



June 9, 2019
Ephesians 3:14-21
Pastor Dave Parsons
Grasping Christ's Amazing Love

Hi Everyone. Thank you for reading this message. At Golden Hills we are committed to exalting Jesus and preaching the Word. Your downloading of this message is a great encouragement to us, as we know that our ministry is going out to spread God's Word all over the world.

We want you to know, too, that in no way do we intend these messages to be a replacement for your involvement in a good local church, where, sitting under the authority of pastors and other teachers, you can learn to worship, grow and serve and be engaged with a body of believers where you can grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We realize also, that some of you may be in areas of the world where there is no local church. Therefore, we hope you are using this message to gather with your family or other believers, or people from the community and that it will be a great encouragement to you, as you hear God speak into your life, helping you to become disciples who are true, reproducing followers of Jesus Christ.

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Today we're going to be going through a great prayer of Paul's, in Ephesians 3. If you have your Bible, you'll want to turn in there.

You know, our Lord Jesus said this in John 16:24, "Until now, you've asked for nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full."

Alvin Vanderriend in his devotion, Love to Pray, (one of my favorite devotionals) says this:

By offering to let us pray in His name, Jesus is offering an amazingly great privilege. It's as if He is giving us blank checks to be drawn on His account, knowing we will use them for His honor and His advantage. Jesus is demonstrating great trust in us. He is trusting that His honor and His interests are safe in our hands. Consider what it would mean to place your estate in the hands of another person, your credit card, your home, your investments, your automobiles, your responsibilities – everything. You'd pick that person carefully, wouldn't you? You'd really be giving that person control over your life and future. That's essentially what Jesus did when He authorized us to use His name in prayer. He gave us authority over His accounts. He asks us to exercise control over His estate, the kingdom of God. We exercise authority by prayer. By prayer we ask the Father for all we need in order to do the job. By prayer we ask God to deal with demonic forces, contrary to His will. By prayer, we direct God's grace and power to strategic locations where it is needed.

I like what Torrey said, "Little prayer, little power. Much prayer, much power."

Prayer is a wonderful privilege for the believer. Over the years, I've noticed in my own life, and in the lives of many believers, a lack of enthusiasm about prayer. Do you know why? Well, there are several reasons why.

One – we pray for things but we really don't expect anything to happen. We have a concept of God that is low, and we really don't believe deep down that He is able to pull it off, by the way we pray.

We major on physical, and minor on the spiritual. We pray for colds, bills, jobs, trips and homes. These are good things to pray for, but don't neglect the spiritual things. We're spiritual beings who are going to live forever. Let's not neglect praying for spiritual power, spiritual maturity, spiritual knowledge, and salvation for the lost.

We lack confidence in prayer. How do we know God is going to answer my prayers? Well, how can we pray with faith, spiritual power and confidence? I believe that Paul gives us a model prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21. We'll look at it this morning.

Before we do that, will you bow with me? *Father, I pray that as we look at this great section of scripture today, that You'll help me to unpack all that is in this. There is so much in here. Lord, will you prepare our hearts and minds so we will hear from You, we will listen to Your words. Lord, as a result, may we have a different view, a different passion for prayer in the days to come. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.*

As we look at this prayer, I want you to see the elements of a prayer that will make a powerful spiritual impact on your life, and the lives of others.

First, Paul starts by talking about the believers' family (v 14-15). He starts with humility before the Father, ⁴"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father." As Pastor Phil often reminds us, whenever you see the words 'for this reason' you have to ask – what reason? You have to go back to chapter 3:1 and read the first 13 verses, to see the reason he is talking about.

Paul said a stewardship of grace had been given to him. God revealed a mystery to him. He said this mystery is that Jews and Gentiles are now members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.

Paul was made a minister of this gospel by God's grace, and given the privilege of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ so that through the church, God's eternal purpose would be revealed on earth and heaven. He says, for this reason – I kneel before the Father.

What is the significance of kneeling or bowing one's knees? You can pray with many postures as you know. The Bible talks about standing in prayer, lifting your hands in prayer, sitting while praying, falling on your face, kneeling in prayer. I like to walk while I pray; I like prayer walks. I believe that kneeling, though, is symbolic of humility and submission. Warren Wiersbe, a well-known pastor and author, points out:

This must have been quite an experience for the Roman soldier, chained to Paul, to see Paul kneeling next to him, talking to His Father in heaven.

