



Sermon – March 31, 2019
Chris Osborne

Verses Covered

Ephesians 3:14 - 17
James 1:21

So open your Bibles, please, to Ephesians 3. That's where we are next. We're continuing through the text. Come to verse 14. Had a great time in Rio, although I must admit I am worn out with international travel. I'm limiting my travel now from here to Hearne. Are we dark in here? Bad sign for me isn't it? Apparently the international travel has worked on my eyeballs.

Now remember last time we were together, Paul made the statement that right now, because of who we are in Christ, that just by praying, just by being in Jesus, we exhibit, in heaven, to the rulers and authorities there right now, the multi-faceted wisdom of God. That was the last text we looked at. So it follows; this is what he says in verse 14.

¹⁴Because of this I bow my knees to the Father.

He says, I pray because I know there is glory out of just stepping into the presence of God. Now we're going to have to walk through this. He's going to pray; now remember he's prayed earlier for them. To understand God's will, various things in their life. Now he's going to pray for two things. Now we're going to look at one of them today. We'll look at the next one next week. So he's going to pray for two things. Here's the first thing. Now to really grasp what he's praying for, we're going to have to walk through the text word by word, phrase by phrase. So follow me. He says,

¹⁴Because of this I bow my knees to the Father, ¹⁵out of whom every family in heaven and upon the earth is named,

Now he reads and he makes that statement. He says, God's connected to every person on the planet. Therefore, if I pray for people because He's connected, it will have an effect. Now here it is. Now walk with me.

¹⁶that He might give you,

Now here's the first thing I want us to stop at.

according to the riches of His glory.

Now here's, what he's going to ask for, he says, is based on the idea of the riches of God's glory. Now I don't have time to spend an entire sermon on the glory of God. But let me just give you a capsule definition so we get this, OK. Jesus made this statement in John 1 that nobody's ever seen God. He declared it. When you come to the Old Testament, there are places where God, now listen, God's presence is visible. For example, when they're in the wilderness, they're walking down, they have the cloud by day and the fire by night. It was God saying to them, "Even though I'm having to discipline you and I'm raising up another generation, I haven't left you. I'm not done with you. My presence in there, and here's the visibility of it." That's the point of that. When you come to Solomon's temple and they have the dedication, and the cloud fills the temple, the idea was God saying, "I am present here in this temple. And here's the visibility of that." So when you read the phrase, generally in the New Testament/Old Testament about God's glory appearing in your life, here's what it is. Bottom line. We can't see Him. Nobody can. But what He wants to do through us, now listen, is to make His presence in our lives, which is true if you're a believer. You have the Holy Spirit in you. To make the presence in our lives visible to people that don't know Him. That's the purpose. And so Paul says, before he gets to his point of his prayer, before he even gets there, he says two things. He says, "Look, I'm going to pray for you. God's connected to all of you so this is going to work." And he says, "Number two, here's the basis of my prayer. I know that God wants, His desire for you is He wants to make His presence, which is in your life, visible to those people that you are connected with in your life who do not know Him. So there's his basis. OK. Now listen to what he says.

I am praying this, ¹⁶that he might give you according to the riches of His glory, two words, power to be strengthened.

Now stop it there. Now we looked earlier in the first prayer, he mentions four words in the Greek for power. He only pulls two up here. One is *dunamis*, it's used throughout the New Testament, except in the Gospel of John, for miracle. It's the explosive power of God. We get dynamite, dynamo, all those things from it. But it's basically just the general statement of the power of God. But the next word, *kratos*, is a Greek word that means the ability to overcome obstacles. So that the things that press against you in your life as a Christian, you can overcome. And he's praying that God's power reigns in your life so that these obstacles we all face; we'll be able to overcome through Him. Now it's what he's trying to do with Timothy in the second book when he says, "Look I know you don't want to come see me. I know you're scared. But I want you to put that aside and come visit me. Even though I'm in jail as a criminal; as a traitor. I'm not in jail for preaching. I want you to come see me." Timothy was overcome by the obstacle of fear. And so Paul, in the second book, says, "Listen, I want you to get that straight." Now let me be clear about something. I really believe there are two ways that God in your life will visibly present Himself through you overcoming obstacles. I think in one of two ways. Number one, the one we generally associate, and one we don't really pay much attention to. The one we generally associate is that we've got these enormous troubles and that God overcomes them for us. I ache every time, because I love A&M, I love A&M football except for like three hours once a year. But I really ache when I read about Manziel. I mean the guy had everything. Heisman Trophy winner. And

