



ONE VOICE

FELLOWSHIP

Worship Service

February 28, 2021

Prelude | Welcoming One Another

English

I love you with the love of the Lord

I love you with the love of the Lord
Yes, I love you with the love of the Lord
I can see in you the glory of my King
Yes, I love you with the love of the Lord

Jesus, I lift Your Name Higher

Chorus:

Jesus, I lift your name higher
I lift Your name higher (ALL)
Jesus, I lift your name higher
I lift Your name higher (ALL)
Jesus, I lift your name higher
I lift Your name higher (ALL)
For you're worthy of my praise
Jesus, I lift Your name higher

When I look back through the years
There is nothing I can compare
To the grace and mercy I've been shown
Except to sing of your greatness
You are my Redeemer, my all in all,

Chorus (x2)

I lift your name higher

Song of Praise | Psalm 27

English

Of this I am sure
I will see God's goodness
My soul will rest in
the land of the living
Be strong in the Lord

Chorus:

The Lord is my light
And my salvation

Whom shall I fear?
Shall I be afraid?
The Lord is my life

One thing I need
One thing I ask you
To dwell in your house
Each day of my life
Delighting in you

Chorus (x2)

In trouble time
He keeps me secure
He covers me
He lights my head
Above the storm

Call to Worship | Psalm 27

Jorge & Sonia | Spanish & English

Psalms 27: 1-14

¹ The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

**All: The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?**

⁴ One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after:

**that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my
life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his
temple.**

¹⁰ Though my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the
Lord will take me in.

¹¹ **Teach me your way, O Lord,
and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.**

¹² Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false
witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.



**13 I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord
In the land of the living!**

14 (*English*): Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!

Opening Prayer

Clément | *Swahili & English*

Scripture Reading | Ephesians 1:3-14

Mike | *Arabic*

Ephesians 1: 3-14

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,

8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,

14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Song of Praise | Jalali Yesu

Urdu

You are full of grace and truth (men)

You are full of grace and truth (women)

Jalali Yesu (men)

Jalali Yesu (women)

Chorus:

Jalali Yesu (men)

Jalali Yesu (women)

You are great and you are good (men)

You are great and you are good (women)

Jalali Yesu (men)

Jalali Yesu (women)

Chorus (x4)

You are glorious

Over all the earth (3x)

You are glorio-o-o-us!

You are making all things new (men)

You are making all things new (women)

Jalali Yesu (men)

Jalali Yesu (women)

Tithes & Offerings

Jorge & Abrham

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Praying Together as a Family

Yaovi | *In our own languages*

Sermon

Chris Sicks | *English*

The sermon transcript will be in your language on page 4

Respond in Song | Jesus, I lift Your Name Higher

Many Languages

**Chorus:**

Jesus, I lift your name higher
 I lift Your name higher (ALL)
 Jesus, I lift your name higher
 I lift Your name higher (ALL)
 Jesus, I lift your name higher
 I lift Your name higher (ALL)
 For you're worthy of my praise
 Jesus, I lift Your name higher

When I look back through the years
 There is nothing I can compare
 To the grace and mercy I've been shown
 Except to sing of your greatness
 You are my Redeemer, my all in all,

Chorus (x2)

I lift your name higher

The Lord's Supper

Chris Sicks | *English*

Who can participate in the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament—a holy interaction between God and His people. It celebrates the spiritual union that Christians have with Christ. It is also called communion, because it strengthens the community we share with every brother and sister who trust in Jesus alone for salvation.

God's Word warns us that "Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 11:27) We must think carefully about this sacrament. It is only for those who:

1. have examined their conscience,
2. who truly understand the nature of the body of Christ,
3. who have committed their entire life to following Him,

4. who are members of a bible-believing church.

Before you come to the table you must first come to Jesus in faith!

We are not to judge people's hearts. Ask the Holy Spirit to examine your heart. If you are not sure about your relationship with Christ, do not participate in the sacrament. Instead, please let us pray for you. We love you and want you to join our community! But first you must be joined to Christ. Our leaders are available to talk and pray with you, to help you on your journey.

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." (Romans 8:9-10)

Prayer of Thanks

Mamatili | *Uyghur*

We Respond, Rejoice, and Reach

Our promise as a church

Chris Sicks | *English*

ALL:

By the power of the Holy Spirit,
 we live in harmony with our brothers and sisters in Christ's Body.
 We worship and glorify God the Father together with one voice.
 And we welcome our neighbors as Christ welcomed us, for the glory of God.

Benediction

Chris Sicks | *English*



Sermon:

Praying for Power

Sermon for: Sunday, February 28, 2021

Pastor Chris Sicks

Introduction

As we get ready to start weekly worship in July, we are building our little community here as a church family. We have been spending time in the book of Ephesians, because there is so much here about the nature of the church, and how God wants us to love each other and glorify Him.

