

Great Truths From Ephesians - Part 2

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's foundation of salvation and the superstructure of good works, and how Christ has brought together people who are completely opposite and made them one.

Duration: 55:53

Scripture: John 15:16, Ephesians 1:1

Topics: "Ephesians"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the book of Ephesians and its division into two parts. The first three chapters highlight what God has done for us in Christ, while the next three chapters explain how we should live on earth. The speaker emphasizes the importance of laying a good foundation in Christ before trying to live according to God's standards. The sermon also mentions the disciples' inability to become one even after Jesus' preaching, but Jesus assures them that they will do even greater works through the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

Yesterday evening I started with a series on great truths in Ephesians and we considered chapter one and a few verses in chapter two. Many times when we study God's Word or hear it preached, we hear what I'd call a topical sermon, a sermon on a particular subject or topic. But sometimes it is good for us to study a whole letter or a book because then we can go into the depths of God's Word and that's what I thought we should do this time.

In yesterday's study I was mentioning that Ephesians is divided into two parts very neatly, better than any other book in the Bible. So, the first three chapters telling us what God has done for us in Christ and the next three chapters, therefore, how we should live on this earth and one must follow the other. If we try to live on earth the way we are supposed to, without first laying a good foundation and that is what God has done for us in Christ, we're going to run into problems.

And this is, I have discovered through many years, it was a problem in my own Christian life for many years after I was born again. I was zealous, I was sincere, I wanted to serve God, I wanted to sacrifice, but my life was so defeated and frustrated and depressed because I was trying to build a house without a foundation and a lot of Christians are in the same boat. I've seen that through many, many years.

Their fundamental problem is they rush ahead to build a house for God, sincerely, sacrificially, but they haven't laid a good foundation and Paul was a wise master builder. When he wrote Ephesians he first laid a foundation in three chapters and the amazing thing is in three chapters, the first three chapters of Ephesians, there is not one single command, not one single exhortation, not one single thing that he tells us to do. Have you ever heard a sermon where you're never told to do anything, you're just told what God's done for you? That's amazing, we hardly ever hear such sermons.

Most sermons we're always, I'm guilty of that myself, I find when I preach I have a tendency to tell myself and tell others what we should be doing for the Lord, but we need to understand first of all very clearly what God has done for us in Christ. You know how your Bible begins, how the Bible begins, in the beginning God, God. That's how it must always be in our life, in the beginning God.

Every day of our life must be like that and our Christian life must be like that. It's not what we do for God first, what God's done for us. Jesus once turned around to his disciples and said, you didn't choose me, maybe you thought you did, but you didn't.

I mean many of us sitting here may also think, well I chose Christ one day. You know what the Lord says to you in John 15 and verse 16, you didn't choose me, I chose you and it's because I chose you that you one day decided to accept me. The Bible describes Jesus as the bridegroom and we as the bride and he waited a long time saying, I'm ready to marry you and we took a long time to say, alright Lord.

It's he who started the work of salvation. It's he, it's God who's done something for us in Christ. It's God who chased after us and followed after us when we were dead in sin, running away from him, wandering away from him and got a hold of us and turned us around.

It's his Holy Spirit who gave us the desire to repent. Everything begins with him and it's good for us to know that. So if you turn to Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 8, it says, by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

Salvation is a gift, it's a free gift. All false religions can be identified by the fact that they teach that you've got to work for your salvation and every cult, even in so-called Christian cults, teach that faith alone is not enough. It's got to be faith plus maybe keeping the Sabbath or circumcision or doing some other work or something else but the Bible says, by grace, that's God's free gift, you are saved through faith, grace is God offering a gift to you from heaven.

Faith is not just sitting there and watching that and believing it. Faith is reaching out and saying, thank you Lord and taking it. Faith is not passive, it's not waiting here and asking God to put something on my lap because he doesn't do that.

He wants us to reach out and take from him. Faith is, in the scriptures, is active. It's not, I mean, I can believe that the earth is circular, well that's not what the Bible means by faith.

