cosmic sermon that is being preached to the spiritual rulers and authorities…. We have a far bigger viewing audience than any of us realize –**

**According to verse 11 Jesus came and accomplished or fulfilled or achieved God’s plan. Christ is the central character in this plan, and all things will be summed up in Him .. The crucified, and risen Christ is at the Father’s right hand, and he will soon come to put all the hostile principalities and powers under his feet!**

**So consider how the church is a witness of the glory of Christ. We make known the ‘multi-faceted’ wisdom of God (a related word is used for Joseph’s multicolored coat in Gen 37 – This wisdom is so great that God uses it to proclaim to heavenly beings. His grace and glory displayed in a diverse people – a many colored fellowship, a multi-cultural, multiethnic fellowship – who have been called, redeemed, forgiven, made alive, and united in Christ! The angelic host look on at the reconciling work of Christ, ‘which is the model for the reconciling of the universe when everything in heaven and earth will be brought together in HIM!**

**Can you imagine how this vision must have encouraged the churches in Ephesus! People gathering from normal backgrounds, leaning in to listen the reading of this letter – farmers, bankers, metal workers, carpenters, shop keepers, servants, masters, moms dads, kids – as they hear chapter 3 they are told that they are testifying to heavenly beings – Stunning – do not underestimate the glory of God in the church!**

**Ephesians 3:14-21**

The prayer itself, is one long sentence in the original Greek—one long, beautifully crafted sentence which gathers rhetorical momentum until the words crescendo into the boldest prayer anyone can ever pray.

Most powerful prayers … greatest things that you can pray for one another, for your family, you spouses, your kids, your grandkids…

**Ephesians 3:14–21 (ESV), “**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. 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, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

In this prayer Paul is asking the Father for two primary things, power and love for the gathered community the church that met at Ephesus!

**For this Reason, I bow my knees ….**

Father from whom every family in heaven and earth derives it’s name … every family – all created and sustained by the Father!

Father’s House… He taught us pray Our Father (Lord’s prayer -reorientated, one word), Oilkos

Family terminology … Every Church in every city a house of prayer!

And not just a house of prayer, but a family of prayers… this makes sense since the primary metaphor of the church that Paul uses in the NT is Family… Paul uses sibling terminology 118x’s, Father terminology 40x’s, and inheritance terminology 14x’s. Family terminology is Paul’s primary and most used metaphor describing the identity of the church!

The Father has always longed for a family (sons and daughters) and a home (to dwell with them).

Paul is like God I know what you are capable of … you are all powerful.. there is nothing you can’t do… therefore … bowing instead of standing…

BOW… before a big God. Therefore, he could pray big prayers. Little God, little prayers. Big God, big prayers…

**For this Reason…** the first three chapters in Ephesians describe for us Who God is and what our identity is in him, the second half Paul will describe how he wants us to live.. in the middle is Paul’s prayer… first two chapters of God’s amazing Grace… Paul was stunned at God’s grace in saving sinners individually, and his grace in uniting them corporately, this God who called us, adopted us, redeemed us, forgave us. Christ died on our behalf, The Spirit sealed us, God has brought us from death to life has raised us with Christ, and has seated us in heavenly places in Him! In light of these things, Paul says, “For this reason” I BOW in humble gratitude! As the Psalmist says, “Come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He is our God!”

And this Heavenly Father gives “according to the riches of his glory” (verse 16).

**“Glory” means “all that makes God be God.” DESCRIBE GLORY…**

“Riches of his glory” implies that the essence of God is inexhaustible. When this God gives, He gives out of a well that is full and bottomless!

**Describe Riches… earlier Paul described his own spiritual poverty with the unsearchable riches of Christ, the riches of God are those that cancel spiritual debt…. Paul describes God has being Rich in Mercy, he is merciful, he doesn’t give us what we deserve… he made us alive even while we were dead in transgressions… has already seated us in heavenly places and enables us to show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ, these riches were provided through the blood of Christ which has redeemed us for the debt of our sin… what we owed God… but not only do they cancel debt they also provide us with the rights and privileges of the household of heaven, even to the point that we get to call God our Father! WOW!**

It is with a sense of urgency and passion that Paul expresses his desire that we experience the fullness of life that is available to us in the triune God.