I like to kneel sometimes in prayer because it reminds me of my dependence on God, and my littleness before Him.

In an article entitled, *Leaving a Legacy of Prayer*, Chris Barrett describes the impact that Ruth Graham (Billy Graham's wife) made on her son, Franklin Graham. Listen to what she says:

Several months after his mother died, Franklin Graham remarked, "I'll never forget the first time my mother heard me preach. Standing at the podium, and seeing her in the shadows, I realized just how much that moment represented in answer to her faithful prayers. To follow in my father's footsteps, I had to go through my mother's knee prints."

Ruth Graham's giant knee prints are an amazing testimony of the way a life of prayer can leave a spiritual legacy. Many a night, when the children crept past Ruth's room, they found her, Bible in hand, kneeling by her bed, speaking to the Lord. When asked by the press how she raised five children with her husband, Dr. Billy Graham frequently gone, she replied, "On my knees."

You know the great preacher, Martin Lloyd Jones said, "Man is at his greatest and highest when upon his knees, he comes face to face with God."

Paul starts his prayer by saying, I'm bowing my knees before the Father. Then he talks about the Fatherhood of God, in verse 15. He says, "¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named." God the Father is the source of all families. He is the primary and foremost Father. We all come from Adam, the first man. He came from God. Luke said this in Acts 17:26-27,

²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,
²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him.

God is the Father of all by virtue of creation; He created all of us, even the angels in heaven. But God is the Father of all believers by virtue of regeneration, by being born again.

As a father, I realize the responsibility I had to teach my boys what a father is like. None of us are perfect. God is the perfect father and He teaches us what a true father is like. One of the plagues of our nation, our world, is that many people grow up, not having a father, or not knowing their father. I read on the internet the other day that, according to the US Census Bureau, just a couple years ago, 19.7 million children (more than 1 in 4) live without a father in the home. Consequently, there is a father-factor in nearly all the social ills facing America today.

Let us never underestimate the difference a father makes in the family. Amen? (amen). Next Sunday is Fathers' Day – a good opportunity to honor and pray for the many fathers that bless so many of our lives.

Paul recognized the fatherhood of God in prayer. Sometimes people ask me, *Pastor Dave, how should I address God when I pray?* We need to remember that God is three persons in one God: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He is a triune God. If you come in prayer saying, "Lord Jesus," or "Holy Spirit" or "Heavenly Father" – it's all right with God. He wants you to come to Him. You're not going to be reprimanded because you said the wrong title. But I do remember that Jesus taught His disciples to pray in this way, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name." I guess I prefer to address the Father, or "Lord" when I pray, but that's really up to you.

Paul goes on in this passage, to give a petition that he prays for the Ephesians that is very interesting. In verses 16-19, first of all he prays that the Spirit will strengthen your inner being:

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

I want you to notice something: Paul prays that they will be strengthened with power. Not “out of” the riches of His glory, but “according” to the riches of His glory. What’s the difference? Wiersbe points out that the first is a portion, the second is a proportion. For example, let me give you an illustration. Perhaps you heard recently on the news about a billionaire named Robert F. Smith, who was invited to be a commencement speaker at a college in Atlanta, Georgia. He stunned the college grads with a promise to pay all their student loans, estimated to be about \$40 million. He said, “We’re going to put a little fuel in your bus, and you can pay it forward later.” One young man started crying. He had a student loan of \$200,000. He had estimated it would take him 25 years, half of his salary, to pay it off. In an instant, it was gone. Now, if Robert F. Smith had given the students a gift of \$500 each – that would be nice. They’d appreciate it. But a gift of \$500 from Robert F. Smith would be “out of” his riches. A gift of paying off the loans was “according” to his riches. The first was a portion; the second a proportion.

Paul prayed that the Ephesians would be strengthened with power according to the riches of God’s glory. His glory is infinite. His riches are infinite.

Then he prayed that they “would be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being.” You know, this word “power” is the Greek word “dunamis”. We get “dynamic” and “dynamite” from it. The Holy Spirit give us the power to live the Christian life. I want to give you two illustrations, one from the Old Testament and one from the New.