really, his speech when he won the Heisman was outstanding. Everything seemed good. He's on the right road. And you fast forward to today, he's been booted out of the NFL, he's been booted out of the CFL, now he's playing for some goofy exhibition league. And he struggles in his life. He's losing his marriage. I mean everything that he struggles with, you just ache for him. But if he were to really come to Christ, and God's power began to overcome the obstacles in his life that have overcome him, oh my gosh, what would happen? First of all, every church in the country would be calling him to come speak. Because that's a big thing for us. And it is a big thing. If that were to happen, he would, listen, and he said, "It's because of Jesus that I got my marriage back, that I've got my career back, I've got my life back. These things that have overcome me no longer overcome me. It's because of Jesus Christ." We would talk about, and it would be true, you would see the visible manifestation of the presence of God in his ability to overcome the things that have overcome him until now. And we all go there.

But there's another place we generally don't honor and we should. There's another way God's visible presence shows up in your life. And that is when the opposite occurs. There are a ton of people in this room that got saved when they were eight or nine years old. Met Jesus. And the obstacles they faced in junior high, all the temptations, through Christ they overcame. Got into high school, got worse, got exponentially harder. All the things they faced, they overcame in Christ. Got to college. Went through all the temptations. Overcame them. Married. Built a great life, holy life. True. Faithful. All these things. So you've got this young man or woman who's come through faith in Christ at age eight and now they're thirty-five and they have manifested in their life, listen, the visible presence of God by the things that overcame Johnny never overcame them. We don't honor that much because it's not the kind of testimony that we put out front. But I'm telling you, I think it's a better testimony than the Manzies of the world coming and all of a sudden being transformed. I think it's more powerful when an eight-year-old stays the course his entire life because of the power of Christ visibly present and overcoming the obstacles that could have killed him but did not because of Jesus. That's powerful.

And so he prays for this church. I want you to have God's power so the things that might overcome you, you will overcome in His power. Now how do we do that? Listen to what he says. We're going to skip one phrase and come back to it.

through His spirit in the inner man, we're going to skip that and come back to it, ¹⁷so that Christ, now listen to this odd phrase, might dwell through faith in your hearts,

Now I thought, if I were a Christian, that He already dwelt in my life. It's the same odd statement that you have in the book of James where he talks about the fact, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. If the soul, if the word is implanted, why do I have to receive it? It's the same principle. It's oxymoronic. If He's already in me and the Bible says the Holy Spirit doesn't indwell you, then you're not a believer, so He's already in me. So what does it mean that He said, that I need to pray so He could dwell in my life when He's already there? And that the dwelling's going to come through the power of the Holy Spirit in me. So before we get there, he's praying that this obstacle overcoming power will enable Jesus to live and dwell in your life. And I think the answer, it's a great metaphor actually, a brilliant metaphor. There's a difference between people visiting you and people living with you. Somebody visits for the weekend; they don't get access to everything in the house. They get the bedroom they're in,

maybe the bathroom, a few things, but they don't get to roam the house. They're not living there. They're visiting. But when people live there, they have access to the whole house. And I think that's exactly his metaphor. What he's saying is, "Look, I don't want Jesus to just be visiting you. I want Him to have everything in you. I don't want there to be a piece of your life that you do not allow Jesus Christ access to and involvement in and control of." He says, "I want every single thing, I want Him to have freedom in your life." You do not want to look at Jesus Christ and say, "Look, You can have every piece in my life, but you can't come in the bedroom. You can have every piece in my life, but I don't want You in the kitchen. I don't want You here." No. See you have a house, you give Him access to every room you have. That's the prayer.

Now how does that happen? Go back to the phrase before. Here it is.

that He might give you, according to the riches of His power, to be strengthened through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷so that Christ might dwell through faith in your heart.

How does that happen?

through the Spirit in your inner man.

Bible says in Romans 8; if you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit of God indwells in you. So you have the Spirit. So the idea is that you release the Holy Spirit in your life. You are to be changed, listen, from the inside out. You are never changed from the outside in. The alteration is, the Holy Spirit in you has got to be release. He's got to be given free reign. You have to get up each morning and here's what you do. You get up each morning and you say, "Father, one, I can't do what You want me to do. I don't have that ability in and of myself. All I can do is outside stuff. I can't fix the inside of me. But number two, you indwell me. And so I'm going to go in my life today, Father, I'm going to do two things. I'm going to rely on Your Spirit in me because He can, through His power, change me inside and allow You to dwell in me in a way that the visible presence that the, presence of God in my life is visible to those around me. And I'm going to trust that Your Holy Spirit can do everything Your word says it can do." I'm going to go there. And if I do, then that power will manifest itself in my life and God will become visible to everybody that knows me.

