

The Trinity In Our Journey

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[0 : 00] That's a turn back to the chapter we had in Ephesians chapter 3. Ephesians chapter 3 said we're coming to a conclusion of our short series we've had over the last few weeks in Ephesians and today we arrive at verses 14 to the end. Ephesians 3 verses 14 to the end.

I should be on the screen I won't read them from the service but for the sake of a text perhaps we can take the last two verses off the text. 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.

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

I wonder if we're being honest how often we've been at a meeting perhaps or a gathering or thinking back to our school or university days when we have been sitting there and doing all that we possibly can not to drift away.

Keeping our eyes open, hoping it ends some point soon. Trying to work out, trying to think. In the other few minutes I can close my eyes and get away from this place.

[1 : 27] Sometimes no matter how awake we may look and awake we may think we look the reality is that many of us, not all of us can't be honest and say that we're tired. We're tired.

Sometimes we feel so spiritually exhausted but it's hard to put on the face that we often do. It's hard to keep looking as if we are fully awake even though we are just so exhausted. Our souls are tired. If we're honest we've all sat in church perhaps even this day you're sitting here just now and saying that's me. I'm exhausted. I'm spiritually worn out. I'm spiritually exhausted. If that is you this morning, this afternoon then take time and as we read these words listen to what Paul is saying to Ephesians. Listen to how Paul is encouraging the church.

We've been working through Ephesians chapter 1 to chapter 3 and now we appear again where Paul is praying. At the end of chapter 1 we had that where Paul was praying for the people in Ephesus and now again he is telling them again at the end of chapter 3 that he is again praying for them.

He is praying. He is praying they would have strength and encouragement as they go on through their journey. Paul is sitting in a prison cell and we can assume he squawled the situation.

[3 : 08] He is writing that these three Christians would have encouragement for their journey. We saw that last week at the end in verse 13 we see that Paul is saying don't lose heart while I'm suffering.

Paul was suffering. Paul was in prison not for the first time in his ministry. Paul knew the walls to suffer in so many ways and yet he is telling these Christians I'm here but yet he is writing from his prison cell.

This is for your encouragement. Be encouraged. There are three things in particular that we can take from these verses. Three things in particular that he prays for these people.

What interesting you prays for them in each section almost is a different person for Godhead. We see first of all he prays for strength from the Spirit and secondly he prays that we have the indwelling and the love of the Son and further he prays the fullness of the fava in their lives.

The strength from the Spirit and the indwelling and love of the Son and the fullness of the fava in their lives. We see that even from the outset, even from the introduction that Paul makes, for this reason I bow my knees before the fava from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

[4 : 36] Paul begins a section of this strange sounding statement to start off with from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. What is Paul saying to these people by starting off this section like this?

Quite simply, every family, every kind, literally we have in here every class, every different type of thing or person.

Due, Gentile, all different types of creation, the physical, the spiritual, all together, all these things that all that God has made, everything God has made, that it's from God.

In the understanding of the day something didn't really exist unless or until it was named. We see that even in Genesis, where God makes a thing then what? When he names it, God makes it and when he names it.

And Paul's saying this again for us here, that God has made these things and they are His. But all things, every family, everything in heaven and on earth is named.

[5 : 52] But it all belongs to God, it's all His and because of that Paul has the confidence to say what he's about to say. Because all things are God and all things belong to God, Paul can have comfort as he talks to his people in Ephesus.

So first of all we can see the encouragement in verse 16 that he prays for them for strength in the spirit in verse 16. According to the riches of his glory, he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being.

This is the central request of the prayer. Paul is asking, for anything else he asks for is based on this first central request. Anything else branches off this request we could say.

Paul is asking first and foremost, they would be strengthened with the power of the Holy Spirit. And Paul is very clear here as to the work of the spirit in the lives of believers.

We said before, much of Ephesians, much of what we've read so far in chapters 1 and 2 and 3 so far, it's been in the plural. Paul speaking to people as a group of Christians, as a church, as a gathering.

[7 : 10] Here we see something interesting, Paul changes in his first section talking about individual inner being. Talking to them as individual Christians.

The spirit gives them strength as a congregation, as a body, as believers, but he does that individually also.

The Holy Spirit gives us strength in our inner being. Quite literally in the part that makes us, us in our soul we could say.