Today we are looking at Ephesians 3:14-21. I am going to read the verses in English and then pray. If you have a copy of the sermon in your heart language, please read the text in the beautiful language that God blessed you with, while you listen to me read.

Scripture Reading

Ephesians 3: 14-21

- ¹⁴ For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,
- ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,
- ¹⁶ that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man;
- ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,
- ¹⁸ may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
- ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.
- ²⁰ Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,
- ²¹ unto him [be] the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.

Outline

1. Your Father Wants to Bless You
2. How the Father Blesses the Church
3. Why we Pray

Note to our friends reading this sermon in different languages: To help you follow without confusion, the pastor will preach through the verses one at a time. The verse numbers will help you follow as you listen.

1. Your Father Wants to Bless You

¹⁴ For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

Paul is praying for the church in Ephesus. He is praying with his whole heart. We know this because he is on his knees in prayer. This was not a popular way to pray 2000 years ago. Usually, the Jewish people would pray standing up. But sometimes, when they felt something very deeply, when they were desperate for God to answer a prayer, they would kneel. Here are two examples:

Ezra 9: 5-6

- ⁵ And at the evening oblation I arose up from my humiliation, even with my garment and my robe rent; and I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto Jehovah my God;
- ⁶ and I said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our guiltiness is grown up unto the heavens.

Luke 22: 41-44

- ⁴¹ And he was parted from them about a stone's cast; and he kneeled down and prayed,
- ⁴² saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.
- ⁴³ And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him.



44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

In Ephesians 3:14, Paul tells us he is praying with his whole heart, on his knees. The passion of his prayer is because of everything he wrote in Ephesians chapters 1-3. He reminds us that God called us, adopted us, forgave our sins, and saved us. He didn't just save people of one culture or language, but people like all of you! He didn't just save good people, but sinners like us! He resurrected us from spiritual death and seated us spiritually in heaven with Christ, where we will live forever with God. Paul is so amazed by God's power and goodness is that he prays on his knees to the Father...

the Father ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named

In our bibles we read that when Jesus prayed, He prayed to His Father. But He also taught us to pray to "Our Father," as we did together earlier in the service.

In many cultures in the world, children get their name from their father on earth. A name tells you what family someone belongs to. Each human family is separated and identified by our different names, because we have different earthly fathers. You can tell just by looking at us, right? All of the different, beautiful colors of skin and hair and eyes here.

But in verse 15, Paul is reminding us that there is one heavenly Father, who has the right to name us as His children. We share one name: Christian. Christian means "Christ follower." Jesus is our older brother, and God the Father is the Father of all of us. Because we share the same name and Father, we are a family. Our brother Paul prayed for the church in Ephesus and for us, praying...

16a that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you...

A grant is a gift. It is not a loan. A grant a blessing from someone who has a lot, to someone who has only a little. When my daughter Lucy needs money at college, she knows that she can call me and say, "Daddy, I need 50 dollars." And she knows that I will give it, because I have 50 dollars and I trust her to spend it on the right thing.

But, Lucy knows that if she calls and says, "Daddy, I need 50 thousand dollars" I am going to say no. Because I don't have 50 thousand dollars! But God gives richly to his children. I am not talking about money here, though. God is not promising to make

you rich. God wants you to have enough money to feed your family, and put gas in your car, and pay the rent. But Paul is praying for blessings that are not financial. Let's look now at Point 2.

2. How the Father Blesses the Church

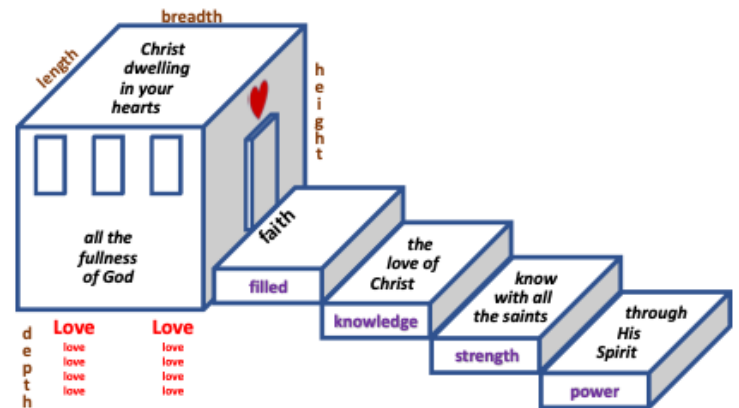
16b ...he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being

Paul asks God the Father to give a grant of blessing to the church. And it's a big blessing. Paul asks God to bless the brothers and sisters in Ephesus in big ways, the ways that they actually need. Paul understands the challenges the Christians have in Ephesus. They are the same challenges we have, too.

