

**Yet Not I, But Through Christ In Me**  
**Ephesians 3:14-21**

Verse 4 of Ruth's song today reads:

With every breath I long to follow Jesus  
For He has said that He will bring me home  
**And day by day I know He will renew me**  
Until I stand with joy before the throne

Renewed day by day by Christ – What does that mean?

For many of us here today, we have days that we're completely exasperated, or we're aggravated, or we're emotionally and mentally spent.

- One more Zoom class and you're going to lose it.
- One more hour of having to wear these crazy masks in class or at work
- One more person taking advantage of me
- One more piece of bad news
- One more day waking up in physical or emotional pain

We need to be renewed – Every day!

The title of Ruth's song was "Yet not I, but through Christ in me" which is based off of Gal. 2:20, which is summation verse on this matter, but Paul develops this idea in a fuller sense in today's passage – **Ephesians 3:14-21 (READ)**

Today, I want us to look at the **Realization** of what we have as Christians, the **Remedy** in our weakness and the **Result** of using that remedy.

**1. Realization of what we already have**

How many of you know a lot about cars?

- You might know how the transmission works, the size of the engine, how to change the brakes, etc.
- It's possible to know everything about cars and yet to have never driven one.
- It's also possible to **not** know all the details about a car, and yet drive one daily all over the place

In many ways some of us here today might be like the person that knows the ins and outs of the car with our spiritual life.

- We know all the Bible accounts, we even know doctrine, the attributes of God, the truths of God and have even been saved, but we've yet to live by those truths in our daily life.
- There is also the chance that you've only been saved a short period of time or you've never had the opportunity to be discipled and you simply don't know the truths of God

Either case, we will see it is because we are not applying the truths of God that we're **not being** renewed spiritually on a daily basis.

We must first come to a **realization** that the truths of God's Word to us are **real** and meant for our **use**.

Paul stated in Vs. 14 **"For this cause"** – For what cause is referring?

- Paul had spent the first half of his letter to the Christians in Ephesus letting them know of the **unlimited** spiritual resources they had in Jesus Christ.
- In Eph. 1:15-23, Paul had prayed that they would **know** their power in Christ.
  - o 2:5 – "hath quickened us" – know they were spiritually alive
  - o 2:10 – "his workmanship" – know they were God's handiwork
  - o 2:19 – "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God – know they were in God's family
  - o Vs. 20 – "built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets" – know their foundation was in God's Word through Christ
  - o Vs. 22 – "are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" – know our new identity makes us the dwelling place for God

For all of these reasons, Paul wanted them to use these truths for strength.

- In Ephesians 1:15-23, Paul was praying that they would **know** their power in Christ.
- Now, here in Ephesians 3:14-21, he is praying that they would **use** it.
- This is my prayer for us today.
- We have to get past just the knowledge of Bible facts to a point to applying, claiming and using the truths of who we are and what we have in Christ.

Think about it – The infinite, all-powerful God of the all has decided to dwell in the limited body of us.

- He has unlimited resources, power and strength.
- We are limited in every one of those areas, yet too often we seldom decide to use God's resources in our daily life.

So, Paul says "For this cause I bow the knee unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"

- Complete side note – We pray to God the Father, through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Further realization – Paul prayed to the Father

- We can pray to our Father. We don't come in with fear and trembling that our Father will reject us, doesn't have time or doesn't care about us.
- We can pray knowing full well that He loves us, desires to speak with us, and is loving and concerned.
- In actuality, God is more desirous that we would come to Him than many of us ever will.

Paul prayed to the Father – on bended knee

- A sign of submission, recognition of God's authority, and reverence

So, what did he pray? Vs. 16 – "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man"

There are two more realizations for us here.

First, Paul says "according to the riches of his glory".