Six movements of the heart in prayer before the Trinity, each of them builds on the others until the whole prayer crescendos into the extravagantly huge prayer to be filled up to the fullness of God.”

**6 movements**

1. According to the Riches of his Glory… Strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being

This is where Paul begins his prayer. And this is where he ends his prayer: “to him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or imagine” (verse 20).

1. Strengthened with power… Not just strengthened but “strengthened with power.” And not just any power, but the power of the Holy Spirit. “The Spirit in the inner being.” Inner being refers to the deepest recesses of our person, to the very center of one’s self, to the place within us that even we ourselves have yet to explore and understand.

We need power to do God’s will! More prayer more power, little prayer little power, no prayer no power –

John 14:12-14

It’s in our inner being … Here is where the Spirit comes to dwell, and here in that innermost person is where we are given power – a power that we desperately need. Power at the core of our being to be the person that God created us to be

**Holy Spirit come upon us. Surround us. Enfold us. Mariante us… Indwell us.**

**Father Breathe your breathe of power upon us…**

1. Movement 2

I pray that the Father grant that Christ dwell in your hearts by faith! The Third Person of the Trinity moving deep within, the Second Person of the Trinity dwelling deep within, exercising control deep within.

“That Christ may dwell.”

There are two words in the Greek New Testament that are rendered in English as “dwell.” One (paroikeo) means to “inhabit as a stranger,” to live as an alien away from home. The other (katoikeo) means to “settle down somewhere.” It refers to a permanent dwelling as opposed to a temporary abode.”

Which word do you think Paul uses here? Means to settle down, to find an home, to find a place of rest!

“When we invite God to dwell in our midst . . . it is an invitation for Him to dismantle everything that the Holy Spirit did not initiate.”

Father, I ask that Christ not only visit our hearts, but that he come and take up permanent residence in them. I ask that your Son dwell at the very core of my personality! The very control center of my innermost being!

1. Movement three: I ask the Father to grant you according to the riches of his glory…to have you rooted and grounded in love (verse 17).

In the “love of the Trinity.” In the love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

“Rooted and grounded” is the natural consequence of the Spirit empowering the center, and Christ controlling the center of my being!

So important that we stay GROUNDED, that’s how we grow, 😉

Greener on the other side… greener where you water it…

Paul is asking that the love of the Trinity be the soil and foundation of our lives.

Rooted deeply in the soil of God’s love so that good fruit emerges.

A foundation that is grounded deeply in the love of God, making the building of our lives strong and enduring.

God ‘s love is unfailing, it’s unshakeable…

O Father, please, please may the soil and foundation of my life be the pure and strong love You and Your Son share in the Spirit.

1. Movement four: I ask the Father to grant you according to the riches of his glory…that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ!

Certainly the Ephesians churches knows some of Christ’s love… but Paul is asking that they might know it better!

**OCEAN.**

**“How can we mere mortals get our minds around this love? Breadth: God’s love is broad enough to encompass every tribe and tongue and nation. Broad enough to know and pursue all 7.4 billion people on the planet! Length: Long enough to encompass all of time. God’s love was there in eternity past, long before we were created, long before we sinned. And God’s love will be there in eternity future— inexhaustible, ever richer. Depth: God’s love is deep enough to make the ever downward journey. The second Person of the Trinity becoming one of us, a real flesh and blood man. And choosing to take on our sin… Deep enough to find me! Deep enough to reach inside me and grab my rebellious heart and win me to himself. Height: God’s love is high enough to lift us out of sin and into his Trinitarian Fellowship.” (Johnson, Darrell W., Experiencing the Trinity - Kindle Locations 1285-1292).**

**O Father, help us to comprehend the breadth, length, height and depth of Trinitarian love.**

**Notice that we should try to “comprehend it” But it takes God’s power to do so!** We have that same Holy Spirit power to actually comprehend (lay hold of as one’s own, to seize, to take possession of) the love of God.