The Christians in Ephesus live in a city that worships idols. A city that does not like them saying that Jesus is the only way, truth, and life. That's an external challenge. They also have the internal challenges of their own sin, as they try to obey God in what they think, and say, and do. Our sin makes it hard to live with each other, to love our brothers and sisters. Am I right? It can be hard to love our husbands and wives sometimes, right? And Jesus told us also to love our enemies. These things are really hard for me, my friends!

We don't have the power to defeat the sin inside us. We don't have enough power to love God or love the people around us, the way we should. The way we want to. That's why we need a power that comes from God.

I made this picture that helps me understand all the different pieces of Paul's prayer. I am going to share this picture and fill it in as we look at each of the things that Paul prays for, including power to make us strong in our inner being, through His Spirit.



17a that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith— [katoikeo not paroikos]



The second thing Paul prays for is that Christ would live and grow in our hearts. The Greek word here is *katoikeo*. It's different than the Greek word *paroikos*. *Paroikos* means someone who is a visitor, a stranger, an immigrant.

Acts 7: 29

²⁹ "Moses fled and became an **exile** [*paroikos*] in the land of Midian"

Moses lived in Midian, for 40 years. But it wasn't really his home. He was always an outsider, a stranger. He didn't become a citizen. Some of you are in that situation, right? You are living here in the United States, but you are not a citizen. Your passport is from Pakistan, or Egypt, or another country. You are **paroikos**. When you become a US citizen, you will get a US passport, that proves you are **katoikeo**. That Greek word means someone who lives permanently in a place. A resident, not a visitor.

Acts 9: 35

³⁵ And all the **residents** [*katoikeo*] of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

Paul prays that Christ will be a *katoikeo* in our hearts. Do you see how amazing this is? If you are a follower of Jesus, He is not a visitor. Not a stranger. Jesus Christ makes His permanent home in your heart, and mine.

How does Christ come to live in your heart? Paul prays that "Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." What does that mean? It means that faith is like the door to your heart. Jesus has to enter through that door. But if the door is closed, Jesus stays outside. He doesn't come to dwell inside of you, to be a *katoikeo* in your heart.

I had the door of my heart closed to Jesus for 10 years. I didn't believe He was real. I had faith in other things. I had faith that parties and girls would make me happy. I believed that being strong and successful would bring to peace in my heart.

But they're not. What are the things that offer YOU happiness, and peace, and safety? Please know my friend, they are all lying to you. Your commitment to your sin and the idols you worship keeps the door of your heart closed. Your desire to live independent of God keeps the door of your heart closed to Jesus. But everything changes when you say to God: "You are the only true God, and my sin is rebellion against you. My sin hurts your heart, and it was my sin that nailed Jesus to the cross. Forgive me, Father, in the name of Jesus, and heal me."

That's all you have to do. The key to the door of your heart is your repentance and honesty about your sin. The Holy Spirit is

ready to give you faith to believe that Jesus can forgive all your sins and live in your heart forever.

I spent more time on verse 17, because none of the things Paul is praying about are true about you unless Jesus dwells in your heart. But if He does, then you can be excited about these promises God has for you. Let's look at the next one:

17^b that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

A tree cannot stand up in a storm unless it has strong roots. A house will not survive an earthquake unless it is grounded, with a strong foundation. Our lives are the same way. That's why Psalm 1 says "^{1a} Blessed is the man who... ^{3a} is like a tree **planted** by streams of water."

Paul is praying for Christians to be rooted and grounded in love. Roots go into the ground to get water and nutrients. They need energy to grow taller, and deep roots to survive storms. So do you and I. We get God's power by sinking our roots into the love of God by reading His Word, attending church on Sundays, and celebrating communion, and praying every day alone and with one another. We need that so we...

18^a may have strength to comprehend with all the saints

Paul prays that we would have strength to comprehend (to know) more of Christ's love and power. But notice that we know this WITH all the saints. This is really important. Paul is telling me that I can't really know the love of God sufficiently by myself. You will only understand a portion of God's Word and Truth if you are with a portion of God's people. If you only fellowship with people exactly like you. To experience the blessings Paul is praying about, we need each other. I know more about God because I know all of you!! Because there is so much to know...

18^b what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

How far is left from right? Can you measure from the east to the west, or from north to south? How big is the universe? It cannot be measured. I think that is what Paul is saying here about the love of Christ. It is wider and longer than we think. God does not limit his love to one kind of people, who speak one language. Throughout history, He always had a plan to invite all people on earth into his Kingdom.