Okay, that's true, I can believe a lot of facts are true, two plus two is four, okay, I believe that but that's not what the Bible talks about when it talks about faith. Faith is active, it's receiving something and we must remember this, whenever the Bible speaks about faith, it talks about taking what God has given to us in Christ. He's already given it or to use an illustration, it's like a lot of money put in our bank account but you've got to go and draw it out of the bank and so there's something God has placed in heaven for us in Christ and we can go and take it if we believe.

See that's the exercise we need to do all the time. Why is it Christians are all of different spiritual levels? There's a reason for that. God has put the same amount of spiritual wealth in all of our bank accounts in heaven, it's exactly the same.

There's no partiality with God, if he gave a billion dollars to one, he'd give the same to the other, in heaven's terms I mean, in terms of spiritual riches, that's what we read in Ephesians 1:3, God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ, it's equal but the amount each person draws from the bank of heaven is different and that's why different believers live at different spiritual levels because one has gone and drawn more, you could have done that too except that perhaps you're so passive and you don't exercise your faith, maybe you don't read God's word and know what is your wealth in heaven and that's what the devil wants, he doesn't want you to know how much there is in your bank account in heaven because he doesn't want you to be rich, he wants you

to be poor, God wants you to be rich, by grace, that's God's free gift, you're saved, salvation is the first step, by faith you receive it, it's a gift of God and not a result of works, verse 9, because if it was a result of something in addition to what God did that I did, then I'd be able to boast about it and the reason why believers are proud, I mean you and I met a lot of believers who are proud, the reason is they feel they also did something and as long as you feel like that, you're going to look down on some other believer who you feel didn't do as much as you did, but the Bible says no one can boast once you understand God's salvation, the reason why a lot of Christians are miserable is because they don't realize salvation is a free gift from God, the reason Christians look down

on other Christians because they don't realize it's a free gift from God, many many problems arise because of this, so in our salvation when we first come to Christ it's a free gift, God forgives us freely because in a thousand years we wouldn't be able to do enough to get rid of one sin, to atone for one sin we've committed and that's why God gives it to us as a free gift, we've just got to receive it and say thank you Lord, now once we begin there, in our initial experience of salvation there are no works, in other words in the foundation there are no works, but in the superstructure there are a lot of works and that's what we read in verse 10, no works in verse 9 but plenty of works in verse 10, see this is the balance in scripture, there is a place for works in Christianity, the Bible

says Christians must be known for their good works, but at what point after the foundation is laid, after we've received forgiveness, we shouldn't confuse foundation with superstructure, we don't put doors and windows in the foundation and that's crazy, doors and windows come in the superstructure, the foundation is stones, concrete etc, so in the same way here we read in the foundation forgiveness of sins, becoming a child of God, zero works, but in the superstructure plenty, so it says in verse 10, we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus, that means newly created, being born again for good works, you see the contrast between verse 9 and 10, Ephesians 2, 9 says not as a result of works, verse 10 it says plenty of good works, but not just any good works that come to our mind,

good works that God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them, there are works that God has planned for us to do, long before we were born, one of the wonderful truths of scripture is that God's made a plan for your life, long before you were born and for my life, it's one of the things that revolutionized my own walk with God, when I recognized that God loved me as he loved Jesus and God made a plan for Jesus life exactly where he was to be born, where he was to live, where he was to die and he's made that for me too and once you realize that, your greatest longing will be to walk in that plan every day, you know it's amazing to realize that God's got a book in heaven, where he's written down what you're supposed to

be doing every day, that's the meaning of this verse, good works

that God planned ahead of time, that you should walk in them, the only thing is he doesn't compel you to walk in them, when God created Adam, he had a plan for Adam, but he didn't force Adam, because once you force a man, he can't become holy like God wants him to be and once God forces you, you can't become what you're supposed to be and that's why he gives you a free will, but God has planned beforehand certain works that you're supposed to do, there are certain people in your circle whom you're supposed to be a blessing to, but you may never be a blessing to them, because you may not seek God and want to know what his plan is, if you're busy doing your own thing, you'll come to the end of your life and have a lot of regret over the way you lived, but if you seek God instead, you can

