

Forerunners for Christ Los Angeles

January 14, 2024 – Praying the Apostolic Prayers – Erlinda Cruz

Comprehending the Love of God

Ephesians 3:14-19 is a prayer to experience more of God and also gives insight into Paul's approach to discipling young believers. Paul presented four stages in our growth in God as indicated by the four times he used the word "that," designating four distinct aspects of spiritual growth.

- Stage #1 (3:16) - We pray that the Spirit strengthens our inner man (mind and emotions) to enable us to love and obey Jesus. It takes God's power to love God and to understand His heart.
- Stage #2 (3:17) - Jesus dwelling in our heart or manifesting His presence on our hearts.
- Stage #3 (3:18) - We receive a greater capacity to comprehend how He sees and feels about others.
- Stage #4 (3:19) - We are equipped to walk in the fullness of God's purposes in each season of life.

"...I bow my knees to the Father... from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you... to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell [manifest His presence] in your hearts... that you... may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ... that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

Ephesians 3:14-19

Stage 3: Comprehending How God Sees and Feels for Others—Bear Fruit

- Stage #3 (3:18) - We receive a greater capacity to comprehend how He sees and feels about others.

"that Christ may dwell in your hearts...that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know [experience and express] the love of Christ which passes knowledge..."

Ephesians 3:17-19

With all the saints: The Spirit allows us to see God's heart for His people. We receive from God in three ways—directly, by expressing it to others, and by others expressing and imparting it to us.

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Passes knowledge: It requires the aid of the Spirit to understand and experience God’s love. The Spirit gives the ability to comprehend the value, destiny, and greatness of others and to see their weakness through the lens of God’s patient love. Thus, we can celebrate who others are in God.

Bears much fruit: We bear fruit inwardly in our character (love) and outwardly in our ministry of love to others. This corresponds with stage #3 in Paul’s prayer here in Ephesians 3:18.

“...He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit...”

John 15:5

God’s 4-Dimensional Love: Paul highlighted different aspects of the Father’s love:

1. The width of God’s love embraces every person, personality type, and rank in society.
2. The length of God’s love speaks of how far it reaches beyond our greatest sin and how long it lasts—forever through all ages. It is not short-lived but long enough to stretch to all eternity.
3. The depth of love speaks of the lowest depths to which Jesus stooped or descended to redeem us (Philippians 2:6-9) and the depths that God’s heart opened to us (1 Corinthians 2:10).
4. The heights of love include the exaltation that we receive in reigning with Him (Rev. 3:21).