- He doesn't say "out of the riches of his glory"
  - o "Out of" – Would be like saying Jeff Bezos gave \$100 out of his billions
- "According to" means something ONLY He could do.
  - o Out of God's omnipotence and omniscience – Only something He could give
- We must realize that ONLY God can give us the strength we need
  - o When we're hurt, betrayed, need forgiveness, need to cross some hurdle in life, through sickness and loss
  - o Pain of parents, feeling abandoned

- Addiction – ONLY God gives the strength
- We have no real concept of the value of God's spiritual riches He has for us and has given us – forgiveness, inheritance

Second realization from this verse leads to our remedy

## 2. Remedy

- Vs. 16 implies we already have the riches. God's riches were given to us at salvation.
- The **remedy** is the **realization** that we can be STRENGTHENED by them.
- John MacArthur tells the story of Julian Ellis Morris.
  - A millionaire at the turn of last century that would spend his days going door to door selling razors and soap. He had no need for the money.
  - At night he would head back to his mansion for a fine dinner and have his chauffeur drive him.
- Too many of us live our Christian walk this way. We live in daily spiritual poverty only occasionally enjoying the riches we were given.
- At salvation, we became the children of God. God inhabits us, He is His workmanship and He wants to help us and work through us.
  - It doesn't matter if you're an 11-year-old Christian, 40 or 100.
- We need the riches of God. We have them, but are not utilizing them.
  - I need them – There are days when I am physically spent and mentally & emotionally drained.
    - Sometimes due to my own weaknesses and sin, sometimes dealing with that of others.
  - I need and you need our **inner man** strengthened
- We should not be living in our inadequacies when we can be living in the fullness of God.

So, the REMEDY, be "strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man"

- To be honest, most Christians don't get here to where God is working in us.
- We must realize that this **outer man** that we allow to rule our thoughts and actions is just a shell that will fail.

2 Cor. 14:16 – "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

- Note – the outward man perishes, but the inward man is renewed daily

The true issues we have in life deal with the inner man and only God can heal and strengthen the inner man.

It is very encouraging to realize that though the outer man grows weaker and weaker that the inner man can actually grow stronger and stronger.

- God energizes and strengthens us

### **How is this remedy applied?**

- Realization of **who we are** and **what we have** in Christ (Vs. 16).
- **How** is that done? The inner man needs **fed**.
- We must feed our inner man regular meals of God's Word
  - o We are also fed when we then apply what we've read.
  - o This means seeking God and His Word in our decisions and responses
  - o We are strengthened in our faith when we see God's promises fulfilled

Some might be thinking, "Only super strong Christians see that".

- No, it is just a normal Christian that decided to submit to God's Word – not just acknowledging it, but actually listening and applying it.
- It didn't make all their troubles vanish, but it strengthened them. It gave them endurance, patience and what we'll see next – LOVE.
- So often we find ourselves in mess after mess that either we've created or someone in our lives – Submit to God – He gives the power to eliminate some from occurring and to be strong in those that still occur.

It's important to understand that this isn't a light switch. It's a growth process.

- It's like gaining strength and losing weight. It doesn't happen overnight.
- It takes discipline to be in the Bible and even more to live it.
- I promise it will strengthen you and build your endurance.

### **How does it strengthen?**

- It draws us nearer to God and further from sin.
- We realize that we're never alone.
- We realize that even though we've been hurt, we're never need to be in despair.

Realization of what we already have, applying the Remedy that leads to the Result

### 3. Result

Let me show two results from Vs. 17-19 when we are strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man.

#### A. Christ dwells in our hearts by faith (Vs. 17)

- This gives us strength so that we can be sanctified (conformed) to the image of Christ
- Note the word “dwell”. It means to be a home in a place.
  - o I dwell in my house. It is my home. The place I feel most comfortable and can be myself and be loved.
- When we allow ourselves to be strengthened in God’s Word and by the application of it in our lives, Christ DWELLS in our hearts of faith.
- We were already told that God inhabits each Christian, but it is a far different thing to inhabit versus dwelling.
  - o It would be like being a patient guest in someone’s home versus really living in it.
  - o On a trip, you may inhabit a hotel room for a couple nights, but it’s not where you dwell.