come to the end of life and look back over the most fulfilled life that any human being could ever live, just like Jesus lived and I want to say to you my brothers and sisters, it doesn't matter how much you have messed up your life in the past, God can do a miracle and do something for you from today, it doesn't matter how old you are, it doesn't matter how old you are, it doesn't matter how much you messed up your life, if you will come to God, I can give you a written guarantee that God can lead you to have such a fulfilled life the rest of your days on earth, that the memory of the mess you made of your past life will be blotted out, you see that's the thing, the apostle Paul was converted probably when he was 30-35 years old and he'd really made a mess of his earlier life, but what a

fulfilling life he had for the remaining 30 years of his life, he could say at the end of his life, I finished my course, but you ask Paul, hey Paul didn't you mess up the first 30 years of your life, yeah that's true, but God's so powerful that he could take care of all that and I still finished my course, isn't that amazing, that's so encouraging to me, you know even if you've messed up 30-35 or even more years of your life, God can still bring us around and make us fulfill his perfect will for our life, he's got a plan, praise the Lord for that, further I want you to see here in Ephesians in chapter 2, from verse 11 onwards right on to chapter 3 and verse 6, he speaks about what he calls a mystery and that great mystery is that one of the wonderful things that Christ has done is bring

together people who are so completely opposite from each other and make them one, now this was something that could never be accomplished in the Old Testament, the word fellowship is almost never found in the Old Testament, I haven't checked it in the concordance but I don't think it's there, it's a New Testament word, overcoming sin, that's not in the Old Testament, forgiveness of sin, that's there even in Psalm 103, a thousand years before Christ, David could say bless the Lord who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, that was in the Old Testament, but overcoming sin, that wasn't there in the Old Testament and fellowship was just not possible under the Old Covenant, you know one way to discover whether you're living in the Old Covenant or the New Covenant, I mean

you may get surprised if you check up on that, we are living in AD time-wise but experience-wise many Christians are living in BC, it's true, it was like that in my life, what does that mean?

For example, in the Old Testament they had forgiveness of sins but they couldn't overcome sin, so if you have forgiveness of sins but you can't overcome sin, your experience is BC, if you can come to church regularly, they did that in the Old Covenant, they used to go to the synagogue or the temple regularly every week and praise the Lord, in fact they used to praise better than all of us, they used to praise and shout and jump and dance and clap and do everything, but when they went home they couldn't have fellowship with their wives, is your experience like that?

Well, that's BC conditions, that's not how it's supposed to be in the New Covenant, in the New Covenant we have a wonderful word called fellowship, you know that was just not possible in the Old Covenant because there was no way that man could overcome this tremendous selfishness there is within us that makes us think only of ourselves and that gives us a revulsion to be other people, there was no way, even when Jesus was on earth he could not make even two of his disciples one, even Jesus couldn't do it with three and a half years of preaching, he was the greatest preacher that ever walked on this earth, preaching the greatest sermons the world has ever heard for three and a half years and these 12 people not even two of them could be one among his disciples, you know what they were

discussing the last day of Jesus' life on earth, these 12 were discussing well who's going to take over when Jesus goes, that's all, imagine they couldn't become one but Jesus said to them you know what's going to happen after I go and I send the Holy Spirit you will do a greater work than I have done, that's in John 14 and verse 12, have you ever thought of what that verse means, what does it mean to do a greater work than what Jesus did, this is the greater work if you've ever understood that verse, it's to make two people one, Jesus said in John 17 and verse, number of verses there that he prayer was father I want these my disciples to become one as you and I are one, can you think of the unity of the father and son, such perfect unity, that's the type of unity God wants to bring

between God's children and if you want to know how difficult that is go and ask any husband and wife, it's so difficult, go and ask the most spiritual husband and wife you know, is it easy for you to be one with each other, it's difficult and there's a reason, let me turn to Ephesians chapter 2, it says here, he speaks here about Jews and Gentiles, now that's a word that comes very often in the New Testament, Jews and Gentiles and when it says he's made verse 14, Jesus is our peace who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, abolishing in his flesh the enmity which is the law of commandments that in himself he might make these two into one new man, thus establishing peace and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, so in the New