Turn with me in your Bible to Zechariah 4. In Zechariah, the exiles had gone back to the land. They had started building the temple. They were opposed by the enemies. They built the foundation, but they didn’t get the temple fixed. So God sent a prophet by the name of Zechariah, a powerful prophet to speak to them. This is what happened. Zechariah 4:1-7 –

And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep. ² And he said to me, “What do you see?” I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. ³ And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.” ⁴ And I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?” ⁵ Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” ⁶ Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts. ⁷ Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’”

He is saying Zerubbabel, it’s not by might, not by human might or power, but by MY Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts. He was able to accomplish what God asked him to do in building the temple because God’s power was working through him.

Paul is praying that they will be strengthened with God’s power through the Spirit.

Another example is Acts 1, the early church. Acts 1:6-8 –

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power [dunamis] when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Later, a couple chapter, we see the early church (Acts 4:31-33) listen to what happened:

When they had prayed the place in which they were gathered together was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and one soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own. But they had everything in common, and with great power, the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Warren Wiersbe commented on this. He said,

As you read the book of Acts, you see the importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church, for there are some 59 references to the Spirit in the book, or ¼ of the total references found in the New Testament. Someone once said, "If God took the Holy Spirit out of this world, most of what we Christians are doing would go right on. Nobody would know the difference. Sad but true."

Paul said, you Ephesians, I want you to be strengthened with power through the Holy Spirit because when we are empowered by God's Spirit, we do God's work, and it is significant.

This word 'strengthen' in the Greek means to fortify, to brace, to invigorate. You know what? It's in the passive voice. In other words, God does the fortifying and the invigorating through His Spirit. He is the one who does it.

We are strengthened in our "inner being." What's that? It's the spiritual dimension, the new nature created in the image of God. Look at Ephesians 4:20. Paul talks about it here. (20-24)

²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

So how are we strengthened by His Spirit in our inner man? It's when we're filled with the Spirit, when we submit to God's Spirit, when we allow Him to control us. It's when we are being led by His Spirit. Those who walk by the Spirit are the ones who are filled with the Spirit.

So Paul was praying that they would be strengthened with power through His Spirit in their inner being.

But he goes on here. He prays that Christ will be at home in your heart. Look at verse 17, "¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love." According to Barkley, the Greek word for "dwell" is the word used for permanent, as opposed to temporary residence. Wiersbe says it means "to settle down and feel at home."

When Pam and I and the boys moved to Brentwood in the early 1990s, we rented a house for a few months, then we bought a house. I want to tell you – there is a difference between the house we were renting, and the house we bought, because when you buy it and start living there, you settle into it. That's what it's talking about here. The Lord wants to be at home, permanently, in our hearts.

Could this be what Jesus was talking about in John 15, when he wrote this (15:1-8) –

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides

in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide [or dwell] in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

Robert Munger, years ago, wrote a little booklet called *My Heart, Christ's Home*. He compares our heart to a home. Each room represents different areas of our life. For example, the study is the thought-life. The kitchen is our appetites. The rec room is our entertainment. The living room is the place of communion. Then there is a secret closet, that none of us want anyone to enter, including the Lord. In this book, he explains that, when the Lord is living in our heart, dwelling in our heart, He wants access to the whole home. If there are rooms where you say, "Lord, You're not welcome in there," He is not going to be at home in your heart. So let me ask you – Is Christ at home in your heart? Are there any rooms in your heart where He is not welcome?

Harold Hoehner, in his commentary on Ephesians, writes, "It denotes the desire that Christ may literally be at home – that is, at the very center of, or deeply rooted in, the believers' lives. They are to let Christ be the dominating factor in their attitudes and conducts." That's what Paul is praying for – that Christ will be at home in the hearts of these believers.

Then Paul also goes on and prays that you will know how much Christ loves you. Verses 17-19, he says

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.

Christ's love for you is an established fact. Did you know that? It says, "...you, being rooted and grounded in love." You are rooted in love! He uses a metaphor here from nature. The same way that trees are rooted deep in the soil to obtain nourishment and water, we must be deeply rooted in God's love.

Over the years, God has used many things in my life to help me sink my roots deep into His love, but I want to tell you – the word of God is the soil that we put our roots deep into, if we want to know His love. That's why the psalmist said in Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
² but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.
³ He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.

