

## *In the heavenly realm (Series)*

### **Lesson # 3 “Strengthened with Power in the Inner-Man”**

(Ephesians Chapter 3)

**Scripture:** Ephesians 6:12 “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

#### **Introduction:**

You ever watch Star-Trek? I’m not talking about any of these new fandangle episodes. I’m talking the real stuff with Captain Kirk, Spock, McCoy and Scotty. You know photon torpedo and I can remember so many episodes where there whole world depended on the need for more power.

You probably remember when the Klingons had Captain Kirk just where they wanted him and he would call Scottie down in engineering and tell him that he needs more power and that the universe depends on him. To which Scottie replies I’m given it all she’s got captain. Then Captain Kirk would say that’s not enough mister, I got to have warp 8 or we will die.

Have you ever been giving it all you’ve got with the Klingons of life bearing down on you, and it just wasn’t enough? Most of us have experienced this to some degree or another and maybe some here today are wrestling with this very thing.

Chapters 1-3 in Ephesians helps us understand and get hooked up with real power When your giving it all you got like Scottie and its not enough....Maybe your hooked into the wrong power source.

#### **Lesson:**

##### **Ephesians 3:1**

1“For this reason...”

-For what reason?

-For the reason in chapter 2 that you were dead and God raised you out of death in Christ and seated you in the spiritual realm on the foundation of Christ.

-“...I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles”

-Paul was most likely a prisoner in Rome at the time of this writing

\*However the bondage that he counts worthy of mentioning here is not that of Roman origin. Paul mentions his bondage in Christ.

Yes Paul was a slave of righteousness (Rom 6:17-18)

\*The Gentiles and the Jews had specific needs in their process of maturity in Christ and God was aware and reached out to both of them.

### **Ephesians 3:2**

2 “if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you;”

-First, stewardship is a concept we really need to understand. It has to do with both responsibility and accountability.

-Have you ever seen a Christian who refused to use the gift that God had given them or fully apply themselves in works of service for which he or she was created?

-Have you ever been that Christian?...Are you that Christian?

-Jesus gets real plain about the idea of stewardship in the parable of the talents. Showing us that we have a responsibility to the assignments of God and will be held accountable for them. (Matt 25)

-The text here tells us that Paul given a stewardship/ responsibility for the gentiles  
-What was it?

### **Ephesians 3:3**

3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

-God had unveiled a secret to Paul....something keep hidden is now made known

-Why would God hide something from them?

-The time had not yet come.

### **Ephesians 3:4-6**

4 By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

-Here Paul unveils the secret

-That the New Covenant includes in salvation “whosoever that believeth and is baptized (Mark 16:16).

-Its meant for all mankind including the Gentiles

-Not a secret society

-Scalpers don't have any tickets to sell you for this event

-The Gentiles are

-Fellow heirs

-Members of the same body

-Fellow partakers of the promise in Christ .....through the gospel

-Why was the secret revealed

-For understanding about Christ.

### **Ephesians 3:7-9**

7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. 8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things;

#### A. On the road to Damascus in Acts 9

- Jesus tapped Paul on the shoulder to preach to the Gentiles
- He had plenty of excuses not to do this
- Paul had been persecuting Christians and Christ
- \*But Paul was faithful to his assignment
- With humility ....the least of the least

#### B. Paul's mission was to explain the unfathomable riches of Christ

- Did you get what the mission here is?
- To explain the unfathomable riches
- How do you do that?
- If it is unfathomable must mean his riches are great beyond our ability to understand.

#### C. I think the point here is that true richness doesn't exist in the material things were moth and rust destroy but in the heavenly, spiritual realm with Christ

### **Ephesians 3:10a**

10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known..."

-So far we have been talking about secrets, insight, knowledge and wisdom. Have you picked up on these key words?

-These Ephesians lived in a world of secrets and mystery. Their culture held wisdom in high regards.

-Do you know someone that is very wise.

- If your like me, you probably seek out their counsel when things get tough.
- Wisdom seems so powerful doesn't it?

-But here, in our text, is a whole new dimension of wisdom. The idea of a manifold wisdom. Manifold means "many" and here is the idea of a layered wisdom with many parts.

-You see, the wisdom of God has many parts that dovetail together perfectly to form his eternal purposes

\*Its not a secret!

## Ephesians 3:10b

“...through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

-Where is God’s wisdom made known?

-Through Philosophers?

-Through group discussion?

-Mysteries?

-Secret societies?

-What about a committee? Ha

\*It’s through the church!

-Oh, and here the audience is not of human origin.

-The audience is the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

-1 Peter 1:10-12

10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — things into which angels long to look.”

-You can just imagine through the ages the angels looking down through those heavenly window panes nudging each other for a look down at earth to see what God’s going to do next.

\*And then, through the church, folks that’s us

-The many parts of Gods wisdom has been made known to those in the spiritual realm.

-An angelic sigh can almost be heard, as they look at the church and collectively understand God’s eternal purpose.

\*Once again God calls us to life in the spiritual realm, away from walking by site to living by faith.

-God uses the church for amazing things that we don’t even realize most of the time.