Testament we're not just talking about victory over sin, we're talking about something beyond victory and overcoming sin to oneness, a holiness that does not bring fellowship with other believers is a counterfeit, if we are really growing in sanctification, it'll bring a greater fellowship with other people who are also walking with the Lord, Christianity is not an individualistic religion, Jesus came to make people one, he may came to make husband and wife one and the devil is determined to separate husbands and wives, determined to separate brother and brother, determined to separate sister and sister, who do you think puts all those thoughts of misunderstanding and suspicion into your mind, do you think that's the Holy Spirit, oh no, those are demons determined to destroy the work of

God in the church, determined to destroy your home, recognize where those voices come from and resist them instead of listening to them, here it says that his desires to make two people into one, I want to read a paraphrase of that, Jesus came and told you that the war is over, he tore down the wall that we used to keep each other at a distance, he repealed the law that had become so clogged down with fine print and footnotes that it hindered more than it helped and instead of continuing with two groups of people separated by centuries of animosity and suspicion, he created a new kind of human being, a fresh start for everybody, he treated us as equals with himself and thus he made us equal with each other, that's the way he did it, you know I have seen through the years in many many

countries the way certain communities of people look down on certain other communities of people, we have that in India in the caste system in the villages where in their religion there are certain people who

are high caste and certain people are low caste, we've got plenty of it in India, 80% of India suffers from this, where certain people won't even, will never enter the house of a person of a lower caste, they won't even allow his shadow to come upon them, they won't drink from a glass that he drank from or eat from a plate where he eats from, they won't sit at the same table, you know it's just like it was here in the United States a couple of hundred years ago, well that's going on in India even today, this looking down on certain people of another community, I mean you can't

imagine that such people could call themselves Christians, they haven't understood Ephesians chapter 2, I remember it's not just in communities, sometimes it can be even among believers where we look down on someone not because of community but because we feel he doesn't have the same understanding of doctrine that I have, you know I've understood it so clearly but he hasn't understood that, I've met born-again believers in the Roman Catholic Church who I believe they're really born again, love the Lord, I mean I don't agree with all their doctrines and I wouldn't be a part of that system but I have to recognize that God's accepted that man, he's born again, I mean he's baptized as a child, he wasn't even baptized the proper way but God's accepted him and it's amazing, you know God's

heart is a lot larger than yours and mine, I'll tell you that and thank God for that otherwise you and I may not have gotten either, it's true and one of the things that God wants to do with you and me is to enlarge our heart, to accept some people whom he has accepted, there's the prayer that I keep praying to God, Lord I want to have as many brothers and sisters as you have children, I don't want to have any one less than that, all whom you have accepted I want to accept and not only accept them, you know you can accept a brother and a sister in a condescending type of way, okay okay come along but that's not the way God accepts us, the mark of a godly man is that he accepts other believers the way God accepted him, how did God accept you brother, was it when all your doctrines were

right, I had a lot of doctrines wrong when God accepted me, I didn't know about doctrine but he accepted me, did he accept me after I got overcome sin and said everything right in my life, no he accepted me just as I was and that's how he changed me and the reason why we're not a blessing to other people is because we're unwilling to accept them as they are, Jesus tore down the dividing wall and he has come to make us one, when he speaks about Jews and Gentiles these are the two greatest opposites in the world, I've heard of Jewish people who get up in the morning and say Lord I thank you that I'm not a Gentile, this is the amount of animosity there was through centuries and Jesus broke it all down, he broke down every dividing wall that separates one man from another and you know how he

did it, if you can understand it, I remember once when I was a much younger Christian and very foolish and I wondered whether I could call a certain person a brother because you know he didn't understand things exactly the way I understood it and I thought it's only the people in my own church I could call brother and sister and the others were well Mr. and Mrs. so and so and then one day I read in scripture in Hebrews chapter 2 that Jesus was not ashamed to call me a brother, you read that verse he's not ashamed to call them brethren, I said boy the difference between me and that brother is about this much, it's so little and the difference between Jesus and me is so vast and from there he's not ashamed to call me a brother and I find it so difficult to call this other person a brother,

