

# The Surpassing Fullness of the Love of God – *Ephesians 3:14-19*

**Introduction** – All of the commandments of God can be summed up in the word, “love.” We are to love God and love others. “...*he who loves another has fulfilled the law...love is the fulfillment of the law*” (Rom 13:8, 10). The message of chapters 4-6 will all be filled with commandments. They answer the question, “how shall we then live?” And the sum-answer is, “love.” But Christianity is not about doing in order to become. It is about being and then doing. And it is not about finding love in your own heart for others – not primarily. It is about being overwhelmed with the riches of God’s love for us, the love of the Bridegroom for His bride, the love of the Father for His children – and living out of and according to that love.

**The Need to Stop and Pray** – “*For this reason,*” Paul writes. Because of all God has declared, all He has accomplished, all He has promised and poured out for us, we must pray. Before the commands are given, Paul must pray for those he will command. Speak to your Father about it long before you speak to the person about it. The best teaching in the world is useless unless the Holy Spirit takes hold of it and applies it deep in our hearts. Word and Prayer. Prayer and Word.

**Bowing Before the Father** – The prayer is to the Father, and while we have been given easy and bold access to the Father, Paul bows in deep devotion, reverence, and humility – absolutely dependent upon the grace of God. This is the Father from whom every family in heaven and earth is named; He is responsible and able in every situation and circumstance for every family and nation. He is always the answer.

**More Gifts from our Father’s Abundant Storehouse** – Paul’s request is for the Father “to grant,” to give, to grace the Ephesians, and to do so, not simply “out of” the riches of His glory, but “according to” those riches. Eph 1:3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 17, and really all of Chapters 1-2 declare the infinite and abundant riches of God’s glory given to us in Christ Jesus. His is an abundant storehouse.

**Praying to Be Prepared to Receive** – In accordance with those riches, Paul asks the Father to strengthen believers with might through His Spirit in the inner man. The strengthening of our inner man is necessary to contain the staggering gifts that will follow. The inner man is the regenerate man, the new heart, the person being fitted out for glory. It is not enough that we receive the gifts that he will ask the Father for – we must be fitted to hold them – and we cannot do this. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Let us be clear: we do not do this; we ask God to do this. And this is something which is not done once and for all; it is something we are renewed in daily (2 Cor 4:16), and corresponds to the daily life we live in Christ.

**The Love of Christ Dwelling** – “Dwelling” (v17) refers to settling down, being at home, and taking dominion of a place, and this is what Paul prays that Christ would do in the hearts of the Ephesians. This is not an evangelistic text (in the same way that Rev 3:20 is not a text for unbelievers, but for the church). This is done “by faith,” but remember, even that faith is the gift of God (Eph 2:8-9).

**Rooted and Grounded in Love** – This is something which we have, which we are. If you are in Christ, you are rooted (like a tree) and grounded (like a well-founded building) in the love of Christ. True Christian knowledge is knowledge of a Person, a Person Who is Love. Love is God’s own motive (John 3:16), and that love becomes the foundation or roots of the new humanity. But consider what grows or what is built upon that...

**Comprehending that Which Cannot be Comprehended** – This is where human language begins to collapse for Paul (and will continue through v21). He prays that we would comprehend that which “*passes knowledge*.” He wants us under the weight of the glory of the love of Christ for us, the love we have for Christ, and the instilled and growing, sanctifying love of Christ we have for one another. This is something that, in order to really “*know*,” we must comprehend “*together with all the saints*.” Paul is praying for the manifestation of the astounding love of a community of Christians that will magnify the glory of God. It is also intensely personal and intimate, pictured in Rev 2:17 as “*hidden manna*” and “*a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it*.”

**The Geometry of Love** – His love goes everywhere, it has no limits, no bounds, no end. Some interpret the dimensions of His love thus: breadth – Jew and Gentile, all nations, the world; length – love since before the foundations of the world and unending through all eternity; height – seating us with Christ in the heavenlies; depth – reaching down to the lowest levels of depravity to those dead in their sins.

**Filling the Finite with the Infinite** – “*filled with all the fullness of God*.” This is crazy talk. We are filled, having read the first sentence of the first chapter in a library filled with an infinite number of volumes. What is he saying? God’s goal is to make us like Himself by filling us with Himself, His power, majesty, wisdom, love, mercy, patience, kindness, longsuffering, and every other thing God is and does. An eternity of “Oh, ah, I see it, I get it” moments are before us. We cannot see what we will become, but we can see Jesus, the Way, the Path, the Projection. Glory. Fill us with this, Lord.