-Often, I think, we take each other for granted.

\*Sometimes we stay out late on Saturday night and come dragging into church Sunday morning slobbering ourselves together, eyelids drooping and try to worship the God of Glory, when we are meant to show His wisdom on earth.

-That would be like the famous guy that carries the brief case with our countries nuclear launch codes (The Football) asking someone to hold his brief case while he goes to the rest room.

### **Ephesians 3:11**

11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

-This mystery was very important but it was only a part of a greater building block and that was God's eternal purpose to redeem mankind unto Himself.

### **Ephesians 3:12**

12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

-The "in whom" is Christ

\*Access to the father is granted....same as Eph 2:18

John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Hebrews 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

### **Ephesians 3:13**

13 Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.

## **Paul's Prayer**

### **I. First, God gives us our name?**

Ephesians 3:14

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,

A. Does a name make any difference?

-When Chevy first came out with their Nova they tried selling the car in Mexico and guess what...it wouldn't sell. Why? In Spanish the word Nova basically means won't run.

B. What name do you suppose God gives to us?

1. His point throughout the Ephesian letter has been CHRIST!!!

-The only name that matters

Acts 4:12 "...for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

-At the sound of His name

Philippians 2:10-11 "so that at the name of Jesus EVERY

KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

2. As the Church with Jesus as its head we understand our name is simply the Church of Christ as in Romans 16:16

-Jesus says in Matthew 18:20

-“For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.”

## II. 1<sup>st</sup> Paul prays that they be strengthened in the inner man by the Spirit of God.

Ephesians 3:16

16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man,

### A. Here Paul prays that they be strengthened in their inner-man

1. In the early 1960's Ford made a car called the Mustang. I bought a 1983 model and boy let me tell you it looked sweet, and looked like it could go the speed of light. You could just walk by that baby and feel the wind in your hair. It had a 5 liter V-8 to back up the look and man would it light the tires.....so I've heard in case my parents listen to this sermon the internet!

-My friend bought one just like it. It looked just the same and I couldn't wait to get out on the Lock and Dam Road and well....burn out the cob webs, make sure everything was in working order.

-It turned out that it only had a small V-6 motor that could barely peel out in gravel.

\*It had the looks of a race car, but it didn't have the power.

\*This reminds me of the Volts Wagon going up Pikes Peak  
...when he got half way and tuckered out he said I should have had a V-8

-Inner is what is inside of us you know the part we usually hide from others.

2. The word strengthened means to empowered.

-Paul prays that the Ephesian Christians would not just have the look but that they would be loaded spiritually under the hood, in in Christ Jesus.

\*Church let there be no mistake we are made for power....

-We are made to run on the power of God

B. Church, for the life of me I don't understand how any of us who have been raised by the power of God through Christ, can approach our Christianity in a lackadaisical, way as if we were some kind of spiritual four cylinder.

\*God designed us with seat belts and roll cages and hood pin, and the power of his son under our hoods.

\*Spiritually speaking we are race car drivers on a heavenly track

\*Are you on track?

## II. 2<sup>nd</sup> Paul prays that they would have power to understand the love of Christ

-Ephesians 3:17-18 "so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,"

A. What would happen if we were to come to a better understanding of Christ's love for us? Would anything change?

-Sure that's the point ...this world would be a different place.

1. The more we understand the love of Christ the more we see our need to respond to it.

-Love is the greatest of all 1 Cor 13

-And it drives us to think and do things we never thought we would do.

-James says in chapter two of his book that if we merely believe in God and don't respond to Him it is simply worthless.

-And response to Christ always makes changes

2. If we fail to grasp the measure of His love:

-We place limits where He does not

-We make sacred cows where he has not

-We began to think that power comes from other places.

2. You see, to see and understand the love of Christ is to be in the presence of God Himself.

-Because God is love (1 John 4:8) and Jesus says if you have seen me you have seen the father (John 14:9).

B. The point here is to have deep roots like a tree firmly planted by the water like Psalms chapter 1:3

1. When we get some scope on the size of Christ's love for us:

- We will understand our blessings more
- We will fall to our knees in thanking Him for the atoning sacrifice that He gave for us.
- \*And we will spend the rest of our lives in faithful response to it.

2. And the more we understand the love of Christ

- The more we need to share it with others.
- Isn't it true that the most convicted Christians of all are the ones out sharing Jesus with the world.

\*And our roots will sink deeper and we will produce more fruit.

### **III. Last, Paul prays for them to be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**

- Have you ever measured out a cup of brown sugar?
  - You can loosely put it in a measuring cup....and do you have a cup?
  - Man you can pack that stuff way down and put more in and then pack it down again.

-Luke 6:38 "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

-You are in God's measuring cup and His measure for you is not a sloppy loose one...but he wants to pack you down with more of His love and grace so you can reach others.

### **Conclusion:**

So if you find yourself like Captain Kirk needed more power .....All you have to do is ask God who:

20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

- You think you have seen powerful magic, and great mysteries?
  - ...Let God show you His power, beyond all you could even dream of.

21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."

-Glory is given to God in the Church and you can't leave Christ Jesus out!