

# Connect360: The Praise of Prayer

November 8, 2024

- *Lesson 6 in the Connect360 unit "The Immeasurable Love of Christ" focuses on Ephesians 3:14-21.*

It is a blessing to have a person who loves and cares for you to pray that the love of Christ and Christ's presence might be present in you. We find in verses 17-19, Paul was praying Christ would dwell in the hearts of the Ephesian Christians; that is, Christ would rule at the center of their intellect and emotions.

Having Christ dwell in their hearts speaks to the Gentiles seeking Christ's words and way of life to guide them daily. With the Holy Spirit empowering them and God's riches being supplied to them, Paul concluded it is their faith that will help them to be rooted and grounded in God's love.

Faith, as mentioned in verse 17, takes an active role in ensuring they would be properly rooted like a plant and grounded, established as one who not only knows God's word, but is actively living it out daily. As Jesus said to his disciples in John 14:23, the evidence of true, grounded love is seen in the words and actions of obedience to God's word. "If you love Me, you will keep my commandments (John 14:15).

Paul gave four dimensions (width, length, height and depth) to show the importance of grasping the true depth of the love of Christ. For the Gentiles truly to be knitted together as one family, they must know of the complete love of Christ. If any area is lacking in any dimension, it will be more difficult for them to have the power needed to be unified as members of the body of Christ.

This requires the individual to have a holistic representation of Christ's love, as well as the collective gathering of the people. If any member is lacking, then the entire unit is lacking because of the member's absence of love. The earlier scholars looked at Paul's notation of the four dimensions of Christ's love, referring to the cross and its four corners as a reminder of the depth of Christ's love.

As the comprehension of Christ's love is gained, so will their unity be with God as their Father, Jesus as their Christ, the Holy Spirit as their comforter, and with one another. In Ephesians 3:19, Paul noted the more one comprehends the love of Christ, the better we understand God more fully. But since the love of Christ is so great, it is almost incomprehensible to fully grasp the depth of such love.

This love is so much in tune with God that it defies humanity's ability to see why someone would go to such great length to sacrifice his life to redeem those who would eventually reject Christ's love. But because Christ's obedience to his Father is grounded in God's love, it is only when we try to understand why God would sacrifice his Son that we can understand Christ's love.

Therefore, the more we grow in appreciation and understanding of God's love, the more we will understand Christ's love. Finally, the love of Christ is the love he bears to us and is the motive of his sacrifice for our redemption.

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