Now you can do a lot of things on the outside. For example, you can come to church today, drive to church without the need of the Holy Spirit. You can put your family in the car, you can dress them, you can drive to church, you can put your kids over in the Children's Building, you can come into the worship center, you can do that without the Holy Spirit. You can sing the songs that Steve leads you to sing without the Holy Spirit. You can do that. You can listen to a short, bald guy talk to you and write notes down without the Holy Spirit. What you cannot do without the Holy Spirit, is drive here with a heart to want to meet the Father. You can't sing what He leads us to sing and actually worship the Father through that song without the Holy Spirit filling you. And let me just give you the real test, OK. If the Holy Spirit fills you, you don't care what style of music. Because it doesn't matter as long as it's truth about Jesus. You can sing it from your heart if the Holy Spirit inside you is altering who you are in the worship. And then you can take what the short, bald guy said and go home and have it implemented in your life if you're changed from the inside out. And we need that in every arena. Just a minute we're going to have parent

dedication. Now you can parent from the outside in. You can buy your kids clothes. You can pay for their schooling. You can put them in a nice house. You can, when they get a certain age, get them a car. You can pay for their sports. You can do all sorts of stuff from the outside in. But if you're really going to parent your kids spiritually, it better becoming from the inside out.

Yesterday Nathan and Nicole led us in a family conference. It was really good. But Nathan talked about parenting and he had a great point. He said, and we'll talk about this when we get to Ephesians 6 in detail. But he talked about effective parenting. He said, "Look what we want as parents if for the Bible to give us X, Y, and Z. And if we do X, Y, and Z then our kids will turn out to love Jesus, love us, and when we get old, put us in a nice nursing home." That's our concept. The problem is, the Bible doesn't have X, Y, and Z. It gives you principles. But it doesn't give you eight rules. If you do eight things, these eight things, everything will turn out OK. No. It gives you principles. And you need the Holy Spirit to be able to live out those principles. One of the reasons is because I don't care what kind of kid you have. If you have more than one kid, they're probably going to be different. Not all kids are the same. Every kid's got a certain personality, a certain directive, certain way he's raised. Your kids are not going to be the same.

When I was in Rio this week my interpreter, Portuguese area, my interpreter had been the head of the SWAT team in Rio. He was special forces. He had been, had a thousand men under him. And he'd been the captain of the guard for the governor of Rio. So I'm staying in a motel; nice, clean, good food, about 25 minutes from the seminary where I'm teaching. And he told me, he said, "Look, don't walk around Rio where you are. It's probably not safe. Just stay in the motel room." So I did exactly what he said. How many of you believe that? As I was walking around Rio, I mean I'm not, I don't, I know we have children in here, but I don't do rules well. My wife, though, loves rules. And so she obeys them everywhere we go. We're in Colorado Springs a couple years ago. We're at the Garden of the Gods. We've done our hiking. I look down. Right over here is my truck. We have two options. We can walk right across this dirt and go straight to my truck. Or we can walk way around and get to the truck. Except there's a little sign here that says, and I'm hoping she doesn't see it, not to walk here. But there are other people walking here so I'm kind of trying to get in the way. I said, "Look we can walk this way." And she goes, "No we can't. The sign says we can't go." I said, "Yes, we can. There are other people walking there. We can go." And then that wife lie when she said, "Well you can go that way. I'm going to go this way and I'll meet you at the truck and I'll be fine." No. For you guys out there that are single. Let me just tell you, that is never true. Because you're going to eat it when you meet at the truck and you're going to eat it down the road. About four years down the road, she's going to say, "You know do you remember when." So just understand when you hear that, that's your queue from the Holy Spirit, "I need to obey." Your kids are going to be different. They're going to have different personalities; they're going to have different issues. That's why there are no rules in the New Testament. You get principles and the only way to correctly even raise your children is for the Holy Spirit to show you how to implement those principles. And that's why Paul prays for the Holy Spirit to control who they are. So understand God wants to take you and use you to show the visibility of His presence in your life so that people that you know will find the Jesus who lives inside you. That's what he prayed. So that's what I'm going to pray.

Let's bow.

Father, I do ask You for every one of us in this room exactly what Paul prayed. We know You're connected to all of us. There's no way this prayer can't be effective. So Father I pray for all of us in this room. We want the visibility of Your presence. We want Christ to be free in every room we live in. We don't want to walk in a room in our life without Him having access to that room. And so, Father, we are going to get up in the morning and I ask You to allow us to remember we can't do it, Your Holy Spirit can, and we can trust Him to do that if we rely on Him. So I ask You that for this room. And Father so that at the end of the day Your glory will show up in this Brazos Valley. I ask You that in Jesus Christ name.