

## Apostolic Prayer #2 - Ephesians 3:14-19

***For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph 3:14-19 NKJV)***

Ephesians 3:14-19 is simply a prayer to experience the presence of God in a tangible way

- Something to notice, as you read the prayer is that the word “that” is mentioned four times. Paul says, “I pray **that** this happens, **so that** this happens, **so that** this happens, **so that** that happens.” There is a clear progression in Paul’s mind. There are four progression points that the Spirit showed Paul. He prayed according to this, but he also taught and pastored people according to this progression.

### **4 STAGES OF PAULS PRAYER**

**Stage #1 (3:16)** - We pray that the Spirit ***strengthens our inner man*** (mind and emotions).

- The practical application is that you are praying this for yourself to be strengthened in your mind, thoughts, emotions, and how you think and feel.
- We need God to strengthen our mind and emotions so that we can sustain a resolute desire to obey Him. We want to obey Him today, but tomorrow we might not want to obey Him, because that inspiration is temporary. Jesus said, “Pray the Father would give you this day your daily bread”. **(Matt 6:11)**
- He does this on purpose because He is a God of relationship. He wants us communicating with Him. He could just wave His hand, and we have inspiration for life. But it doesn’t work that way, He wants us continually leaning into Him.

**Stage #2 (3:17)** - Jesus ***dwelling in our hearts*** or manifesting His presence on our hearts enables us to feel God’s love in a real and practical way.

- Many look at this verse and think to themselves “wait He already does dwell in my heart”. That is true but there is more in the Bible, of Christ dwelling in your

heart, than the day you were saved. What Paul is talking about is the manifest presence of God and you feeling it in your mind and your emotions.

- When He is manifesting His presence in my heart, my mind is much more clear and my emotions are tenderized. That is the same as being rooted and grounded in love.

**Stage #3 (3:18)** - We receive a greater capacity *to comprehend* how He sees and feels about others.

- When I have a new capacity to comprehend how God sees and thinks about me then I can see how He thinks about others. When I am not weighed down with my own dullness, dark emotions, condemnation, and rejection it frees up my emotional bandwidth to see others through the lens of God's heart.
- If I do not see through the lens of God's love, then peoples deficiencies bug me more than I want to be bugged or vice versa. However, when I have this greater capacity I recognize that people have flaws and deficiencies, but there is a bigger storyline in God's heart about their life that I anchor my heart to.

**Stage #4 (3:19)** - We are equipped to walk in the *fullness of God's purposes* in each season of life.

- God will provide the grace needed to walk in the fullness of our callings and assignments in each season of our lives if we just ask.