

# Christian Students Association Bible Study

January 12, 2021

## The Apostle's Prayer for the Church regarding Experience Ephesians 3:14-21

That the Saints May Be Strengthened into the Inner Man vv. 14-16

**14** For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

**15** Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,

**16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

That Christ May Make His Home in the Saints' Hearts v.17a

**17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith,

That the Saints May Apprehend the Dimensions of Christ vv. 17b-18

that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

**18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

That the Saints May Know the Love of Christ v. 19a

**19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ,

That the Saints May Be Filled unto the Fullness of God v. 19b

that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

The Apostle's Praise to God for His Glory in the Church and in Christ v.3:20-21

**20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

**21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

**Note for "That" in verse 16** – In vv. 16-19 the word *that* is used four times in the apostle's prayer: the apostle prayed *that* the Father would grant us to be strengthened; the result of such a strengthening is *that* Christ makes His home in our hearts; the result of Christ's making

His home in our hearts is *that* we are full of strength to apprehend the dimensions of Christ — the breadth, length, height, and depth — and to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ; and the result of this apprehending and this knowing is *that* we are filled unto all the fullness of God. These steps make up a metabolic process by which the Body of Christ is constituted with the riches of Christ through our enjoyment of those riches.

**Note for “strengthened” in verse 16** – The apostle’s prayer in 1:15-23 was that the saints would receive revelation concerning the church. Here in vv. 14-21 his prayer is that the saints would experience Christ for the church. This requires us to be strengthened into our spirit.

**Note for “Spirit” in verse 16** - The Father strengthens us from within through the indwelling Spirit, who has been with us and in us since our regeneration.

**Note for “into the inner man” in verse 16** - The inner man is our regenerated spirit, which has God’s life as its life. In order that we may experience Christ unto all the fullness of God, we need to be strengthened into our inner man. This implies that we need to be strengthened into our spirit through the Holy Spirit.

**Note for “hearts” in verse 17** – Our heart is composed of all the parts of our soul — mind, emotion, and will — plus our conscience, the main part of our spirit. These parts are the inward parts of our being. Through regeneration Christ came into our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22). After this, we should allow Him to spread into every part of our heart. Since our heart is the totality of all our inward parts and the center of our inward being, when Christ makes His home in our heart, He controls our entire inward being and supplies and strengthens every inward part with Himself.

**Note for “apprehend” in verse 18** – Or, grasp, lay hold of intensively.

**Note for “all the saints” in verse 18** – To apprehend the dimensions of Christ, we need all the saints, not individually but corporately.

**Note for “knowledge-surpassing” in verse 19** – The love of Christ is Christ Himself. Just as Christ is immeasurable, so also is His love; hence, it is knowledge-surpassing. Yet, we can know it by experiencing it.

**Note for “filled unto” in verse 19** – When Christ makes His home in our hearts, and when we are full of strength to apprehend with all the saints the dimensions of Christ and to know by experience His knowledge-surpassing love, we will be filled unto all the fullness of God, which is the church, the corporate expression of God for the fulfillment of His intention. The fullness of God implies that the riches of all that God is have become His expression. When the riches of God are in God Himself, they are His riches. But when the riches of God are expressed, they become His fullness (John 1:16). All the fullness of God dwells in Christ (Col. 1:19; 2:9). Through His indwelling, Christ imparts the fullness of God into our being that we may be filled even unto

the fullness of God to be the practical manifestation of the church, in which God may be glorified in His expression (v. 21).

### **Discussion Questions**

- What are the four “that’s” which Paul prayed for so that all the saints may experience Christ?
- What is the experience of being strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man?
- What is the experience of Christ making His home in your hearts?
- What is the experience of apprehending with all the saints the dimensions of Christ and knowing the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ?
- Paul’s prayer culminates in the saints being filled unto all the fullness of God. What is this fullness?