

DWELL

September 25, 2022

GOOD MORNING! Every day is a new day and God's mercies are renewed every morning.

AMEN! It is such a privilege to stand before this body today. I am truly humbled to be with you today.

LET'S PRAY!

Today's message is titled **The Fullness of God**. So Let's go!

PLEASE STAND AS WE SHOW HONOR TO OUR CREATOR FOR HIS PRECIOUS WORD.

TODAY'S TEXT IS Ephesians 3:14-21

14 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.

THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD!

Psalm 121:1-2 (MSG) -I look up to the mountains; does my strength come from mountains? No, my strength comes from GOD, who made heaven, and earth, and mountains.

Tired? Worn out?--Keep going! You are here! Praise God! Every day is a new day! God's mercies are new every morning!

Isaiah 40:28-31- Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,

the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;

his understanding is unsearchable.

29 He gives power to the faint,

and to him who has no might he increases strength.

30 Even youths shall faint and be weary,

and young men shall fall exhausted;

31 but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;

they shall mount up with wings like eagles;

Every day we should be reminded of this verse. Praise God!

BE ENCOURAGED THE LORD IS WITH YOU! WE OFTEN NEED TO BE REMINDED OF THAT VERY THING. WE ALL GET CAUGHT UP IN OUR LIVES TO THE POINT WHERE SOMETIMES WE CAN'T SEE RIGHT IN FRONT OF US. IF THAT IS YOU THIS WEEK, BE ENCOURAGED! HAND WHATEVER IT IS OVER TO THE LORD. JUST GIVE IT OVER. HE CARES FOR YOU! HE ALREADY KNOWS WHAT YOU NEED. LOOK TO HIM. IT TRULY IS WHERE OUR STRENGTH COMES FROM.

How Great Thou Art!

Oh Lord, my God

When I, in awesome wonder

Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made

I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder

Thy power throughout the universe displayed

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee

How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee

How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Ponder this simple, powerful quote:

Every man is as close to God as he wants to be. A.W. Tozer

**OUR THEME IS DWELL: TO RESIDE, TO STAY. TO REMAIN. TO ABIDE.
TO LIVE IN A SPECIFIED PLACE. TO TARRY TO LINGER IN EXPECTATION**

THE Bible can change our lives as we read it and obey its teachings every day. Billy Graham

Psalm 119:105- Thy Word is a light unto my feet and a light unto my path.

CONTEXT

The book of Ephesians is one of Paul's letter written in prison in Rome. As for Paul's journey here, those details can be found in Acts 19. See Map. Ephesus was one of the most active and important cities in this region known as Asia Minor. Its location along the water of the Aegean Sea to the North and the Mediterranean Sea to the south as well as and the internal trade routes from east to west made it an epicenter for trade and culture. That culture included significant polytheistic beliefs in Greek and Roman gods. Paul's time there was fruitful in building up the church and drawing many new believers. The letter outlines the divine purpose of God that all would realize their calling to this new family. Paul prays throughout the letter that believers would realize that they are in God's family.

Chapter 3 is titled The Mystery of the Gospel Revealed. Paul explains the wonder and mystery of God's grace and how it was revealed to him. He explains that this gift of grace is for all believers. All believers can now approach God with freedom and confidence. Then he prays for believers.

Then we arrive at the text for today's message. It is titled "Prayer for Spiritual Strength." He is praying for a deeper experience of God's blessings and fullness for each believer. The rest of Ephesians outlines ways to fulfill God's purpose. AWESOME!

In Chapter 3, Paul explains the mystery of the Gospel. He explains that grace is for every believer.

Verse 11-12- 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.

This is where we will pick up with today's text.

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,

The first thing that comes to mind here is Paul's reverence, awe and emotion. My research indicated that a more typical posture in prayer at this time was to stand to pray. This brings to mind a clear point. Prayer is not to be taken lightly. As you know, I knelt down before I prayed today. This is because we are in the House of the Lord. It is not for show. Too often our prayer life is too informal, callous or superficial. Yes, we are speaking directly to Our Heavenly Father. As brother Colin has mentioned many times, Our Daddy. However, we are also coming into a place where we are speaking with the Creator of the Universe. How can we take this lightly. Should we ever? Maybe not. Pray on that as well.

Verse 15 demonstrates that we are part of this family- God's family. While we are in the presence of the Creator of all life, we can come with confidence. Not meekly. Not timidly. We can come boldly. The Lord has granted us a place in His Family. He loved us and drew us to Him through His Holy Spirit. We can come humbly yet confidently. Praise God for that! Paul comes to his prayer confidently yet humbly even though he recognizes his frailty. He recognizes who he once was. How about us?

Verse 8-10 - 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, 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,

Application: May the Lord be your guide. When you come into His presence is your mind, heart and soul on Him or is it you and your agenda? I have to look in the mirror on that one.

If you ask, “Who am I that I can come into the presence of God?” Well Paul answers that. Jesus too!

Revelation 21:5-8 - And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” 6 And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

We are His Children! How awesome is that?! Do you believe it?

What about those people we don't like? Them too? Do we often catch ourselves looking at others who we do not see eye to eye with in a different manner? God does not differentiate.

Romans 10:9-10- because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes

and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

How should we respond anyway? When you leave here today, what will be your mind set?

Where will your heart be? Well, I hope it is in line with the Holy Spirit. To love and to be gracious as our Lord is with us. We are all image bearers of God. Think about that. We are all made in the image of God.

