

EPHESIANS: LIVING IN ALIGNMENT WITH OUR HIGH CALLING

Part I: Our High Calling In Christ, Ephesians 1:1-3:21

I. Enjoying The Spiritual Fulfillment Of Christ

(Ephesians 3:14-21)

I. Introduction

- A. In Ephesians 2:7, Paul had written that we believers in the Church "will be an eternal display of the grace of God," Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Ephesians 2:7.
- B. God's grace extends to us believers to cause us to enjoy spiritual fulfillment in Jesus Christ, what is greatly needed in evangelicalism today seen by the many books now in print on trying to gain spiritual fulfillment.
- C. Ephesians 3:14-21 explains the spiritual fulfillment we believers can enjoy in Christ and how to obtain it. We thus study that passage to apply its truth for great blessing in our needy era to God's glory (as follows):

II. Enjoying The Spiritual Fulfillment Of Christ, Ephesians 3:14-21.

- A. Paul prayed to God the Father "from whom every family" of human beings in heaven and on earth is named, be they saved Hebrews or Gentiles in Christ, Ephesians 3:14-15; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 631.
- B. In this prayer, Paul asked the Father that believers might come to enjoy spiritual fulfillment, Eph. 3:16-19:
 1. First, Paul asked the Father that his believing readers might be strengthened with God's might by the Holy Spirit in the inner man, the soul and spirit of the believer, Ephesians 3:16. We explain how this occurs:
 - a. Many evangelicals try to gain inner strength from their own effort by counseling, practicing "Christian" yoga, etc. where God has already provided the indwelling Holy Spirit to author such strength! (Rom. 8:9b)
 - b. The **way** one obtains this strength in the inner man is by relating well to the indwelling Holy Spirit:
 - i. First, the believer must confess any sins that block his rapport with God, 1 John 1:9, for failure to thus deal with such sins blocks the Spirit's edifying fellowship with the believer, 1 John 1:5-7.
 - ii. Second, the believer must rely by faith on the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit as Galatians 5:16 teaches, and then he will enjoy being strengthened in his human spirit by God the Holy Spirit!
 - c. Second, with his believing readers thus empowered, Paul asked God the Father that they might experience Christ's settling into their everyday experiences, that He might "dwell" (*katoikesai*) or "be at home in" their lives, Ephesians 3:17a. From other Scripture passages, we explain how this occurs:
 - i. In John 14:21-23, Jesus said that if a believer obeyed His commands, both the Father and He would enter into his everyday life experiences and make their "abode" with him!
 - ii. This obedience results from the believer's walking in fellowship with the Lord by having his sins confessed and his relying on the Holy Spirit's power to be able to obey God (as noted above), *Ibid.*
 - d. Third, Paul asked the Father that his readers thus spiritually endowed might be rooted and grounded in God's love so as to comprehend with all believers "the immensity" of the love of Christ, what passes knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God, Eph. 3:17b-19. In other words, when the believer sees the Lord interacting with him in his daily walk in richly encouraging ways, he will begin to realize that God's love for him is far beyond what he humanly has the capacity to fathom, a spiritually fulfilling realization!
 - C. Moved by the greatness of God's grace in all of this, Paul himself broke out into a doxology, Eph. 3:20-21:
 1. He acknowledged that God could do exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ask or think according to the power of God the Holy Spirit Who indwells us believers, Ephesians 3:20.
 2. Paul then gave glory to God in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages to come, Ephesians 3:21.

Lesson: Paul prayed to God the Father requesting that He by the Holy Spirit Who indwells each believer might empower the inner man of each believer, equipping each one to experience fellowship with Christ in his everyday life, that thus being rooted and grounded in God's love, each might come to realize the immensity of God's love for him, a truly spiritually fulfilling experience that leads one to praise God for His infinite grace!

Application: (1) Spiritual fulfillment in the inner man is NOT the result of practicing some man-made discipline, but from relating well to God the Holy Spirit Who already indwells us, and has done so from the moment we first trusted in Christ. (2) Thus, to enjoy great spiritual fulfillment in our Christian walk, may we (a) confess any sins that block our spiritual fellowship with the Lord (1 John 1:9) and (b) rely on the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16) in order to obey Scripture (c) and thus see Christ interact with us in our everyday lives, John 14:21-23. (d) In so doing, we will gain a glimpse of God's immense love for us, (e) causing us to praise Him for His great grace!