

CALL to PRAYER - Pray that we might better understand and live out true love.

## **Eph. 3:14-19 - The Dimensions of Love within the Domestic Heart**

Intro - The preaching today is about a *prayer*. Our text is one of the many recorded prayers in the Bible and this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> prayer we've encountered in Ephesians. Last week we noted the preface to this prayer where we saw the hierarchy & patriarchy within the Trinity. Prayer is to be addressed to The Father...*from whom all blessing flow.* James 1:17 God the Son & God the Spirit address The Father in prayer, and we too should *kneel before the Father*. Today we highlight the content of this prayer. The Father is beseeched to bring a domestic quality to the heart of the believer. Family comes from The Father, and the Father domesticates the heart of the believer. Today we notice the NATURE & NURTURE of this prayer. This prayer has a *Trinitarian nature* and a *Trinitarian nurture*. Father, Son & Spirit are invoked in prayer and Father, Son & Spirit are at work in this prayer to bring about a reality that exists within the *Family in Trinity* and grow it within the community of faith. That family quality is *love*. This is a prayer to understand Divine love. God is love...and we are to love what God loves and how God loves. Rom. 5:5

### **THE NATURE OF THIS PRAYER**

- The nature of this prayer is Trinitarian.
  - I like to mark in my Bible....I mark when members of the Trinity are mentioned together. I find this a very helpful visual – God has revealed Himself in Trinity
    - Often seen in Eph - chapter 1.... Eph. 2:18... chapter 3, 4, 5
  - This prayer is Trinitarian in nature. Father, Son & Spirit are invoked.
- Father - 3:14-15
  - The Father is the Person addressed in prayer (this is the proper formula)
    - “*Our Father...*” (Matt. 6:9)
  - The Father is the provider, so He is knelt before and humbly asked to provide.
    - 3:16 “*...the He would grant you...*” James 1:17
    - The Father is rich and richly supplies. 3:16 “*...according to His riches...*” (1:3)
- Spirit - 3:16b
  - The Father is sought to give strength and He does this by His Spirit.
  - The Holy Spirit is the source of the believer's strength.
    - Acts 1:8 Luke 24:49 Zech. 4:6
    - If we are to “*be strong in Lord...*” Eph. 6:10 ...then it is by His mighty Spirit.
      - (The Spirit is the *Spirit of God* and the *Spirit of Christ* - Rom. 8:9)
- Christ - 3:17
  - This prayer is for believers to have Christ “ *dwell in their hearts by faith.*”
  - To “*ask Jesus in your heart*” is not biblical terminology....for the unbeliever...
    - ....but it is biblical for the believer
    - Rev. 3:20 (church) John 14:23 2 Cor. 6:16 Rev. 21:3 *culmination of salvation*
  - L. MacArthur helped me on this...The believer's heart is not to be just a *house* but a *home*.
    - The prayer is for Christ to be “*at home*” in the heart. Is Christ comfortable...?
    - A big difference between a *tolerated/temporary guest* and a *family member*.

- Christ should be “*at home & comfortable*” in the heart of a believer.
- *J. Calvin* - “Most people consider fellowship with Christ, and believing in Christ, to be the same thing; but the fellowship which we have with Christ is the consequence of faith. In a word, faith is not a distant view, but a warm embrace, of Christ, by which He dwells in us, and we are filled with His Divine Spirit.”
- This prayer is for the Trinity to domesticate our hearts....dwell in us

### **THE NURTURE OF THIS PRAYER**

- The nurture of this prayer is Trinitarian.
  - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are asked to nurture us.
  - *Nurture* = to foster growth...health...development
    - Nurture a plant by water/soil/sun ...&.... a child by feeding/teaching/loving
  - This prayer is asking the Triune God to nurture the believer.
- The prayer request is to nurture the *inner man* not the *outer man*.
  - 3:16 (our prayers tend to focus on the outer man)
  - 2 Cor. 4:16 3 John 2
  - If we are to *grow...be healthy...develop in maturity* - we need a strong *inner man*.
    - 1 Tim. 4:8 (man focuses on the outside by God looks at the heart)
  - The Father empowers the believer with His Spirit so that Christ can be *at home* in the *inner-man* of the heart - 3:16-17
  - When Christ is *at home in the heart*, He brings love into that heart/home.
- God domesticates the heart with His family love...Trinitarian love.
  - 3:17b John 17:26
  - When Christ moves in...and is comfortable...He brings love into the place He lives
  - Christ nurtures that heart with His love - *rooted and grounded in love*
    - Christ teaches His love to His loved ones.
  - His Spirit enables us to truly love - fruit of the Spirit - Gal. 5:22 Rom. 5:5
  - God is love...inter-Trinitarian love.
    - When God moves in...love moves in 1 John 4:7-8
    - When Christ is at home in our hearts, we begin to live out Christ’s love.
- The dimensions of Divine love
  - 3:18-19 God’s love is immense and beyond measure.
  - It reaches from heaven to earth - John 3:16 The Son’s love - 2 Cor. 8:9
  - It reaches down to the lowest hell and lovingly lifts them to highest heaven.
  - It extends from eternity past <sup>Eph. 1:4-5</sup> to eternity future. <sup>Jer. 31:3</sup> Rom. 8:38-39
    - The Infinite God has an infinite love
- The understanding of Divine love
  - We don’t understand true love very well. We tend to misunderstand true love
  - The prayer is to understand this Divine love - 3:18-19 comprehend / know
  - Divine love is too big to comprehend, yet it is THE COMMAND for the Christian
    - We can’t do in our own strength...we need God’s strength
  - Pray that The Father will strengthen us by His Spirit so Christ will be at home in our hearts...and domesticate our hearts so we can live out His divine love.
    - 1 John 3:16 1 John 4:10-11
- 1 John 4:7-8 (KJV scripture song) (Benediction - 2 Cor. 13:14)