All that we are for Christians today, the Holy Spirit is in us. And he has given us and he gives us and he will give us strength.

He gives us strength for what to carry on in our walk. Paul is praying these Christians would carry on going, would keep going despite their difficulties, would keep going despite what may come up against them.

[8 : 08] The Holy Spirit, he gives us strength to carry on in our walk. He guides us, he leads us in all that we have to do as Christians.

We know ourselves, the Christian life is not easy. We had this on Thursday evenings, we're looking at the end of Samayethi 4. Sometimes a Christian's journey is a hard journey.

Sometimes a Christian's journey is so, so painful and so, so tough. And we all know that individually. We know that to be true. Some hear more than I ever will and I know that to be true.

And even in that the Spirit is always in us giving us strength. The Spirit gives us understanding when we come to hear God's word and read God's word for ourselves.

What's so wonderful about God's word is it doesn't require any priest to tell you what it says officially. It marks us out perhaps from some of our cults, even the cults in our islands.

[9 : 15] We have friends, our personal friends in the JW's and in the Mormons. And in both these groups you're discouraged, discouraged from reading scripture for yourself.

You have to do it with someone else. Someone else who is trained to read it properly. That's not so for the Christian. Each one of us here can take up a Bible and read it and enjoy God's word.

That's a wonderful privilege we all have today. A privilege we should make the most of. And why can there be a shangl over it because the Spirit is in us? Think back to before you were a Christian.

Those who are Christians think back to before you were saved and you read God's word and it made no sense whatsoever. Perhaps parts of it was okay but other parts.

What is this on about? I can't understand this. I can't get this. I can't apply this to my life anyway.

But then what happened? What happened after salvation? What happened after Jesus saved you?

[10 : 14] All of a sudden it makes sense. All of a sudden you can't get enough of reading it. You can't get enough of seeing what God is saying to you, how God has dealt with people, what God

promises for you now and for the future and so on.

The Holy Spirit in you opens your mind to God's word. Of course you still need to come together and learn together and grow together.

We know that and we do that. The Holy Spirit in us individually opens up our eyes to see the word. As we pray the Holy Spirit, the Bible tells us, praise for us almost.

When we find a word it's hard to say what we see in the Bible. The Spirit, he prays. He intercedes in our way. Just as our Savior intercedes in the right hand of God, the Spirit in us, he also prays when we can't pray.

He leads us in our prayer. I'm sure we all know there's nothing perhaps more terrifying than praying publicly. It's my last time here so I can say this honestly as friends.

[11:29] Praying publicly is more terrifying than preaching publicly. I say it honestly. Should we really feel about me? Is that a fear of man we have? I think it is.

The reality is no matter how we feel our prayers are, we are Christians. When we pray, the Spirit prays in us and with us. He leads us in our prayer. As we falter and stagger through our words, the Spirit is praying in us.

He is leading us and he's interceding for us we could say. We are Christians here today and we have a Spirit in us. We are Christians here today and we know we're Christians. The Spirit is in us and we should never be ashamed to pray.

There would be a shame to pray at all publicly or privately whatever the situation is. Now how much you stagger and fail your words, forget it.

The power of the Spirit is in you. It encourages us all even this morning. He guides us. He leads us. As the Spirit strengthens us, he leads us in the way we should go.

[12:34] I have a discussion on Thursday evening after the prayer meeting. We discussed how do we know as Christians what to do? How do we know where to go?

How do we know where to follow the word God? I was reading, it was Alistair Begg as a great, lots of sermons on that issue. In one sermon he sums it up as just pray and get on with it.

It's like a great summary of so much discussion. Pray and get on with it. Just pray and pray and know that it's true that the Spirit will lead his people.

But God will open doors and close doors. It's not for us to try and work out the bigger plan. The job is as Paul encourages his people in Ephesians, even instead of hardship, trust in the strength of the Spirit. Trust that he is able to lead us, even when we are confused when we are lost.

Again, this is not just dry field. You're not just learning for sake of it. Maybe some here even this morning who are struggling as to what to do, where to go in some situations in their life.

[13:44] The reality is, if you know Jesus as your Saviour, then he has you. He will protect you. He will keep you. Pray, pray, pray. Read the word, pray.

Read the word, pray, come here. Gather together. Read the word, pray. The word that Alistair Begg, pray and get on with it. And trust the Spirit that he is powerful enough to lead you according to his will.

