

November 12 Su Reading 316 — Ephesians 3:14-21 — Strengthened with Power

<sup>14</sup> *For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,* <sup>15</sup> *from whom* <sup>[fn]</sup> *every family in heaven and on earth is named,* <sup>16</sup> *that He would give you, the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit,* <sup>17</sup> *so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; [and] that you, being firmly rooted and grounded in love,* <sup>18</sup> *may be able to comprehend with all the* <sup>[fn]</sup> *saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,* <sup>19</sup> *and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.*

<sup>20</sup> *Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or understand, according to the power that works within us,* <sup>21</sup> *to Him [be] the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations* <sup>[fn]</sup> *forever and ever. Amen.*

**LSB Footnotes**

(3:15) Or *the whole*

(3:18) or *holy ones*

(3:21) Lit of *the age of the ages*

**Indwelling Love** — Two aspects of our relationship with Christ are mentioned in Paul's prayer for the Ephesians. The first is Christ's indwelling presence: "...*that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith*" (v. 17). It is through faith that Christ comes to dwell in our hearts at the time of conversion, but Paul's prayer was for people who were already Christians. Faith isn't a one-time thing; it is something that continues and should grow in the life of a believer. Paul also thanked God for Christians in Thessalonica because their "*faith is growing abundantly*" (2 Thess. 1:3). When our faith grows, we put more trust in God and what He wants to do in us and through us. We become more dependent and productive when Christ dwells in our hearts through faith. Paul's second prayer for the Ephesians was for them "*to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge*" (Eph. 3:19). This is more than just knowing *about* Christ's love; it is *experiencing* it. It is something that "*surpasses knowledge*." A young person may know about love by observing their parents or watching a film, but they don't really know it until they experience it. Neither is this experiential knowledge a one-time thing; love grows. Like a tree that grows from a seed to a sapling, to a strong and stately thing of beauty, our love for Christ should constantly be maturing.

**[My Jesus I Love Thee - YouTube](#)**

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine;  
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;  
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou;  
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

— William R. Featherston (1862)

\*\*\*\*\*

November 13 M Reading 317 — Ephesians 4:1-16 — Unity of the Church

<sup>1</sup> *Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, exhort you to walk worthy of the calling with which you have been called,* <sup>2</sup> *with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,* <sup>3</sup> *being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* <sup>4</sup> *[There is] one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;* <sup>5</sup> *one Lord, one faith, one baptism;* <sup>6</sup> *one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

<sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. <sup>8</sup> Therefore <sup>[fn]</sup>it says,

"WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH,  
HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES,  
[And] HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."

<sup>9</sup> (Now this [expression], "He ascended," what <sup>[fn]</sup>does it mean except that He also <sup>[fn]</sup>descended into the lower parts of the earth? <sup>10</sup> He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) <sup>11</sup> And He Himself gave some [as] apostles, and some [as] prophets, and some [as] evangelists, and some [as] pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the <sup>[fn]</sup>saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the <sup>[fn]</sup>full knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature <sup>[fn]</sup>which belongs to the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup> so that we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness <sup>[fn]</sup>in deceitful scheming, <sup>15</sup> but <sup>[fn]</sup>speaking the truth in love, <sup>[fn]</sup>we are to grow up in all [aspects] into Him who is the head, [that is] Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, being joined and held together <sup>[fn]</sup>by what every joint supplies, according to the properly measured working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

#### LSB Footnotes

(4:8) Or *He*

(4:9) Lit *is it except*

(4:9) One early ms *had first descended*

(4:12) Or *holy ones*

(4:13) Or *true knowledge*

(4:13) Lit *of the fullness*

(4:14) Lit *with regard to the scheming of deceit*

(4:15) Or *holding to, being truthful in*

(4:15) Or *let us grow up*

(4:16) Lit *through every joint of the supply*

**Ties of Unity** — The obvious theme of this passage is unity, and the context is that of the Church, the collection of the people of God in groups around the world. What is it that ties these people together in a bond of unity? The first is the bond of *peace*, "*being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*" (v. 3). Keeping that peace is done with attitudes of humility, gentleness, patience, and love (v. 2). Unity is not forced from a leader, but it is a divine melting together of the tender attitudes of God's people. The second bond of unity is *gifts*. Christ gave the Church gifts of leadership (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—v. 11). Their purpose is to unify and build up the body of Christ by equipping them for service (or ministry). The third bond of unity is *stability*. We are to be mature, not like children who are fascinated by glittering distractions, not being led astray by changing doctrines motivated by tricky, crafty, and scheming men (vv. 13-14). The last bond of unity is *Christ* Himself, acting as head of the Church (v. 15). He is the head, and we are the body; He makes us function. We are "*to grow up ... into Him*" (v. 15). Our unity is found in Him; He is our peace, our giver of gifts, our stability, and our head.

