REALIZE HIS GREAT PROVISION!

Ephesians 3:14-21
4-5-2023

INTRODUCTION: V. 14-15

***Paul prayed that believers would realize all that God has provided for us!**

Four practical experiences God wants you to have:

I. THE <u>STRENGTH</u> OF CHRIST (v. 16)

II. THE <u>PRESENCE</u> OF CHRIST (v. 17a)

III. THE <u>LOVE</u> OF CHRIST (v. 17b-19a)

IV. THE <u>FULLNESS</u> OF CHRIST (v. 19b)

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V. 14

"I bow my knees" - synonym for prayer. This posture in prayer shows:

1) Humility under God
2) Dependence upon God
3) Earnestness before God

Paul completes giving the contents of a prayer that he began in 1:16-19

V. 15

"Of whom" - refers to ***"the Lord Jesus Christ"*** (v. 14)

"the whole family" - refers to the family of God, both those who are in Heaven (the dead in Christ) and on earth (the living believers).

The church is a family! A family reunion will occur one day -- I Thes. 4:13-18

"Is named" - God's family bears the <u>name</u> of His Son. Just as children bear the last name of their father, sow e bear the name "Christian" - because we belong to Christ.

"Too often believers fail to realize all that God provided for them and consequently fail to grow and enjoy their Christian life to the fullest.

***Paul prayed that believers would realize all that God has provided for us!**

Four practical experiences God wants you to have:

I. THE <u>STRENGTH</u> OF CHRIST (V. 16)

Do you sometimes feel weary? Weak? Tired? Fatigued spiritually? Impotent (powerless)?

Do you lack zeal for God?

Go to the powerhouse!

God has enough strength to go around to every child of God. He can grant them strength ***"according to the riches of His glory"*** (v. 16).

Stored up inside of God's brilliant, glowing, bright, blazing glory is a vast wealth of energy (dynamic power).

God is a "powerhouse" that has an enormous amount of power. It is not available to Con Edison! But for His children!

EX: Paul's thorn in the flesh made him rely on God's strength (II Cor. 12:7-10)

"By His Spirit" - The Holy Spirit is the channel or "powerline" through which God's power flows into us.

"In the inner man" - we need to be more concerned about our inner man (our innermost, spiritual being) than we are for the external.

God **encourages us to exercise ourselves unto Godliness.** ***"For bodily exercise profiteth little: but Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come"*** **(I Tim. 4:8)**

Paul said: ***"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man"*** **(Rom. 7:22).**

It is the hidden man of the heart that women are to adorn (I Pet. 3).

The Bible says that *"though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day"* (II Cor. 4:16).

II. THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST (V. 17A)

"Dwell" - (kat-oikeo = kat=down; oikeo=at home) Lit. to be "down at home", to settle down; to be at home.

The Ephesians had Christ in them, and they were "in Christ" (ch. 1 & 2), but now Paul prayed that they would come to experience His intimate presence on a daily basis

SEE John 14:18-23

Too often we treat Christ like a passing visitor or an occasional guest. . . when He wants to move into every room and closet of our lives. He should have access to every area. No place of our lives should be off limits to him (our leisure, eating, recreation, work, pleasure, etc.)

"By faith" - just as the means to Christ's power was the Holy Spirit, the key to Christ's intimate presence is faith.

We come to attain a relationship with Christ by faith, and we enjoy our relationship with Him also by faith. *"The just will live by faith."*

III. THE LOVE OF CHRIST (V. 17B-19A)

V. 17b

"Rooted and grounded" - (passive - it is God who planted us into His love).

We are so rooted and grounded (firmly established) that nothing can separate us from his love. (SEE: Rom. 8:35-39).

Nothing can uproot us. However, many times we lose sight of how much He loves us. We get disgusted with ourselves and are deluded into thinking that God shares the same attitude.

V. 18

"Comprehend" - to lay hold of; to get a handle on; to apprehend for yourself.

Such apprehension is what "*all the saints"* need.

God's love is broad, long, high, and deep.

It is broader than the east is from the west; it is higher than the heavens; it is deeper than the deepest sea.

V. 19

"The love of Christ" - Christ's love. The love that Christ has for His own.

"Which passeth knowledge" - It surpasses our finite ability to mentally understand it all.

This is why Paul prayed for them; because unless God opens our minds to understand how much love Jesus has for us, we will never fully realize it in this life.

"Passeth" - running over; a bubbling over

Our minds do not have the capacity to capture and hold onto the immensity of Christ's love.

The love of God is greater far
than tongue or pen can ever tell;
it goes beyond the highest star,
and reaches to the lowest hell.
The wand'ring child is reconciled
by God's beloved Son.
The aching soul again made whole,
and priceless pardon won.

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
and were the skies of parchment made;
were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill,
and ev'ryone a scribe by trade;
to write the love of God above
would drain the ocean dry;
nor could the scroll contain the whole,
though stretched from sky to sky.

O love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure—
the saints' and angels' song.

IV. THE <u>FULLNESS</u> OF CHRIST (V. 19B)

The *"fullness of God"* would definitely refer to the fullness off His Holy Spirit. God has a fullness that will fill every empty, lonely hurting spot of your life. Every cavity, every hold, every crevice of our life He longs to fill (pervade).

Be filled with His Spirit! (Eph. 6:18)

CONCLUSION:

V. 20

Since it is God who strengthens us, indwells us, loves us, and fills us, it is God who should get all of the glory.

"Exceeding abundantly" - God is able to perform superabundantly above and beyond all that we can <u>ask</u> (pray) or <u>think</u>

God's power that is available is already resident and presently actively energizing us.

He wants to do so much more than we are willing to let Him.

V. 21

--The <u>object</u> of glory -- God the Father (*"unto Him"*)

--The <u>manifestation</u> of glory -- *"in the church"*

--The <u>channel</u> (means) of glory -- *"by Jesus Christ"* (without Him we can do nothing)

--The <u>longevity</u> of His glory -- forever!

--The <u>certainty</u> of His glory -- *"Amen"* - truly!