The Spirit gives evidence. As the Spirit strengthens us, he gives evidence of us having transformed lives. As he sanctifies us, as he does that work in us, where we slowly, very slowly but surely become more and more like our Saviour.

The Spirit works in us in that. Where we see ourselves and we see our journey of creation. We may think that I haven't transformed in the last five years, ten years, fifty years or so.

But with the reality is, we trust the Word of God. The Spirit that he transforms us, he sanctifies us. He makes us gradually more and more like our Saviour.

[15:01] Do we ever find ourselves as Christians moping around, feeling as if we're just so powerless and so hopeless? If we still can think, the reality is, is because we've lost sight of a One who is with us and in us.

We've lost sight of the Spirit, of a One who has the power of God, for One who is God. If we remind ourselves, He is with us continually, as Paul prays with Ephesians.

We should understand that He is with us, giving us His strength continually. Don't rely on your own strength, and we will fail and fail again if you do that.

Rely alone on the strength of the Spirit. Rely on His strength, on His leading, on His power. Rely that He knows you, and He is with you.

Now we see Paul encourages them in terms of the indwelling of Jesus, of knowing Jesus' love. We see that in verse 17. So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love may have strength to comprehend of His saints.

[16:18] What is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

We said this last week in the evening series in Micah. The prophets of old, they waited for a year, their lifetimes, those after them waited.

Waited for the day when God would come and dwell with His people. That day has come, and we know that day has come. The coming of our Savior, the coming of the Spirit.

When Jesus left, He promised one would come after Him. The Spirit came. What does the Bible tell us? The Bible tells us that where the Spirit is, where Christ is.

John 14 and verse 23, our part scripture tells it. For every single Christian that we are here this morning with Jesus with us.

[17:20] Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of Christ. As the Spirit lives in us, so does Jesus. As we talk with, as we look at, as we interact with our Christians.

So go about our daily lives with our brothers and sisters. We are talking to the ones not only who have been washed and saved by Jesus. Not only who have been loved from eternity by Jesus. Not only those who were chosen and called precious from before the world began. We're talking to those who right now have the Savior living as aware as part of them and dwelling them.

That should stop us in our tracks when we think about how we treat and talk with and talk to our brothers and sisters. Not only are we the precious enough to our Savior that He would save them, but also He is still with them as He is still with us right now.

The wonder and the reality is that Christ dwells as it had here in the heart of every believer even here this day. For right now as we sit here, as we gather here together to worship God together, Christ dwells, everyone here who knows Him and who loves Him.

[18:45] We said John 14 in verse 23, Jesus speaking, and He says, if anyone loves Me, He will keep My word and My Father will love Him, and We will come to Him and make our home with Him.

When His Spirit comes and transforms us, Christ as aware also takes up residence in our heart. What a thought, what a thought that should be for us this day.

We feel so lost and so dejected when we feel as though we're abandoned perhaps by God. For being honest to ourselves, as we said before in the first days in Psalm 84, there's times in the Christian's life when life is hard and is dark, we're going through this dry valley.

At these times when we feel so alone, so far away, lacking so much strength, the reality is that Christ is in us and with us.

I'll get into it. I'll steal more from Alsther Begg. You can tell us a little bit about Alsther Begg sermons this week. He is a great sermon about relying on feelings, our constant reliance on feelings where we should be relying on the truth of God.

[20:00] We all rely so easily on what we feel and what we think, but in reality is God's word trumps that every time. And God's word tells us that Jesus lives in the believer right now, no matter where we are, how we feel Jesus is in us and with us, and will forever be that way until he takes us home to himself.

We have that promise and even the word being used here. Verse 17, where Jesus dwells in our hearts. The word dwell there, it's not a one-time thing, it happens, but it's also continuous.

It happens once, but it happens, then it goes on and on and on, that there's no end is at where the word being used here. Other words could be used, but word being used here implies a one-time happening and then it goes on and on and on.

There's no point in our life and Christ will cease to dwell with us. Jesus will always be with us. Okay, this is not just something nice for us to talk about, this is the wonderful reality of our Christian lives. Our Savior cares for us so much that he has chosen to make his home in us and with us.

[21:26] That's a comfort to the Christians and a challenge to the Christians. It's a comfort, like we said, that Jesus our Savior is always with us.