something's wrong with me and that's the day I realized that how large the heart of God is, he like we read in he treated us as equals, can you treat other people as equals, if there's a single human being you look down upon because he's less educated, because he's not cultured or maybe because he's a he's still insane, you look down upon him you haven't understood the love of God at all, let me show you a

wonderful verse in the old testament that's been a tremendous blessing to me and it often comes to my mind, if you have a bible it's in Job, it's in the book of Job in chapter 36 and verse 5, the book of Job chapter 36 and verse 5, it says God is almighty but he doesn't despise anyone, and I've learned something from that, God is almighty but he doesn't despise anyone and I realized

that the closer I come to God I'll be like that too, I won't despise anyone, if you despise someone because he's not intelligent because he's foolish, because you think he's not as smart as you are, that's because you are far away from God, you know if God were here and the devil were here on my left and God's on the right, the devil despises everyone, God despises no one, when I start my Christian life I despise a lot of people because I'm so close to the devil, the closer I come to God the more and more and more I'll start appreciating people and that's one way you can know whether you're coming closer to God or not and that's one way you discover whether you're closer to the devil or not, if you despise anyone for anything, for the color of his skin, for his intelligence, education,

ability, wealth or lack of wealth or lack of education or anything, you're pretty close to the devil whether you knew it or not, at least you know it today I don't mean to offend you my brothers and sisters but I want to give you a correct scan report, I don't want to touch it all up and deceive you because God wants to free you from it, Jesus broke down these dividing walls, he treated us as equals and in Christianity that's how it must be, I've got to look at every person of every community, every tribe, nation, tongue, barbarians, uncultured barbarians and highly educated Greeks as equal, not equal in ability but equally accepted by God, all sinners but saved by the grace of God, that's wonderful, see that's what Jesus did and that's how it says in verse 19 that he makes them all into

one family, you know the church is not supposed to be an institution, it's supposed to be a family, we're supposed to be a family where we care for one another and because we're large in number, God's got many children, we don't know all of them but God puts us in small groups so that we care for one another, in fact Jesus said that all people will know you're my disciples when you love one another, this is one of the great things that God has done in the new covenant that was not possible to make two people into one, that's one of the wonderful things he did on the cross, there are many things Jesus accomplished on the cross but most Christians know about only one thing, that he died for our sins, that's great but there's a lot more that he did and you won't get the benefit of that until

you believe and understand, you shall know the truth, the truth shall set you free, for example I said the other day, last Sunday that Jesus defeated Satan on the cross, you don't get the benefit of that till you know that, another thing Jesus did on the cross is what we read right here, he made two people into one and that's why the Bible says we are crucified with Christ, you know if a husband was crucified on the cross along with Christ and the wife was also willing to be crucified on the cross with Christ, they'd both be one, it's because they're not willing to die to themselves, they don't become one, one of the great truths that the Bible teaches is that if you take up the cross and follow Jesus you can become one with others who also take up the cross and follow Jesus, when two

people are not one with each other, whether it's husband and wife or brother and brother or sister and sister, it's always because always one of them or both of them is unwilling to die with Jesus on the cross without a doubt and they are frustrating God's purpose through that, now this is what Paul says is one of the great mysteries, I want you to turn to chapter three now, Ephesians chapter three, he says this is a mystery verse four and five which was not revealed in other generations how two people could become one, but now it's being revealed in Christ and I want you to see this very lovely verse in Ephesians chapter

three and verse eight, why was this revelation given to the apostle Paul, he says here, he says earlier on in verse three, this mystery was made known to me by

revelation and in verse eight he says, to me the very least of all the saints this grace was given to preach this in the world, the apostle Paul wrote the letter, this letter to the Ephesians around 60 AD, five years earlier he wrote another letter which we know as one Corinthians and in one Corinthians 15 and verse 9 he referred to himself as the least of all the apostles, now we know him today as the perhaps the greatest apostle, but one mark of the greatest apostle is that if you look into his heart he will think he's the least of the apostles, it's a mark of greatness always and he writes there in one Corinthians 15 verse 9 to me who am the least of all the apostles, five years later he goes further down and he says I'm the least of all the saints, we read that just now in Ephesians 3

