

Ephesians 3:14–19

Sermon Notes

1. The Question

What do we need most as a church right now to become the kind of church God wants us to be?

2. Before We Talk About What To Do...

Paul says: STOP. Before commands, he shows us what we have and what God is doing.

- We have every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3)
- God's plan: to unite all things in Christ — reversing the curse, fixing what sin broke (Eph. 1:10)
- The church's role: to put God's wisdom on display — to the world and to the supernatural world (Eph. 3:10)

Only then does he tell us what we need most.

3. To Know What We Need, Look At What Paul Prays

Paul prays twice in Eph. 1–3. Both prayers share the same emphasis:

Knowledge — that we might truly know

Power — the power to know, and knowing the power

4. The Answer

What do we need most? Knowledge. But not just any kind of knowledge.

Two types of knowledge:

Intellectual: An unbeliever can accurately explain a doctrine

Spiritual: A Christian has a deep apprehension of its reality — where it grips and changes you

Think: bee sting. You can know what those words mean — but once you've been stung, you know it differently. Spiritual knowledge works the same way, except we need the Spirit to do that work in us.

5. The Problem

We shrink the Christian life down to: knowing some facts, going through the motions, doing our thing

But Paul prays for this twice — which means this is necessary, not optional.

6. What Has To Happen

We need the Spirit — not to give new revelation, but the ability to truly see what has already been revealed.

"Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened" (Eph. 1:18) — it's passive. We're not turning the lights on. God is.

The knowledge Paul wants us to experience is so weighty we need supernatural strength just to bear it (Eph. 3:16–17)

7. The Climax of Paul's Prayer

Paul prays for strength to comprehend (Eph. 3:18) — a word meaning to seize, to conquer, to capture. What are we meant to comprehend?

The love of Christ — its breadth, length, height, and depth

Vast — beyond full comprehension ("surpasses knowledge", v.19)

And yet — truly knowable. We're meant to be conquered by it.

8. Not Alone — With All the Saints

Paul doesn't pray that we'd each sit alone contemplating God's love. He prays "with all the saints" (v.18). We grow in this understanding together, as a community. Corporate worship is one of God's primary designs for heating up this comprehension — like coals placed together on a fire

9. What Christ's Love Actually Means

It's easy to hear "Christ loves you" and let it slide past. But think about what that actually means: He has affection for us — He delights in us, He cherishes us (Eph. 5:29) He is deeply concerned for our good — He thinks about us, sacrifices for us And this is not just anyone — this is the King of kings, the Creator of the universe, the one before whom all creation will bow That's why Paul has to pray for a supernatural work. The facts aren't hard to read. But having them grip us at the core — that's something different entirely.

10. Why This Matters

Knowing Christ's love is the soil where everything else grows: It's how we become more holy — not by sheer willpower, but by setting our affections on something better It's the answer at the root of marriage problems, relationship struggles, everything Think: the Sirens. Odysseus blocked the song. But Orpheus played a better one — and the sailors weren't tempted.

God doesn't just restrain us from sin by external force. He woos us with something more beautiful.

11. The Goal

"That you may be filled with all the fullness of God." (v.19) The church becomes the temple — the place where God's glory is displayed We image God properly — we do what Adam was supposed to do We put His character on display to a watching world — and to the supernatural world

12. How Does That Happen?

Not just more activity
But deeper, Spirit-given knowledge of the love of Christ
The Father strengthens us by His Spirit → Christ dwells in our hearts → we are rooted in love → we comprehend → we are filled with His fullness.

13. What Now?

Three questions to sit with:

Do I want this kind of knowledge?
Am I praying for it?
Or am I content with something smaller?