#### [Blest Be the Tie That Binds - YouTube](#)

Blest be the tie that binds  
our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
is like to that above.

— John Fawcett (1782)

\*\*\*\*\*

<sup>3</sup> *I thank my God in all my remembrance of you,* <sup>4</sup> *always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all,* <sup>5</sup> *because of your* <sup>[fn]</sup> *fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now.* <sup>6</sup> *[For I am] confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.* <sup>7</sup> <sup>[fn]</sup> *For it is only right for me to think this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are fellow partakers with me in this grace.* <sup>8</sup> *For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the* <sup>[fn]</sup> *affection of Christ Jesus.* <sup>9</sup> *And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in full knowledge and all discernment,* <sup>10</sup> *so that you may* <sup>[fn]</sup> *approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and without fault* <sup>[fn]</sup> *until the day of Christ,* <sup>11</sup> *having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which [comes] through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

#### LSB Footnotes

(1:5) Or *partnership in the preaching of the gospel*

(1:7) Lit *Just as it is right*

(1:8) Lit *inward parts*

(1:10) Or *discover, distinguish between the things which differ*

(1:10) Or *for*

**Affection and Righteousness** — Paul opened his letter with tender prayers for those people in Philippi who supported him financially in his ministry. His loving feelings for them are obvious. He compared those feelings, in fact, with those of Jesus: “*with the affection of Christ Jesus*” (v. 8). The Greek word for “*affection*” here is often translated “*heart*,” describing the very core of one’s emotions. Paul loved them the way that Christ loved them. Jesus is the author, example, and source of our love. John wrote, “*We love, because He first loved us*” (1 John 4:19). Our reading for today also says that Jesus is the source of our righteousness: “*...having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ*” (Phil. 1:11). We have no righteousness of our own, but what we have comes from Jesus; it is His righteousness. Jesus is loving and righteous, and as we grow in our relationship with Him, we are made more loving and righteous.

#### [Love Divine All Loves Excelling - YouTube](#)

Finish then, Thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be;  
Let us see Thy great salvation perfectly restored in Thee.  
Changed from glory into glory, till in heav'n we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before Thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.

— Charles Wesley (1747)

\*\*\*\*\*

<sup>18b</sup> *Yes, and I will rejoice,* <sup>19</sup> *for I know that THIS WILL TURN OUT FOR MY SALVATION through your* <sup>[fn]</sup> *prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,* <sup>20</sup> *according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but [that] with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.*

<sup>21</sup> *For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.* <sup>22</sup> <sup>[fn]</sup> *But if [I am] to live [on] in the flesh, this [will mean] fruitful labor for me; and I do not know what I will choose.* <sup>23</sup> *But I am hard-pressed* <sup>[fn]</sup> *between the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for [that] is very much better,* <sup>24</sup> *yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.* <sup>25</sup> *And convinced of this, I know that I will remain and*

*continue with you all for your progress and joy <sup>[fn]</sup>in the faith, <sup>26</sup> so that your reason for boasting may abound in Christ Jesus in me, through my coming to you again.*

#### LSB Footnotes

(1:19) Lit *supplication*

(1:22) Or *But if to live in the flesh, this will be fruitful labor for me, then I*

(1:23) Lit *from*

(1:25) Lit *of*

**To Live For or to Be With** — Paul presents a dilemma here, desiring both to continue living in service to Christ and to die and be with Him. The condition of living for Christ is where we all are now, and we should have the attitude Paul expressed, that we should live “*with all boldness [so that] Christ will ... be magnified in my body*” (v. 20). The word “*boldness*” should describe our willingness to stand for and present Christ in our relationship with family, friends, and neighbors. We are to be proud of Him and excited for others to know what He has done for us and what He can do for them. The word “*magnified*” should describe the high priority Jesus has in our lives. Nothing should be as important to us in our daily lives. Elevate your priorities! Give Jesus first place! The second desire Paul expressed was to die and “*be with Christ, for that is very much better*” (v. 23). God has given all His creatures a desire to live, but He has also given Christians a desire to die—well, maybe not the process of dying, but the result of it. Living in our flesh with a personal relationship with Jesus is a wonderful experience, but “*now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face*” (1 Cor. 13:12).