And God's love is higher and deeper than we imagine. There is no sinner on earth who cannot be forgiven. You can break every one of God's laws, hundreds of times, and the blood of Christ is sufficient to wash you clean and make you innocent if you repent and trust in Christ. This truth should give us boldness and courage to tell all of our neighbors about the love of Christ. Because we want them to...

19a to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,

The love of Christ is the root and foundation of our lives. Christ's love gives us the power to love each other, too. We are praying that we will have many visitors to our church later this year, when we open to the public. They will see us singing and praying and worshipping together. They also need to see us loving each other, blessing and serving one another. They will get a taste of Christ's love when they see it displayed in us. We come from many different countries and cultures. It doesn't seem possible that we could be one family, according to human knowledge. But we are and we are growing more into a family, right? We are growing as God fills us up with everything we need. Look at the second part of verse 19:

19b that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

If you look at the verbs in these verses, you might notice that God is the one doing everything. The Father strengthens us. The Spirit gives us power. Christ dwells in our hearts. The entire Trinity is invested in blessing us! Our Father, through the Spirit, fills us with the knowledge of Christ's love.

Paul doesn't say "fill yourself with God." Paul prays that "you may be filled" by God. Our duty is to receive God's blessings, by being open and available. How do we do that? Surely God has something for us to do here, right?

One thing we do is pray, as Paul is doing in these verses. And later in this letter, I think he does give us some advice on what we can do to make ourselves available to the work of God.

Ephesians 5: 18-21

18a be filled with the Spirit;

19 speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

20 giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

21 subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.

This is a description of what we should do as brothers and sisters of this church. My friends, we need to encourage, help, and support each other. We do these things, at the same time as God does His work in each of us individually. The result will be a strong, healthy church family. That is what we are praying for together.

3. Why we Pray

Paul is praying to the only One who can do the amazing things we have looked at today. The only One whose love "surpasses knowledge" and who gives "according to the riches of His glory." Paul ends his prayer with some of the most beautiful words in the Bible, starting in verse 20...

20a Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think

My wife and I finish our morning prayers together every day with verses 20 and 21. These verses express our confidence in the God who answers prayer, and they remind us of the reason why we pray. We can pray with confidence because we are praying to a powerful God. His power is so great that Paul can't use just one word to describe it. Paul could have said:

God is able to do **more** than we ask

But that's not enough, right? In our English translation we have:

God is able to do **far more** than we ask

God is able to do **far more abundantly** than we ask

God is able to do **far more abundantly** than **all** that we ask

God is able to do **far more abundantly** than **all** that we ask **or think**

My friends, do you realize that this is the God you pray to? Why do we forget to pray, or hesitate to pray? Let's encourage each other to pray often, about everything, because of the love and power of our Father in heaven who listens closely when we pray.

20b according to the power at work within us,

This refers back to 15, when Paul prayed that God would "grant you to be strengthened with power through His Spirit." The Holy Spirit works powerfully in us. It isn't physical power. It is the power to know and understand and believe everything Paul has been talking about. That is what changes us, on the inside. Then



our outside behavior and lives are changed, too. And our changed lives bring glory to God. That's why Paul prays:

21a to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus

God's honor and reputation are enhanced and proclaimed to the whole world because of what He is doing in us as individuals and as a church. Paul prays for the glory of Christ Jesus to be visible in the church. We don't pray for One Voice Fellowship to be a popular church. I don't pray to be a popular pastor or preacher. We should not seek our own glory. God alone deserves and receives glory when we live according to these promises, because:

"only divine power can generate divine love in the divine society." (John Stott)

21b throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

"All generations" looks back in history, to God's faithfulness to the men and women who lived before us. "Forever and ever" looks into the future. We can trust our good Father in heaven to be the Father of our children, and grandchildren. We trust Him to grow this church, and provide what we need this year, and in the years ahead.

The last word of Paul's prayer is "Amen." As you probably know, *amen* means "It is true" or "I agree." Jesus says this in

John 5: 24

²⁴ Truly, truly, [*amen, amen*] I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Jesus begins his statement with "Amen, Amen" in the Hebrew language to let everyone know that what he will say is the truth. And Paul ends his prayer with "Amen" to remind us that everything he has said is true. Because it is true, we can learn from Paul's prayer, make this prayer our own, and trust that the God of truth will hear us when we pray.

Let's pray together now to this God of love and power:

Lord Jesus, we need you. We need you to dwell in our hearts, and to change us on the inside. We need you to clear out the sin inside of us, and to replace it with love and peace. Heavenly Father, please give us power through the Holy Spirit to say no to sin in our lives. Help us love one another, as Jesus has loved us. You will be glorified in our eyes and the eyes of the world when you do this work in us. And as a changed people, we will be able to serve and love one another sacrificially, so all the world will know that there is power in the name of Jesus. We pray in His name. AMEN!!

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