The convicting thought that rises from this is, “Is Christ a visitor or the host in our heart?”

- Is He calling the shots?
- Too often we’re more than happy to come worship and spend time with Christian friends, but we want to call the shots and decide what we’re going to do and how we’re going to do it.
- No strengthening occurs with that spirit.

Christians, the Spirit of God entered our life at salvation, He continues to love, but He desires much more in and for our life.

“In Robert Munger’s book *My Heart Christ’s Home*, he pictures the Christian life as a house, through which Jesus goes from room to room. In the library, which is the mind, Jesus finds trash and all sorts of worthless things, which He proceeds to throw out and replace with His Word. In the dining room of appetite, He finds many sinful desires listed on the worldly menu. In the place of such things as

prestige, materialism, and lust He puts humility, meekness, love and all the other virtues for which believers are to hunger and thirst. He goes through the living room of fellowship, where He finds many worldly companions and activities, through the workshop, where only toys are being made, into the closet, where hidden sins are kept, and so through the entire house. Only when He had cleaned every room, closet, and corner of sin and foolishness could He settle down and be at home."

Christ dwells in our hearts by faith

Second result from the remedy:

**B. Being rooted and grounded in love, that we may be able to comprehend and to know the love of Christ (Vs. 17b-19)**

- The result is first the full indwelling of Christ which leads to a full understanding and experience of God's love.
- We become **rooted** and **grounded** in love – It becomes our basis on which we live
  - o First of the fruit of the Spirit is love – It is how we are to be known
- This is agape love – the meritless love – Love we didn't earn, but is given out of will
- We're rooted and grounded in it and Vs. 18 tells us that we then can understand the full dimensions of it (breadth, length, depth, height)

This is a selfless love that is giving, denying self and giving to others.

- Wanting to serve other and to sacrifice for others

Therefore, if we find ourselves typically to be unloving and unwilling to serve and sacrifice for others – it reveals a lack of Christ's love in us

If Christ is dwelling in us, this type of love is understood and displayed as natural as it is for us to breath. We don't even think about it.

Take marriage as an example:

- Ephesians 5 instructs us to love our spouses with agape love (unmerited love – not based on reciprocation)
- Therefore, it is not an emotional love that we can fall in or out of, but an act of the will.

- “The absence of love has nothing to do with what is happening **to** us, but what is happening **in** us.”

Christ’s love in us creates a desire to serve, care and be self-giving toward others that have nothing to give in return.

It is when we follow, strengthened in God, that we begin comprehend this love and as Vs. 19 tells us to know it in a way “which passeth knowledge”.

- Meaning it passes from knowing, to experiencing
- The comprehension and experiencing of God’s love conforms us to spread it.

J. Wilbur Chapman would tell, in his meetings, the testimony of a man.

“I got off at the Pennsylvania depot as a tramp, and for a year I begged on the streets for a living. One day I touched a man on the shoulder and said, “Hey, mister, can you give me a dime?” As soon as I saw his face I was shocked to see that it was my own father. I said, “Father, Father, do you know me?” Throwing his arms around me and with tears in his eyes, he said, “Oh my son, at last I’ve found you! I’ve found you. You want a dime? Everything I have is yours.” Think of it. I was a tramp. I stood begging my own father for ten cents, when for 18 years he had been looking for me to give me all that he had.”

Friend, this man is not much different than you and I.

- Will we realize we already possess the riches of God’s glory?
- Let it give us strength to feed on God’s Word and follow His will in our life
- That we could live a life the not only has knowledge of God’s love, but fully comprehends and experiences it.

This will renew your inner man day by day – There’s not a problem we can’t face

- No need for despair
- The ability to get up to face the new day with strength
- The way to persevere and triumph