#### [When We See Christ - YouTube](#)

It will be worth it all when we see Jesus,  
Life's trials will seem so small when we see Christ;  
One glimpse of His dear face, all sorrow will erase,  
So bravely run the race till we see Christ.

— Esther Kerr Rusthoi (b. 1909)

**Meditation:** Paul uses a curious expression about Jesus in this passage when he mentions “*the Spirit of Jesus Christ*” (v. 19). It is intriguing because “*the Spirit*” normally refers to the Holy Spirit, yet it is closely connected to the name of Jesus here. There are several other passages in the NT with a similar correlation. Romans 8:9 uses the expression, “*the Spirit of Christ*,” as does 1 Peter 1:11. Galatians 4:6 says, “*the Spirit of His Son ... just as from the Lord, the Spirit*” (2 Cor. 3:17-18). Are these expressions referring to the Holy Spirit or to Christ in His spiritual form? Maybe both.

\*\*\*\*\*

November 16 Th Reading 320 — Philippians 2:1-11 — Christ’s Example of Humility

<sup>1</sup> *Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any <sup>[fn]</sup>affection and compassion, <sup>2</sup> fulfill my joy, that you think the same [way], by maintaining the same love, [being] united in spirit, thinking on one purpose, <sup>3</sup> doing nothing <sup>[fn]</sup>from <sup>[fn]</sup>selfish ambition or vain glory, but with humility of mind regarding one another as more important than yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not [merely] looking out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this [way of] thinking <sup>[fn]</sup>in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, although existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing <sup>[fn]</sup>to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but <sup>[fn]</sup>emptied Himself, by taking the form of a slave, by being made in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death <sup>[fn]</sup>on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore, God also highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in*

heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS that Jesus Christ is <sup>[fn]</sup>LORD, to the glory of God the Father.

#### LSB Footnotes

(2:1) Lit *inward parts*

(2:3) Lit *according to*

(2:3) Or *contentiousness*

(2:5) Or *among*

(2:6) Or *of which to be taken advantage*

(2:7) Laid aside His privileges

(2:8) Lit *of*

(2:11) In OT, *Yahweh*, cf. Is 45:23-25

**Emptied and Exalted** — Paul was urging the Philippians to be united, focusing their attention on Jesus, who was their example of humility and obedience. Jesus is God, and He always was God (“*existing in the form of God*”—v. 6). As the Son of God, He was submissive to the Father and was obedient to serve as the critical player in the plan of salvation for mankind. That plan included temporarily giving up His heavenly privilege (“*emptied Himself*”—v. 7a) by being “*made in the likeness of men*” (v. 7). He was the ultimate example of unselfish sacrifice, and Paul encouraged Christians to follow that example, “*with humility of mind regarding one another as more important than yourselves*” (v. 3). If Jesus could temporarily give up heaven for our salvation, we ought to be willing to temporarily give up our personal preferences for the benefit of others, being obedient to the will of God. The personal result of Jesus’ obedience was that the Father “*highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name*” (v. 9). Jesus received something that He did not have before—authority over all things—so that all knees will eventually bow to Him and all tongues will confess that He is God.

#### [Jesus, Name of Wondrous Love - Bing video](#)

Jesus, name of wondrous love,  
Name all other names above,  
Unto which must ev'ry knee  
Bow in deep humility.

— William W. How (1854)

**Meditation:** The OT quote in vv. 10-11 is from Isaiah 45:23. Commenting on the expression, “*that Jesus Christ is LORD*,” the ESV Study Bible says: “In Isaiah these words apply to Yahweh, the personal name for God. Thus, when Paul claims Jesus Christ is Lord, he is saying that Jesus is God.” The Legacy Standard Bible capitalized “*LORD*” here to indicate that, in Isaiah, it refers to the name Yahweh. The LSB is the only major English translation to translate the OT Hebrew word as “*Yahweh*” instead of the substitute expression, “*the LORD*.”

