

I Bow My Knees
Ephesians Series

Ephesians 3:14–21
INTRODUCTION

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Grace Chapel

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Review of the Exposition:

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| 1:3–14 | Gentile believers should praise the Father for what the Trinity did for Jews first |
| 1:15–23 | Paul [a Jewish believer] thankfully prays for the enlightened Ephesian Gentile believers that they would know their calling in hope, their rich inheritance, & how powerfully the Father works for believers w/ His power that raised & seated Christ |
| 2:1–10 | Despite Jews & Gentiles being dead, God made alive, raised, & seated them together w/ Christ (saving separated from God people by grace through faith) so they cannot boast but that His created Church would do the good works He prepared for it. |
| 2:11–13 | These now alive & near-to-God Gentiles are to remember their former alienation |
| 2:14–22 | Christ effected peace between alienated Jews & Gentiles when he made both one & broke down the dividing Law & He reconciled both to God, so Gentiles are no longer aliens, but fellow citizens with the saints, having been built (along w/ Jews) into a holy temple that is God's habitation—the Church. |
| 3:1–7, 13 | Paul [requests that they not lose heart at his imprisonment] on behalf of the Gentiles, because he assumes that they know of the grace (spiritual gift) given to Paul, namely that God revealed the previously unrevealed mystery to the apostles and NT prophets [e.g., that some Gentiles would be fellow heirs, of the same body, and fellow partakers (with some Jews)] |
| 3:8–13 | Paul received a grace (gift) to announce the Church's inheritance & the mystery dispensation—the Church—hidden from creation by the creator— God's great eternal plan thru accomplished Christ. Thus, no one should lose heart over Paul's imprisonment, because (his message, that resulted in) imprisonment is their glory |

New Exposition

3:14–15 [In light of Christ making peace between Jews, Gentiles, and God in the body of Christ] Paul prays to the Father, who rendered the body of Christ a family

3:1–13 was a parenthesis, so the basis upon which Paul prays is the message of chapter 2

In verse 15, it is important to determine whether the word should be translated *every* or *whole*

If the Greek said “the *pas* family,” it would necessarily mean “the *whole* family.”

When it lacks the word *the* (as it does here), it may be “the *whole* family” or “*every* family.”

Verse 14 gives an important clue, but the words in question are part of a variant reading.

The Egyptian manuscripts do not include the words *of our Lord Jesus Christ*, but the Majority Text does. Those translations that accept these words see Paul relating the Fatherhood of the Father over humans to His fatherhood of Christ, so they take it as “the *whole* family.” Most translations that omit these words take it as “every family.” The context here supports taking it as a reference to God's fatherhood over the Church, rather than in a nebulous fatherhood-of-creation view.

What does Paul mean that the whole family is named by the Father?

3:16–17a The content of Paul’s prayer is that the Spirit would strengthen the Ephesians spiritually in order that Christ would indwell their congregation (corporately)

According to the riches of His glory

Paul does not assume that Christ is already indwelling

Why corporate?

3:17b The basis upon which Paul prays for God to strengthen them for Christ to indwell their congregation (corporately) is because they have been grounded in God’s love

have been rooted and grounded in love

Whose love?

3:18 The first goal for which Paul prays that Christ would indwell them (corporately) is in order that they would comprehend God’s love in its extensiveness

Meaning of *width and length and depth and height*

Referent of *width and length and depth and height*

3:19a The second goal for which Paul prays that Christ would indwell them (corporately) is in order that they would know Christ’s love in its infinitude

How can one know what is unknowable?

3:19b The purpose of knowing God’s love in its extensiveness and infinitude is that they corporately would manifest God’s character in its fullness

filled with all the fullness of God

3:20–21 Believers should praise the Father forever who works exceedingly [on behalf of the body of Christ] doing for it what we never could have imagined, let alone, asked for

Recall 1:3: Blessed *be* the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ

Conclusion and Application