verse 8, if you were to cut open Paul's heart and look inside to see what he thought about himself, he considered himself to be the least among all the believers on the earth, now he wasn't acting humble when he said that, I mean that wasn't false humility because this is inspired scripture, the holy spirit wouldn't allow any false humility to come in, it's amazing that the greatest apostle on earth thought of himself as the least among all the believers, that teaches us something, the mark of greatness in the Christian life is humility, the three secrets of the Christian life I always tell people, humility, humility, you know the third one, humility, if you've learned those secrets you'll learn it all and that's the reason why the Lord was able to reveal certain things to Paul that he

couldn't reveal to others and if you can't understand why God has not revealed certain things to you, you know the reason now, to consider oneself the least of all the saints, you know five years later after he wrote this he wrote another book and that's 1 Timothy in 65 AD and you know what he said of himself there, you see Paul's progression in holiness in AD 55 when he wrote 1 Corinthians he said he was the least of all the apostles, in AD 60 he says I'm the least of all the saints and in AD 65 when he writes 1 Timothy 1 15 he says I'm the chief of all the sinners, that's progression in holiness if you want to understand it, the closer we come to God the more we realize how sinful we are, the more we judge ourselves, the more we, the less we judge other people, the closer we come to

God, who are the ones who are always judging people, the ones who are pretty close to the devil because he's called the accuser of all the brothers and if you're very close to the devil you'll accuse everybody and the further you distance away from him the less you will accuse people and once you come close to God you'll be judging yourself all the time because you see so many things wrong in yourself, I want to ask you a straight question today, do you see more wrong in yourself or in your wife or your husband or another brother or another sister or somebody else's children or some other person in the church, that's a pretty good test of whether you're close to the devil or close to God, God's the, the devil's the accuser of all the brothers, Jesus prays for everyone, there are two

ministries that are going on all the time, one is accusing people day and night, Jesus praying for people day and night, when the devil sees something wrong in someone he accuses, when Jesus sees something wrong in someone he prays and you and I are in fellowship with one of these two, remember that, don't you see things wrong in other people, of course we do, we're not imagine, we don't have to imagine that our wives are perfect or our husbands are perfect or the brothers are perfect or sisters are perfect, no one's perfect except God, the point is what do you do when you see something wrong in another, you either accuse like the devil or you pray, intercede like Jesus, it's one of the two and there we discover who we are closer to and I tell you many people who think they're very

spiritual may get a revelation this morning, they're not, it's a very simple test, the apostle Paul moved closer and closer and closer to God and as he did year by year, he had, he still knew he was very valuable to God, he never lost it, it's not a question of low self-esteem, no, he knew he was the son of a king, he knew he was the son of almighty God, he had authority over Satan, he never lost sight of that but in his attitude to other people, he felt I'm the least of the apostles, I'm the least of the saints, I'm the chief of all the sinners, he never despised anybody because he got close to God who's almighty, who doesn't despise anyone, now it's very important for us to understand this, this is one of the great truths we see in Ephesians and we want to move on, Paul says in

Ephesians chapter 3, he says here in view of this fantastic gospel that's placed me in the heavenly places in Christ, that's brought me to the place where I can be one with my fellow brothers and sisters, he says I bow my knees, he prays, the two great prayers of the apostle Paul in Ephesians, one is the prayer we considered yesterday in Ephesians 1 17 where he prays that we will have revelation, that means the God, the Holy Spirit opening our, the eyes of our heart to show us things that we can never understand with human cleverness, the amazing truths in scripture which we cannot understand by study, if you study the Bible like you study a history book or a chemistry book, you won't get it, you got to study the Bible with humility, Jesus once said in Matthew 11 25, he said I thank you

father that you have hidden these wonderful truths from the clever and the intelligent and revealed them to babes, he used the word revelation there, revelation is a New Testament word, meditation was the Old Testament word, study was the Old Testament word, Ezra studied the scriptures, but in the New Testament God reveals truth, why does he hide it from the clever and intelligent, I mean is God against cleverness and intelligence, that can't be because he gave it to us, who made you or me clever or intelligent, God, but what he is against is the pride that people have because they are clever or intelligent and that pride is what hinders them from understanding scripture, what is it that babes have which intelligent people don't have, humility, purity of heart, it's the condition of our