\*\*\*\*\*

November 17 F Reading 321 — Philippians 3:7-11 — Knowing Christ

<sup>7</sup> But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> More than that, I count all things to be loss because of the surpassing value of <sup>[fn]</sup>knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, <sup>[fn]</sup>for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own which is from [the] Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which [is] from God upon faith, <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and <sup>[fn]</sup>the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, <sup>11</sup> <sup>[fn]</sup>in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.



### LSB Footnotes

(3:8) Lit *the knowledge of*

(3:8) Lit *because of*

(3:10) Or *participation in*

(3:11) Lit *if somehow*

**The Fellowship of His sufferings** — Our year-long theme of Knowing Jesus is emphasized in this passage; here, it is “*knowing Christ Jesus my Lord*” (v. 8). There are three main things Paul mentions here that we should know about Christ. First is His *worth*, “*the surpassing value of knowing Christ.*” That is a value we can never completely understand and appreciate because He is so far above us. It reminds me of the parable Jesus told of the merchant who found one pearl of great value. There is nothing more valuable than Jesus. The second thing we should know about Christ is His *power*, the power demonstrated in His resurrection and exercised now from His throne, working through us. We need to learn more about its availability and His willingness to provide it for our use in ministry to others. The third thing to know about Christ is His *suffering*. Most of us will never have to suffer physically because of our stand for Jesus, but in another way, we all have the daily opportunity to suffer “*the loss of all things*” (v. 8). Things that were of great value to Paul were willingly given up for the surpassing value of knowing Jesus. Again, when the merchant in Jesus’ parable found that pearl of great value, “*he went and sold all that he had and bought it*” (Matt. 13:46). What can you “sell” for Jesus’ sake? What are you placing high value on that consumes your money, thoughts, or time that is of much less value than Jesus? Pick one today and give it up for Christ! Suffer a little for Him!

### [Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed - YouTube](#)

But drops of grief can ne'er repay  
the debt of love I owe.  
Here, Lord, I give myself away;  
'tis all that I can do.

— Isaac Watts (1707)

\*\*\*\*\*

November 18 Sa Reading 322 — Philippians 3:17-21 — The Transforming Savior

<sup>17</sup> *Brothers, join in following my example, and look for those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.* <sup>18</sup> *For many walk—of whom I often told you, and now tell you even crying—as enemies of the cross of Christ,* <sup>19</sup> *whose end is destruction, whose god is [their] stomach and glory is in their shame, who set their thoughts on earthly things.* <sup>20</sup> *For our* <sup>[fn]</sup> *citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,* <sup>21</sup> *who will transform* <sup>[fn]</sup> *the body of our humble state into conformity with* <sup>[fn]</sup> *the body of His glory, by His working through which He is able to even subject all things to Himself.*

### LSB Footnotes

(3:20) Lit *commonwealth*

(3:21) Or *our lowly body*

(3:21) Or *His glorious body*

**Changed and Changing** — In this passage, Paul contrasts unbelievers, whose minds are “*on earthly things*” (v. 19), to believers, whose “*citizenship is in heaven*” (v. 20a). Although we are not in heaven yet, we belong there and we should act like it, not like those whose selfish focus is on things of this earth. We are not in heaven yet, but “*we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ*” (v. 20b). We who have been changed through conversion are going there, and Jesus has promised to come to get us. Those believers who have died and gone to Paradise before us are there in some spiritual

form, but when Jesus returns, He “*will transform*” all our bodies to be like His glorious body (v. 21). That will be our resurrection into a new kind of existence. While we wait, we are to follow the example of Paul and other godly Christians who are obedient and faithful, living like changed people.

### [Heaven Is My Home - YouTube](#)

I'm but a stranger here,  
Heaven is my home;  
Earth is a desert drear;  
Heaven is my home:  
Danger and sorrow stand  
Round me on every hand;  
Heaven is my fatherland,  
Heaven is my home.

— Thomas Taylor (1836)