People, the man or woman, boy or girl, who delights in God's word and meditates on it, is like a fruitful tree, planted by streams of water. Paul prayed that they would be rooted in His love.

He prayed that they would be grounded in His love. What does that mean? Whenever they build a skyscraper, or any large building, they must spend an enormous amount of time and resources, preparing the foundation. Why? Because without a good foundation, the building will fail. Did you know that the foundation of the One World Trade Center in New York City has a depth of 110 feet? Likewise, we need to be grounded in God's love. The Aphesis course here at Golden Hills was very helpful for me to become more grounded in God's love. I recommend that course.

The apostle Paul, the author of this epistle, went through the most trying of circumstances. How did he make it through? He shares his conviction with the Romans, in Romans 8:38-39:

³⁸ For I am sure [grounded] that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, not height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rooted! And grounded in God's love.

He goes on and says that you will be able to comprehend His love, through faith. Look at Ephesians 3:18 again.

¹⁸ [you] 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.

This word for 'know' is the Greek 'gnosko'. It means a personal knowledge, or an experiential knowledge. Paul wants God to give them the power to grasp and apprehend the amazing love of Christ.

People – it cannot be understood on a human level. This must be revealed. As Harold Hoehner puts it, "the more a Christian knows about Christ, the more amazed he is in Christ's love."

Do you have any idea how much Christ loves you? Paul says, I want you to know the **width** of His love – it encompasses everyone, all races, social status, gender, abilities. Galatians 3:27-28

²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

He wants you to know the **length** of Christ's love. Just think about the length of God's love. He left His glory in heaven, became a man, a servant, and died a cruel death on a cross to save us from our sins. Romans 5:8 – ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

2 Corinthians 8:9 – ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich."

As Charles Wesley put it in his wonderful hymn, "Amazing love! How can it be? That though, my God, shouldst die for me!" The length of His love!

He wants you to know the **height** of His love. How high is God's love? Psalm 103:11 states,

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love [hesed] toward those who fear him;

Do you know how high the heavens are above the earth? Scientists estimate the known universe stretches more than 30 billion lightyears – that's 200 sextillion miles! That's more than some of you commute in a week! (laughter) That's how great God's love it.

How about the **depth** of His love? Do you understand the depth of God's love for you? Micah 7:19 –

¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us;
he will tread our iniquities underfoot.
You will cast all our sins
into the depths of the sea.

The Daily Walk a while back had an illustration that if you were to drop an anchor in the Pacific Ocean, over the Marianas Trench, which is the deepest spot in earth's oceans, an hour later it would not have touched bottom. Seven miles below. In fact, the famed movie director, James Cameron, took a sub to the bottom of the Marianas Trench on May 23, 2013. Such is the depth of God's love for you. He has cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

My friends, would you understand this kind of love? I mean really understand it? You experience it, if you know it in your inner being. You will be moved to action.

That's why John wrote in 1 John 4:19 – “We love, because He first loved us.”

1 John 3:16 – “By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers”

2 Corinthians 5:14-15, Paul wrote, “For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that One has died for all, therefore all have died. He died for all that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who, for their sake, died and was raised.”

When you know His amazing love, it motivates you to love. That's why Jesus said, “Love one another as I have loved You.”

Also, Paul goes on. He prays that they will be filled to all the fullness of God. Look at verse 19 again: “To know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, and that you may be filled to all the fullness of God.”

In Ephesians 4:13 Paul put it this way, “¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

Colossians 2:6, 9-10

⁶ Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,

⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

This is not saying that we become gods in some New Age sense. It is saying that God's purpose or goal for our lives is to become progressively more like Christ. We know the fullness

of God dwells in Him, and we are in Christ. Spiritual maturity is being conformed to His image. Someday, in heaven, we will be just like Him, when we are in His presence.

William Hendrickson in his commentary seeks to explain what the fullness of God means, because it isn't easy to understand. This is what he says, "What Paul prays is that those addressed may be filled to all the fullness of God. Perfection, in other words. Also in such matters as knowledge, love, blessedness must ever remain the goal to become more and more like God, the ultimate ideal."