heart and not the intelligence in our brain that determines how much we're going to know of scripture and so the prayer Paul prays in Ephesians 1 is for revelation and I want to say to you my dear brothers and sisters, you and I will never know what the New Testament means if we don't get revelation and if you're humble God will show you things that he hides from all the intelligent people in the world, I've discovered so many amazing truths in scripture that no man could ever teach me, I never read it in a book, I never went to a bible school in my life, but God opened my eyes as I went to scripture on with brokenness of heart and said Lord I'm foolish, I'm stupid, please give me understanding and the Holy Spirit can do that for you, the second prayer that Paul prays here in Ephesians 3

is that God, verse 16, Ephesians 3 16, will strengthen you with power by his Holy Spirit in the inner man, these two prayers of Paul are very important, one a prayer for revelation to understand God's ways to see the glory of Jesus as we read the scriptures and the second is for power to live according to the standard we see, see Paul realizes that seeing a certain standard is not enough and what you've been hearing now about what Christ has done for us is great, now how are we ever going to live there, we need power and for that also Paul prays, he says first of all I pray that you'll have revelation and second he says I pray that you'll be strengthened with the power of the Holy Spirit in the inner man, so that verse 17, Ephesians 3 17, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith

and I like another translation of that which says that Christ may feel at home in your hearts, you know the difference between being in a home and feeling at home there, you visit some homes and you don't feel at

home and you visit some other homes and the folks there just make you feel at home right from the very first moment and there's a difference, you can be sitting in a house and not feel at home there and you can go to another house and feel at home right from day one and it says here that Christ may feel at home in your heart, I want to ask you not whether Jesus lives in your heart, is he at home there, does he feel at home, does he feel happy about, is he at home in your home for example, does he feel happy about the type of programs you watch on television does he feel happy

there or you feel he gets up and walks out when you turn to certain channels, is he happy with the things you watch on the internet, is Christ at home or do you say he's here, are we imagining that Christ is there the Holy Spirit comes to make Jesus Christ feel at home, he does something in our life so that Christ can feel at home in our heart, he gets rid of certain things from our life, he prompts us to get rid of certain things so that Christ can feel at home, I want to ask you my brothers and sisters, you come here to church and you say you're Christians but I want to ask you a question, are you really serious about wanting to make Jesus Christ feel completely at home in your home, are you willing to get rid of everything in your home that Christ feels uncomfortable about, I'm not

here to tell you what he feels uncomfortable about, your own conscience will tell you, I remember reading a little poem years ago about how it would be if Jesus came to your home one day, I mean physically if you heard the doorbell and you open the door and hey Jesus himself is there and he says I'd like to come and spend a few days with you, sure Lord come right in and of course you prepare the best guest room for him and the food is the best but you may not turn on certain programs that day on television because Christ is in the home and you may want to quickly hide some books and magazines that are lying around and you'd be very especially gentle towards your wife that day the way you speak to her because Christ is in the home and her wife would be so gracious and submissive to her

husband that day because Christ is living in the home and you speak so nicely to your children and even to the dog because Christ is in the home today and then I mean so many things would change in your home and when he says after two or three days well I think I better go on of course you say the usual right words no no no Lord you want to we want you to stay and all that but when he finally leaves what do you say now I can be myself once more isn't that true do you really believe that Jesus lives in your home every day or are we fooling ourselves dear brothers and sisters how long will you fool yourself it's easy to hang a little text on the wall saying Christ is the head of his home it's not really the Holy Spirit comes to make Christ feel at home and I say Lord you gave your life

for me you died for me on the cross you saved me from a hell that I don't even realize fully how terrible it is you saved me from such a miserable life the least I can do is for the rest of my life at least make you feel completely at home in my life and in my home will you pray that prayer will you say spirit of God I want you to work in me and get rid of everything in my life that displeases Jesus every single thing I want to do everything I want to get rid of everything in my home that displeases you I never want to watch a program on television or the internet which will which you you're not going to feel comfortable about see this is so important the Holy Spirit comes to make Christ feel at home another thing it says here is he roots us verse 17 he roots us and grounds us in love

