

Discover Your Purpose:

How to Live as God's Children

I've been reflecting on this passage for a couple of weeks, and each time I come back to it, I find it truly marvelous. I feel compelled to share these thoughts because this passage has deeply resonated with me, and I hope it will with you as well.

Take your Bibles and turn to Ephesians 3, starting at verse 14.

"For this reason, I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; 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 the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us. To Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

What a great word from the Lord!

Paul's posture in prayer here is significant. Ancient Jews did not typically bow their knees in public prayer; they would stand and lift their hands to heaven. Paul's kneeling emphasizes the intensity of his prayer for the Ephesians. Bowing reflects his profound reverence and the earnestness with which he prays for these believers.

In verse 16, Paul's primary request is for inward strength. He prays that God would grant them, according to His glorious riches, strength through His Spirit in the inner man. The thought of God's limitless riches is staggering. Paul wants God's children to live according to their spiritual wealth in Christ. Sadly, many Christians live far below their privileges and fail to grasp the great wealth available to them in God.

Consider Julian Elias Morris, a wealthy man who chose to live like a beggar during the day, only to enjoy his riches privately. Many of God's Children live

similarly, experiencing only glimpses of their spiritual wealth. Instead of living in God's abundance, they often feel inadequate and impoverished.

God's Children Have the Holy Spirit

We are co-heirs with Christ, which is a remarkable truth. The first step to living as God's children is being strengthened with power through His Spirit. Though our outward man may weaken with age, our inner man can be renewed daily (2 Corinthians 4:16). As physical strength declines, spiritual strength should grow. The Holy Spirit works within us to develop spiritual endurance and strength.

We are not weaklings in the Lord; we have strength in God. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). As God's strength increases in us, sin decreases. The closer we draw to God, the further we move from sin (Galatians 5:16). To be obedient, effective Christians, we must be spiritually conscious, Spirit-filled, and Spirit-controlled.

Jesus performed miracles through the Holy Spirit's power, and that same power is available to us. Our inner spiritual strength is vital, and the Holy Spirit is here to help us grow and conform to the image of Christ.

God's Children Invite Jesus to Dwell in Them

Paul's second request is for inward presence. In verse 17, he prays that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. While Jesus enters our hearts at salvation, Paul talks about Christ feeling at home in our hearts. It's not just about Jesus living there; it's about Him being comfortable and in control. Christ wants to be the Lord of our lives, not just a tenant.

Paul's prayer is that we understand the profound truth that an Almighty and holy God desires to dwell within us and be at home in our hearts. As Jesus said in John 14:23, "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."

Jesus said in John 14:23, "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." This verse means God the Father and God the Son will dwell in our hearts. The Holy Spirit reveals this reality to us. God is truly at home in us, so comfortable that He metaphorically takes off His sandals and puts His feet up in our hearts.

Imagine that—God dwelling in us! That’s what Paul is praying for: we grasp this profound truth that God wants to empower and indwell us.

God’s Children Experience the Supernatural Love of Christ

Paul’s third request is for inward perception, found in verses 17b to 19a. He prays that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may comprehend the dimensions of Christ’s love—its width, length, depth, and height. To truly know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, is to experience an incomprehensible love. When Christ makes Himself at home in our lives, His love is displayed in and through us.

Jesus gave us a new commandment: to love one another as He has loved us. This kind of love is not humanly possible on our own. Sometimes, even liking people can feel like a miracle! But Jesus calls us to love others the way He loves us, and that is only possible through the Holy Spirit, who pours His love into our hearts and enables us to share it. You can’t give away what you don’t have. God pours His love into us so that we can pour it out to others.

We can only truly love others when Christ’s love flows through us. We can’t fulfill Jesus’s command to love without His help. You might make a New Year’s resolution to be more loving, but it’s not achievable in your own strength. It requires the strength and anointing of God. When the Spirit empowers us and Christ is obeyed as Lord, we naturally want to serve and sacrifice for others. Love, being the very nature of Christ, becomes our supernatural attitude.