It's also a challenge, the challenge we find ourselves falling into sin, we find ourselves going away from him. We have that mindset, don't we, of Jonah.

A mindset of Jonah, we think we can escape God somehow. No word that he is all-powerful. No word that Jesus is in us and with us. No word that it is with us in us.

No word that our triune God knows all about us. That's a comfort and a challenge. An encouragement, even. When we do find ourselves falling back into sin, or falling into old sins, or catching ourselves in sin, we should realise there's no hiding it. God is with us. And because He's with us, we can take our request to Him in prayer, knowing He hears us.

[22 : 33] The indwelling of Christ, but also we see moving quickly on the love of Christ. The love of Christ in the rest of verse 17 and verse 18 down to verse 30.

The love of Christ, see, in our salvation and the indwelling of our Saviour, in our souls at where, that has a real impact on our life. A real impact, we see here Paul says that the love of Christ that we've been rooted and grounded in love.

Rooted and grounded. Rooted, as it sounds in English, is a term used for anything other cultural. Seeds are rooted in the ground, same word being used.

Grounded is the architectural term. Houses are grounded in the earth. The image here is that if we know Jesus, that He is in us and His love is in us.

It's rooted, it's grounded, it's so entwined as part of us, it cannot be removed or moved. Paul's ultimate hope is that the indwelling presence of his Saviour will deepen the believer's love of God.

[23 : 55] As we know that Jesus is in us and with us, we also know that He loves us. We've heard this a hundred times, a thousand times, I'm sure in our lives.

So much so we can let these things wash over us. But verse 18 and verse 19 should not wash over us. That the breadth and the length and the height and the depth of the love of our Saviour for us. That should stop us from our tracks every time we hear about it or discuss it. My friends, here we get a glimpse, a small glimpse into the eternal love of our Saviour for us, His people.

Paul uses it as a word, the biggest word he can hear. There's nothing else he can say. He's given us all the dimensions he possibly can. His love is that way, that way, that way and that way. It's so beyond our understanding.

That is the love of Jesus for His people. We discussed this before. We see in the prayer in Christ's high, peaceably prayer.

[25 : 09] That we find out that God loves us as He loves the Son, these incredible words.

Our Saviour loves us that much. We see that in fact in verse 19.

The love of Christ surpasses knowledge. We can grasp it as much as we can, but it surpasses knowledge. It surpasses our understanding.

Jesus saves us. Jesus saves us. He takes us up as it were, His home in us. He dwells with us. The love He displays to us, the love He keeps displaying to us, is so beyond our understanding.

Every one of us just now who is a Christian, we started talking about the love of Jesus for us and our love for Him. We keep going and going and going and end up repeating ourselves because we're so small in our human vocabulary but we know that His love is so much greater than that.

[26 : 22] That is the love of Jesus today for you if you are His. The those here this morning is a fornoone who are not yet Christians. This is the reality you're missing out on.

You're missing out on knowing the love of Jesus. The Christians here know that despite our weaknesses, despite our awful situations, despite our mistakes, despite our sin, that our Jesus loves us.

We come to Him as a loving Savior, as our caring Savior. Those here today, and we love you, as if you are not Christians, then how do you come to Jesus?

What is He to you? He is still the God you must one day answer to. He is the God who hangs over you in judgment and wrath.

That is not the way it has to be. That's not the way it has to be. Come to this Jesus. Come to this Jesus and experience and know the love of Him.

[27 : 34] The one who did all things for you to be saved. Come and take nothing with you to Him and trust and know that He is, He's your King.

I said this before and said it again. If you know Him or not, if you believe in Him or not, He's still King. It doesn't change His position. He is still King. What matters is, is He King and are you His loving servant?

Or is He King and are you still an enemy fighting against Him? The strength of the Spirit, the indwelling presence and the love of our Saviour.

And finally and briefly we see the fullness as it were of God, the fullness of the Father in the last second half of verse 19. Where Paul prays that they would be filled with the fullness of God. Filled with the fullness of God. We've just said, we can't understand even the love of Jesus. How can we be filled with the fullness of God? But where do we see God shown and all that He is? [28 : 46] We see that shown to us in Jesus. We will never see the Father. But we will see our Saviour.

To know Jesus and to love Jesus is to know the Father and to love the Father. We know that. To serve and worship Jesus is to serve and worship the Father.