this is the work of the Holy Spirit he's talking about the power of the Holy Spirit that comes to make Christ feel at home in us and roots us and grounds us in love I picture it like this to be grounded in love means that love is my permanent address I'm never going to move from here you'll always find me on the street love he roots and grounds me in love that's the work of the Holy Spirit too and one more thing I want to

show you here before we move on is verse 19 it says verse 18 and 19 Ephesians 3 verse 18 and 19 he says I pray that along with all the saints you may know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge there's something I learned here that if I want to know the totality of Christ's love I can know it only along with all of God's children because there's something about the

love of Christ that I can experience through fellowship with another brother which I cannot experience all by myself God has made it like that so that we learn to value one another so if I cut off one brother whom God who is one of God's children just because I don't agree with his doctrine or I don't like his face or something like that who's going to be the loser me I remember reading a little statement by one of your American poets Emerson he said every man on earth is my superior in some way and in that I can learn from him and I applied that to the body of Christ I said every brother and sister in the body of Christ has got something of Christ that I don't have and if I'm humble enough I can learn from him you know it's just like in the world if I am humble enough I may be a very

clever intelligent educated man but when a plumber comes to my house to fix a problem with the piping and if I watch him I'm humble enough to learn something from him maybe next time I can do it myself or when the electrician comes to fix something in my house and I watch him and I'm humble enough to learn something from him I can do it myself if I watch somebody fixing my car I can learn something from him you know if we have a humble attitude even in the world to learn from other people we become wealthier ourselves all we need is humility to acknowledge that that person knows something in one area that I don't know anything about let me learn from him now imagine what will happen if we have that attitude towards one another in the body of Christ I it took me many years to come to that

position but for many years now I'm just taking that position every brother he may be much younger than me it doesn't matter he's got some experience of Christ that I don't have and I want to get that I want to be humble enough to this person who's half my age to learn something about Christ from him and to this other person in this other country in the other place you know what's happened in the last few years God's made me spiritually a very wealthy man and if I can share some things with you that bless you it's because many brothers and sisters have made me rich I'm just sharing with you the wealth that other people have given me can't you be wealthy like that sure you can be a blessing to multitudes if you will be humble enough to acknowledge that I can learn something of Christ from

all the saints dear brothers and sisters if you have never had that attitude start from today you can become wealthy and from there he goes on to say the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit makes Christ feel at home in us verse 17 the Holy Spirit grounds us in God's love verse 17 the Holy Spirit makes us know Christ's love along with all the others and then through the Holy Spirit verse 20 Ephesians 3 20 God is able to do beyond everything that we ask or think you know we we think that we can ask God for great things and here this verse says God can do in us way beyond what we ask or think and I'll tell you I'm giving you my honest testimony God has done such amazing things in my life way beyond I ask or think I was such a slave to depression and discouragement in my younger days I never thought

that I would ever be delivered from it in all my life I want to testify I'm completely free that's not because I went to any psychologist I've never been to a psychologist in my life I went to the Holy Spirit I opened myself and I confessed all my sins and I said Lord I want to keep my conscience clear I don't want to ever lift myself up in my thoughts I want to humble myself in every situation and the Holy Spirit began to show me things that I needed to acknowledge and gave me power to get rid of it and gradually changed my life completely and made my life full of joy every day of the year you know God can do that for you I want you

to believe that I want you to believe that God can do way beyond what you ask or think he's healed me of sicknesses that I had because of wrong attitudes he

can do way beyond what we ask or think now we need to be grounded very clearly I've spent a lot of time on this because very often we hear so much about what we're supposed to do and it's on the basis of all this that we go to the next three chapters which I'll deal with in the next session because chapter 4 verse 1 begins with therefore therefore and whenever you see a therefore in scripture see what it is therefore why is that word over there therefore because of all that you've heard in chapters 1 to 3 because this fantastic work that God has done in Christ therefore this is the way you should live let's pray

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