

THE INFINITE LOVE OF CHRIST
Ephesians 3:17

***Review :**

Tremendous Power available within us

- Inner strength from the Holy Spirit
- Infinite love of Christ
- Immeasurable fullness of God

***Problem :** We often use our own power.

Illustrations:

The Bruised Pharisee - simply because what they do is when they meet a woman in the streets, in order not to be tempted, they just close their eyes while they walk. Most of the time, they hit a tree, a wall or fall down and gets bruised.

The Monk Who Lived in A Cave - In order to strengthen himself, he lived in a crevice in the cliff small enough to fit him in just one position, where he falls asleep, eats, everything. His assistants just pull up food to the cliff. He did that for months, thinking that what he did made him strong against temptation, he went down and the first thing he saw was a curvaceous woman which ignited his strong desire and he went back to the cliff again.

**J. B. Phillips paraphrases Ephesians 1:19-20, "How tremendous is the power available to us who believe in God."*

***Now again,** how do we get this power again available to us?

By being connected with God.

Illustration : In a seminary missions class, Herbert Jackson of CMA told how, as a new missionary, he was assigned a car that would not start without a push. After pondering his problem, he devised a plan. He went to the school near his home, got permission to take some children out of class, and had them push his car off. As he made his rounds, he could either park on a hill or leave the engine running. He used this ingenious procedure for two years. Ill health forced the Jackson family to leave, and a new missionary came to that station.

When Jackson proudly began to explain his arrangement for getting the car started, the new man began looking under the hood. Before the explanation was complete, the new missionary interrupted, "Why, Dr. Jackson, I believe the only trouble is this loose cable." He gave the cable a twist, stepped into the car, pushed the switch, and to Jackson's astonishment, the engine roared to life.

For two years needless trouble had become routine. The power was there all the time. Only a loose connection kept Jackson from putting that power to work.

**Ephesians 3:14-21*

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom his whole family^[a] in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Pray

**¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that (hina) Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.*

Explain “hina” -in order – or with the purpose of

***a.) Inner strength to avoid temptation and to obey the Lord.**

John 14:²³Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

***b.) Inner strength not to be anxious about anything and to replace it with Godly thoughts**

Philippians 4:8

⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

***Read again :** *¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that (hina) Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.*

Very Important – “hina” - with the purpose. The reason why we pray for inner strength to avoid temptation and obey the Lord or not to be anxious and think only about Godly thoughts it’s because we want “Christ to dwell in our hearts”.

***Explain first :** That when we receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, we were born again, meaning we were new creation because Christ is in us. But although, Christ is in us, it doesn’t mean he’s always at home in us.

***Show two kitchens :** 1 immaculately clean, the other is a dirty mess.

So now, if we have inner strength from the Holy Spirit, then Christ will be comfortable in our lives. Do you think there is joy and peace in a house that is really messy?

Do you think there is joy and peace in a life that is full of sin and worry?

This is the reason why God wants us to live holy lives... but because he wants us to experience true joy and peace in our lives.

***Question :** Now what does it mean now for Christ to dwell in us.

***I. THE LORD WANTS TO BE INTIMATE WITH US**

¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

Etymology : dwell – “katoikeo” - "to settle down in a dwelling, to dwell fixedly in a place." “kata” preposition “oikeo” – dwelling together of those who are married

Illustration : When Chicay and I got engaged, everytime we will say goodbye to each other and go to our separate homes, we will really have a hard time saying goodbye to each other and Chicay will say, “Sana, live together na tayo, sana one house na tayo.”

That’s the meaning of being intimate, to really want to be part of each other’s lives.

Application :

***True intimacy** means : Your joy becomes my joy. Your sorrow becomes my sorrow. Your pain becomes my pain. Your problem becomes my problem.

Isn't it wonderful that Christ is concerned about us?

Sample : What are your concerns right now? He cares about that.

**1 Peter 5: ⁷Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

***But** this works both ways :

Since we are living with Christ and in Christ, His concern becomes our concern too.

His love becomes our love too. His pain becomes our pain too.

Pelikula : Kung sino ang mahal mo, mahal ko na rin yun.

That's why?

1. We can love our enemies because Christ loves them too. It's not just about because Christ commanded it. It's because we love Christ and we share His concern and love.

2. We bring people to church to hear the good news, it's not because it's an obligation but because Christ is concerned with them too and we love Christ.

3. We don't despise suffering because somehow we can share with the pain that Christ suffered on the cross.

**Philippians 3:10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,*

So now you see, how a powerful Christian stems from our being intimately connected with the Lord.

Note : God doesn't want us to follow Him because we have to (that's legalism). He wants us to follow Him because we love to (that's grace)

Even in our own relationships, alam mo kaya kita inaalagaan hindi dahil asawa kita, kung hindi dahil mahal kita.

That's why God says in

**1 John 4: ⁷Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.*

Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

*To appreciate this let's look at the following

- The Person who wants to dwell in us
- The Place where He wants to dwell
- The Proof He dwells in us.