What Paul is asking, therefore, with special reference of course to the church still on earth, though the answer to the prayer will never cease – is nothing strange, nothing new. It is a request similar to the exhortation in Ephesians 5:1,

Be therefore, imitators of God as beloved children, and walk in love just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a fragrant odor.

So to be filled with the fullness of God means you become more and more like Jesus. You are being conformed to His image. That's what Paul was praying for – that they would become mature, more and more like Christ.

You know, as Paul was giving this prayer, he just broke out in a doxology, a praise. He couldn't help himself. That's what the last two verses are.

First of all, he says, "God is able to do more than you can imagine." (v 20) Look at it:

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

People, God is able to do more than you can ask or even imagine! The word here for "abundantly" means 'super-abundantly' – quite beyond all measure. The form used is the highest form of comparison imaginable.

How does God do it? Through the power, the *dunamis*, that is working in us! That resurrection power that is in us! He listened to a man named Joshua, and the sun stopped moving for a whole day.

Later, He conquered a walled city by having the people march around it and then shout!

Gideon defeated a 120,000 Midianites with only 300 men.

A small shepherd boy named David defeated a mighty Philistine giant.

King Hezekiah defeated 185,000 Assyrians. How? By trusting in God.

You know what? God took a handful of disciples in the first century in Israel, and started a church that now numbers between 1 and 2 billion people world-wide.

He is able to do far beyond what we can imagine.

James Boyce, in a devotional on Romans gives a wonderful illustration on how God does more than we can even imagine. Listen to this story:

Let me tell you one story of such a blessing. In the year 1860, a scottzman by the name of Robert Haldane went to Switzerland. Haldane was a godly layman who, with his brother James Alexander, had been much used of the Lord in Scotland. In Geneva, on this occasion, he was sitting on a park bench in a garden, in the open air, and heard a group of young men talking. As he listened, he realized two things: first, these were theological students. Second, they were ignorant of true Christianity. As a result of this encounter, and after a few encouraging conversations, Haldane invited the students to his room, and began to teach them the book of Romans. God honored this work, and the Holy Spirit blessed it by the conversions of these young men. They were converted one by one, and in turn they were instrumental in a religious revival that not only effected Switzerland, but also spread to France and the Netherlands.

Then Boyce says this:

Why should it be any different today? Why should it be any different today? If it were our gospel, we would expect nothing. But it is not our gospel! It's the gospel of God – that grand old gospel that was promised beforehand, through His prophets and the Holy Scriptures, and was achieved for us by the Lord Jesus Christ through His substitutionary death and resurrection. We should proclaim it fearlessly and with zeal, as did Paul.

Amen? The prophet Jeremiah exclaimed, "Oh, Lord God! It is You who has made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for You."

Let me ask you, in light of this verse, how would you answer God? Would you answer, "Lord, I'm not sure this can be done. I'm not sure it's possible"? What are you having trouble today, believing God for? Could it be that your God is too small? He is able to do exceeding, abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, by the power that is at work within us.

Why does God do all this? Why did Paul pray this prayer? That all things are done for His glory. Look how he ends it (v 21) "21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." The reason we live and serve God is to bring glory to His name, to honor Him. That's what we were singing about earlier. The Westminster Confession of Faith asks the question, *What is the chief end of man?* The answer: *The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.*

Our purpose as a church is to glorify God by making disciples who will impact every area of the world for Christ.

Warren Wiersbe clarifies our purpose with these words:

The church on earth is here to glorify the Son of God. If our motive is to glorify God by building His church, then God will share His power with us. The power of the Spirit is not a luxury; it is a necessity. But the amazing thing is that, what we do in His power today will glorify Christ throughout all ages, world without end. The church's greatest ministry is yet to come. What we do here and now is preparing us for the eternal ages when we shall glorify Christ forever.

I would encourage you this week, to take some time to pray this great prayer of Paul's for your family, your church, your co-workers, your neighbors, your friends. Take that prayer. Pray it. I'm going to end my message by praying for you and those on line. I'm going to pray this prayer for us. Would you bow with me in prayer?

Father, I pray that according to the riches of Your glory, that You may grant us to be strengthened with power through Your Spirit in our inner beings. So that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. And that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to

comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. That we may be filled to all the fullness of God, and we pray this prayer, Lord, for Your glory, forever and ever. In Jesus' name, amen.