Genesis 1:26-27 - Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

IMAGE BEARERS! Every time, IMAGE BEARERS! No matter where, no matter what
IMAGE BEARERS! IMAGE BEARERS! Look around IMAGE BEARERS! Don't agree
politically- IMAGE BEARERS! Don't like their attitude-IMAGE BEARER! Displeased with
their driving technique- IMAGE BEARER! YOU TOO ARE AN IMAGE BEARER! Let's
make that connection right now. We are all IMAGE BEARERS OF GOD! PRAISE THE
LORD!

What will bring this ideal from God closer to our hearts and minds? Seek the Lord in all you do.

Dwell in His Word. Pray deeply that the Holy Spirit will move you closer to image of Jesus.

He will finish what He has started. Believe it! Praise God!

I believe was essentially saying the same thing. If you look at some of his other writings, he implies this point. The world is crooked and depraved. Is it any different. Paul addresses this.

2 Timothy 3:1-7 - But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. 6 For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, 7 always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

Our Response====> IMAGE BEARERS!

Consider praying this: Lord, If I do not get anything else done today, if I do not accomplish anything else today, I want to know you a little bit more than yesterday. I want to love you a little bit more than yesterday. I want to recognize that I am your Image Bearer and every single person I come into contact is as well. May your love and grace abound! In the name of Jesus, Amen.

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,

What an amazing prayer! Does our prayer life look like this? Do we pray with God's Big Picture in mind? Or are we praying too small.

The abundant riches of God at your disposal. The unending power of God is at our fingertips. His mighty Spirit is available and inside us! Are we short changing God? Are we praying too small? Too simple?

In **Ezekiel 36:22-38** - Not in slides. Please follow along. Especially v. 26 -27 and 36

He will do it! He will put His Spirit in us. When we are believers the Holy Spirit is sealed in us.

Do you believe that? The evidence is all around us. The Word of God declares it! Praise God!

Let's remember the DWELL MEMORY VERSE FOR September- Ephesians 3:17-19

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.

Here we see “so that.” Paul is praying for the glorious riches of God to strengthen in order for Christ to dwell in us. It is beyond our full comprehension. We only see a glimpse of God's glory

on this side of Heaven; however, Paul is pleading to God on behalf of the Ephesians. What an amazing prayer. **This is the prayer that would clearly change the world would it not?**

Paul uses such specific language. He reminds them that their faith is grounded in love. It is dug in. He is may very well be praying that the Ephesians be rooted and grounded in their love for one another, more than There may have been trials, yet it has holding firm.

Application: Do we look at our faith as rooted and grounded in love? That is both literally and figuratively deep!

Many believe this verse is pointing to believers being rooted and grounded in love for one another. Either way, it is a lofty, goal. One worthy of striving for. The impact is great no matter what.

I can tell you this week has been a test in many ways. How about you? Is your faith in Jesus dug in? Rooted? Grounded? Able to withstand the wind and the waves of life? Is it growing? Praise the Lord, He is with you! He never leaves you! Let's be reminded of what being rooted can do?

Let's Go to Matthew 13:1-9 and 18-23:

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. 2 And great crowds gathered

about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. 3 And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. 5 Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, 6 but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. 7 Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. 8 Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9 He who has ears, let him hear.”

18 “Hear then the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. 20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. 22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. 23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Let’s focus on verse 20-23. Being ROOTED! It is necessary. What is the answer? Abide and

Dwell in God's Word. Be fertile soil. Stay close and remain in His Word. The result is we will have the strength to fully comprehend the amazing, unstoppable, unfathomable love from God.

Verse 18 and 19: 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.

Paul is praying that we have the strength to comprehend as all the saints. Let that sink in. We are all together. All the saints can have access to this love of God. We will comprehend. The infinite, all-knowing, all-powerful God who knows each of us in ways we do not even realize is going to bring us in to see His love more fully than we can even comprehend.

Again, what a prayer! It is about not going through the motions. It is in word and deed. Actions and experiences. Even though it appears as if there are dimensions to God's love; however, can we fully measure it? Do we even want to? Is it not enough to recognize its vastness and to be able to tap into even a little bit of 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, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

What a powerful conclusion!

Let's focus on one part. IS ABLE. Our God is able! How often do you remind yourself of this? Do you believe it? To handle every issue. To answer every prayer. To provide more abundantly than we could possibly imagine. Our God is Able!

When we pray, do we give Him the Glory even as we pray? Paul is doing so here. Well we should. We should give Him all the glory and praise. We should recognize Him for who He is. But our prayers should line up with His will in order to give Him all the glory. Especially as He unfolds His many blessings upon us, how can we not give Him all the glory.

Quote:

WE WERE NEVER DESIGNED TO RECEIVE GLORY. WE WERE DESIGNED TO GIVE IT TO OUR LORD

As you continue dwelling and abiding in the Lord, you will your prayer life begin to line up with His will? I believe so. It will change your life. **It will give you unspeakable joy.** It will open up opportunities to be His witness like never before. Lord God please show us the fullness of your love that me go and make disciples every where we go.

We are called to make disciples of all nations in the name God, the Father, Jesus, His son and the Holy Spirit(Matthew 28:18-20). **It is not a suggestion.**

Application: will you be a true follower or a fan? We all like watching our team win. We

live vicariously through our teams. What about the greatest team in history? Will follow Christ for real or simply remain a fan?

Paul prayed with all he had that we would be close, near followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Go and make disciples by how you live and what you say. Go!

Remember this : The enemy wants to fill you with lies. He wants you doubt. He wants you to give up. He does not want you to believe that you can have access to the fullness of God.
“DON’T YOU DO IT!” Stay close. Abide. Remain.

NEVER FORGET- You are IMAGE BEARERS!!

Lord bless you all!