***1. The Person who wants to dwell in us.**

¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

The Person is Christ Himself

Illustration : When you ask parents whom they would want their daughter to marry? If they were honest : they would want someone who is

- good-looking
- kindhearted
- who loves their daughter
- and if possible – has a stable and nice job or in short, may pera, para naman hindi mahirapan ang anak nila.

Sample : My bestfriend and I always jokes around, "sana hindi makatagpo yung mga anak nating babae na katulad natin."

Isn't all the attributes we want in a Man in Christ already. He is the Perfect Man. He is the Son of God.

***2. The Place where He wants to dwell**

¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

Etymology : heart "kardia" – the centre of the will

In short, he wants to take over sa mga desires natin, sa mga kagustuhan natin (kung Siya ba ang nasusunod o tayo?)

Application : Is Christ really dwelling in our hearts? The question is...sino ba ang nasusunod?

And why can we allow Him na Siya ang masunod?

Again : Intimacy - it's because we trust Him...we love Him. We know who He is. WE KNOW HE CAN ONLY BRING US GOOD.

One test of a good relationship : Are you becoming a better person...meaning ARE YOU GETTING CLOSER TO GOD.

Illustration : Had a girlfriend before whom the father didn't want me to see already because he was saying ever since naging mag-on kami, she stopped becoming an ace student.

Illustration : Always tell my children...wag kayo ang magpapadala...kayo ang magdadala.

Prayer : At a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Bobby Richardson, former New York Yankee second baseman, offered a prayer that is a classic in

brevity and poignancy: “Dear God, Your will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else. Amen.”

***3. The Proof He dwells in us**

***17**so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith*

Story : By God’s grace, Zak and Bexy have already received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and they were baptized already. (singit kung sino gustong magpa-baptize sa camp) But in one occasion, Bexy was asking me where is Jesus? And I told her, He is in heaven and He is in our hearts and she told me, “pero di ko Siya nakikita”...exactly. He lives in our hearts and the proof is in our faith.

****2 Corinthians 5:7** We walk by faith and not by sight.*

***Hebrews 11:** **1**Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

Now, how do we know Christ is in our hearts through faith. The Word of God tells it so, so we believe it by faith.

***Question :** Does Christ really feel at home with us?

Illustration : If we have bisita, what do we say, “feel at home”. But we say that in order to make our guest comfortable. But in the true sense of the word, to “feel at home” is to raid our refrigerator anytime, to change things that are not according to his/her taste and etc.

Example : Robert Munger wrote a booklet entitled : My Heart Christ’s Home. Published in the 1980s

He compared our hearts to a home. I’ll just borrow the illustration to fit our modern homes

***1. Living room** - the place of fellowship – do we live our lives as if he’s there or not or we just forget him throughout the day. Best friend mo bumisita, hindi mo man lang pinapansin. Do you think he will really fill at home?

Is the living room of our hearts full of joy and laughter and peace? Do you think you can be at home in a place na palaging may nag-aaway? Or in a place where there is full of childlike laughter?

***Research** - An average child laughs around 400 times a day while an adult laughs at around 15 times a day.

Now question : Why do you think is that so? It’s because wala silang ina-alala.

I believe a heart that is filled with the Holy Spirit is a heart that is filled with joy and laughter.

***2. Entertainment room** - the place we fill our minds – will he find in our hearts trash like pornography. Is he our source of comfort?

***3. Dining room and kitchen**- the place where we fill our appetites – is our greatest desire on godly things or material things

***4. Bedroom** - the place of rest - do we find comfort in Him or do we find comfort in other things?

***5. Comfort room** hehehe(washroom) - the place where we clean ourselves - do we often visit it? Kundi babaho tayo. Ever seen a Christian who's acting like the world? It's because he doesn't go any clean himself.

***6. Any secret rooms** – (Big castles) may tinatago ba tayo doon na mabaho? O tinatakpan lang natin ng Febreze but the source of the smell won't go away. Those are our secret sins.

CONCLUSION :

Story : There was an old man who was really sick, he can barely stand up and walk. His wife is already gone and his children doesn't visit him. He was confined to his bed all day long and he was miserable because of that. But there was a Christian who always visited him who told him about Christ and how he wants a personal relationship with us. He received Jesus as Lord and Saviour. But he asked the Christian how to pray. He said, it's just like talking to your best friend. But how do I do that I can't even see him. To help him, the Christian pulled a chair and said, "Just think that the Lord is seated there." Days pass, as the Christian visited the old man there was a different persona in him as he is now joyful and he is now explaining how he is having a wonderful time with the Lord simply because He is talking with him and thinking that He is at that chair. But one day, the Christian went back to the hospital and the old man wasn't there anymore because he passed away. So he asked the nurse what happened and gave him the time and day that he went home to His Lord. But the nurse shared something, this old man who barely had the strength to get out of bed and stand was found dead...in a position, kneeling in front of the chair as if embracing someone.

This old man died in the arms of the Lord.

***CHRIST WANTS TO BE INTIMATE WITH US.**