If we know Jesus, we know the One who sent Him. If we reject Jesus, we reject the One who sent Him. God and His fullness, He gives us so much.

He gifts us so much. We saw that in chapter 1 and 2, the gifts of God to His people. The promise of God to His people.

In Micah, we saw that all the way through Micah. I gave it again. We see God showing His people their sin, but also reminding them of His covenant, ongoing love and care for them.

[29 : 51] God is a God who cares for His people. And Paul prays that His people would know the fullness of God.

That the Christians in Ephesus would have known it is to know the fullness of God. That's our prayer here today. As we seek to grow in our love of our God, we will grow in His fullness.

We will go on understanding that and seeing that in our own lives. We come this day before our God.

Before our God, before the Father who provided the Son. A Son who we see the fullness of the Father showing. The Son who, out of obedience to the Father, out of love for His people, came, lived, died, rose again.

Ascended through the hand of God. To the Spirit who then came and who made His home and who makes His home in us. Leading us in all things that Christ taught.

[31 : 04] Why? All the glory of God. See that in the final words of Paul in this section. Why do we do all that we do?

Why are we here every day? Why do we worship God? Why do we carry on all for His glory? In the final words in verses 20 and 21, the final closing prayer, closing segment of Paul's prayer.

It's incredible and it's beautiful. To Him who is able to do far, far more abundantly than all that we ask for or think.

According to the power at work within us. That within us right now as Christians, the power of God is working. The same power that God used to make and create all that we know.

The power right now sustains all of time and reality. That same power is working in us. The power as I said before in chapter 1 that rose Christ from the dead.

[32 : 17] That power is working in us as believers for believers today. It's no small thing to call ourselves Christians.

It's to say that right now the power of God is working in my life and in your life. The cause of a Christian is to say that my Savior, my Jesus, the King of all things has made His home in me.

That our triune God has seen fit out of His love for us. To indwell us, to be with us, to go along with us, to lead the way before us.

Seven weeks has just gone in. Seven weeks has just flown by from the enemy. Seven Sabbaths even more quickly.

How often have you sat here? How many years have you sat in this place in other churches and heard the gospel? There's nothing else we can say. Every parish that comes here will give you the same gospel.

[33 : 30] That's it. There's no songs and dances. There's no secret knowledge. There's no fancy handshakes or aprons to go for. It's only this. This is the gospel. Trust in Jesus and be saved. Trust His finished work for you.

I'm a passing student. Take God's word, God's eternal word for what it is. We're so comfortable. We become so comfortable in our procedure.

So comfortable sitting here and going away again, sitting away again. This is life and this is death. This is real and this is serious.

The Christian here right now, the God of all creation, that your saviour, the one who's done all things for you, he is in you now and with you forever.

Those here who we love dearly, who as of yet are not Christians, come and know His saviour. There's nothing you can do but come to Him and cry out for Him. That's it.

[34 : 38] So simple. So simple. That's a wonder of our gospel. A wonder of our God. Let's bow our heads in that. A word of prayer. Our God, we come before you again this day. We thank you for your word. We thank you that your word is perfect.

Lord, you speak to us still through it. Because you are alive and you are all powerful, your word is alive. Lord, help us to give your word the proper place it deserves in our lives, the proper place it deserves in our minds and our worship of you.

Lord, do you forgive me for anything I said that was incorrect? We thank you that power is in your word and not in the poor servants who stand here. We thank you for your people. We thank you that you have called the people your own.

Even this day we come together as brothers and sisters, equally part of your family, equally worshipping you. Give us a sense even this week that we are here with you, that we go through our lives with the Spirit in dwelling us.

He leads us in guidance. We do pray, Lord, that He would open our eyes even this week. He would open our eyes to your word, open our eyes to, as we serve one another, open our eyes as we witness and share the gospel to those around us.

[35 : 51] Help us to understand these things, things which are so beyond us in many ways, things which we can't even begin to grasp or things you have told us in your word. Help us to understand, even in a small way, the wonder of your love for us, the wonder of the love of your Son, that love which is beyond us.

That love which is beyond all measurement. Help us to carry on this week with that love in our minds, that care in our minds. Help that inspire us as we seek to serve you. Help us even as we come to sing our final item of praise for this time of worship.

Help us to do so of hearts and minds full of joy of what you have done for us and who you are. Keep us and bless us. Always things in, guys, the precious name. Amen.