**BOB SORGE – greatest love -**

**So crazy as it might sound, our Bridegroom is truly head-over-heels in love with us… he treasures us, he takes great delight in us he enjoys you even in your weakness… he never stops thinking about you, dreaming about you, in fact you are his dream come true!**

He delights in every single moment we give Him

Death has no power over this love. It is **eternal**. **Unbreakable**.

The way he protects, goes to any length to have us, he sells everything… his love for you is that intense, it is furious love, relentless, a never ending kind of love, and he will never backs down from his promises…

He relentlessly pursues us… He is so in love with you and me, that He came to earth to show how much He is willing to sacrifice just to have you back in His arms.

He offered His life to give us the freedom that we don’t deserve **…**

**And we want to grasp it together with all the saints.. we need each other to share stories of …**

**E. Movement five: I ask the Father to grant you according to the riches of his glory… to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge (verse 19).**

To know what surpasses knowing! This knowing is more than intellectual assent. It means to know personally, to experience. To experience what surpasses experiencing!

The implication is that we will never be done with knowing this love. There will always be more to know, to experience.

**F. Movement six: I ask the Father to grant you according to the riches of his glory…that you may be filled with all the fullness of God**

Extravagant language for an extravagant reality.

“Filled up.” The verb means to “fill to full capacity,” to “fill to the brim.”

Father, fill us up to the brim out of the riches of Your glory, fill us to full capacity.

“The fullness of God” is the sum total of God’s wisdom, power, purity, grace, truth, beauty, mercy, justice, light.

“The fullness of God” is all that makes God be God.

Paul is praying that we—broken, frightened, sinful, anxious, empty human beings—be filled up to the brim with the sum total of God’s attributes.

In Colossians 2:9, Paul says that all the fullness of Deity dwells in Christ in bodily form”

In relationship with Jesus Christ, we partake of that fullness.

**III. Conclusion**

This is the good news, the Gospel. The Triune God draws near to us to draw us near to Himself, pulling us within the circle of the Trinitarian relationship, in order to occupy and possess, pervade, and permeate every part of our lives.

Doxology –

Finally Paul moves to Praise – He shows us the greatness of God Consider the What, the How and the Why of this doxology –

What – 20a

Paul says God is Able – Able to do what? Notice how he heaps up phrases to describe God’s sovereign rule

To do Above – But that’s not all

To do above and beyond – but that’s not all

To do above and beyond all we ask (but that’s not all)

To do above and beyond all that we ask or think – even imagine!

God can do more in response to one prayer that we can do in one hundred years of planning and prodding Do we believe God aloen is the only Soverieng – He is the One who raised Jesus from the dead and placed Hi mas head over the church and he has put all things under his feet – if so, then pour out your heart to him believing he is ABLE

We need a vision of God that increases our faith in God’s greatness – the best way to do this is to fill our minds with the Word of God

How –

How does God work beyond our imaginations ? Paul says according to the power that works in us – Think about the examples of this in the Bible – his work through Abraham, Moses, Gideon, David, Elijah – a man like us according to James 5) Isaiah, the disciples, the early church God is able to do extraordinary things through ordinary people by his Power at work within them!

Why?

Why does God do these things? Pauls says in Verse 21 – This should be the ultimate goal for our prayers for power and love, “to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generaiotns forever and ever amen! God bleses his people for his own Glory!

And for how long?

Forever – Foreer God will be glorified for his power and love Forever God will be glorified by his peop;le – forever God will be glorified in Chist Jesus – the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world – Forever God will be glorified in the Christ – who fell to his kneeds before the father in the garden of gethsemane – who took the cup of wrath that we could reveive the cup of grace – who has reconciled us to the Fathe rand one another and who now dwells in our hearts through faith by the Spirit – To God be the glory forever!

**Let’s say it together:**

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. 16 I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, 17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. 18 I pray that you may have the power 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, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.