Jesus said the world would recognize His disciples by their love, not their buildings or practices. Our love will be the distinguishing mark of our discipleship, reflecting His life in us. The love of God—agape love—is remarkable and incomparable. It is supernatural, sacrificial, unconditional, and eternal. To truly know this love, God must reveal it to us. Jesus’s sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate demonstration of agape love, where He gave His life willingly for us. This love is constant, not a faucet that turns on and off. The cross shows us Jesus reaching up to heaven, down to us, and out to the world. Paul urges us to understand that a loveless life is ungodly, while a godly life is characterized by serving, caring, and self-sacrificing love.

The world needs the love of Jesus, not just policies or programs. The love of Jesus can transform lives. As we prepare to celebrate the Lord's Table, let us reflect on this profound love.

God's Children Embrace His Divine Influence

Paul's fourth request, found in verse 19b, is for inward provision: that we may be filled with the fullness of God. Can we even begin to grasp this? To be filled with the fullness of God means to be completely dominated by Him, with nothing left of self. Paul is praying that we would be so filled with God's fullness that our lives reflect all He is and has.

J. Wilbur Chapman once shared a story about a man who, having lived as a tramp, was shocked to discover that the person he had been begging from was his own father. Having been searching for him, the father offered him everything he had. This story illustrates how God desires to give us all He has, though we often live as if we are poor.

God's goal is to bring us to Himself, to make us like Himself by filling us with His fullness. We have not exhausted His resources, and we may have yet to begin to tap into His wealth. We worry and complain when we forget who our Heavenly Father is—a Father who knows and provides for all our needs. To be filled with the fullness of God means to be entirely dominated by Him, leaving no room for self.

To be filled with God means to be emptied of self. If you desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit and have more of God in your life, you must allow God to empty more of you out. Being filled with His fullness means you are completely under His control and divine influence. Paul instructs us, "Don't be drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit." This filling isn't like filling a glass with liquid; it's not about how full you are but about yielding and submitting to the Lord.

When you are filled with the Spirit, you will walk in obedience to God, and your spiritual self will actively seek Him. Some might feel uneasy about surrendering control to the Holy Spirit, but in reality, you are never more in control than when you are under His influence.

When the Holy Spirit empowers us, Christ dwells in us, love masters us, and God fills us with His own fullness. These are the four aspects Paul describes. And

when these conditions are met, God can do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think. We often quote this verse, but its power is realized when we meet these conditions. Until then, God's work in our lives may be somewhat limited. By fulfilling these conditions, His work becomes unlimited.

Don't you want to remove restrictions on God's potential in your life? Don't you want to be exactly what God created you to be? The possibilities are endless when God finds someone who responds to Paul's prayer. We often limit God to our own understanding of what we can do. When we yield to Him, He will show us what He wants us to accomplish according to His will and timetable.

God does live in your heart, but the question is: Is He truly at home there? Is He comfortable in your heart, or do you make Him nervous by letting in things that don't belong? Is your heart cluttered with junk that makes Him uncomfortable? God wants to dwell in a clean, welcoming space. He doesn't want to be just a tenant; He wants to be the landlord, controlling the entire house.

Is He comfortable and in control? He wants to be Lord of all, not just part of our lives. Just as a home requires regular upkeep, our spiritual lives must be open to His inspection and renovation. We must allow the Holy Spirit to teach, train, and discipline us, applying the principles of God's Word to our lives.

Think of the Bible as God's gym. Just as gym equipment works only when used, the principles of God's Word are effective only when applied. We often want God to work mightily in our lives without putting in the effort ourselves. But God has given us His Word and principles, and we must work them out.

Serving Jesus requires time, effort, and quality commitment. Don't offer God your leftovers or only turn to Him in trouble. Apply His promises and principles actively. When you do, His presence will overflow from your life, influencing your words and actions. People will see His work through you, and you'll experience a transformation that touches and changes lives.

As we prepare for communion today, ask God to examine your heart. Even though He lives there, ask Him to check your spiritual house for any areas that need His touch. Are there attitudes or behaviors that make Him uncomfortable? Ask Him to make any necessary corrections or renovations so He can feel at home in you.

