

A Prayer for Love

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Preacher: David Jackman

[0 : 00] Well, we're going to turn to our Bibles now, to our reading for this evening, which you'll find in Ephesians chapter 3, in our blue church visitors Bibles, that's page 977, page 977.

And we're reading from Ephesians 3 at verse 14 through to the end of the chapter, another of Paul's prayers for the church.

So Ephesians 3 and verse 14. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in earth and on heaven is named.

That, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being.

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. That you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge.

[1 : 20] That you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. And may God bless to us this his word. Well, with that prayer on our lips and in our hearts, please turn back with me to Paul's letter to the Ephesians and our passage for this evening, which is chapter 3, verses 14 to 21.

And while you're turning there, let me thank you again for your welcome today and say what a joy it is to be with you. It's always a great joy to come back to the Tron and to meet old friends and make new friends.

And I want to thank you especially for your singing, which I think is terrific. It's been a joy all day at all the services to sing old hymns and new hymns and to hear the whole congregation uniting in praise to the Lord Jesus.

It doesn't happen in every church, you know. And it's something that's a great joy to share in as we worship the Lord together. So thank you to you for singing, to the musicians for playing, and for doing my heart good as we've shared in the worship together.

[2 : 55] Now this letter to the Ephesians has been described as the grand canyon of Scripture, by which I think it means that this is an amazing vista of the majestic power and beauty and awesome majesty of the mind of God, the Creator.

Just as the great natural wonders of the world reveal his hand, so the great canyon of Scripture, or perhaps you could compare it to a mountain range if you want a different image.

It reveals the mind and will of God in an amazing way. And nowhere is that more clearly seen than in the words which come at the end of verse 19 in our passage, which is really our text this evening that unites this prayer together, where Paul is praying that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

That you, you personally, us together, the Church of God across the world, may be filled up to capacity with the very life of God himself.

Now that is what we all most need, and I guess for many of us, deep down, it is what we most desire. It is certainly God's desire, both for the Church and for the individual members of the Church, that we should know the fullness of God in our experience.

[4 : 27] It's actually at the heart of this letter. If you flip back a page to chapter 1, verse 23, which we were looking at in our morning service, you remember the first prayer in the letter ends with the reminder that the Church is the body of Christ, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

That idea again of being filled with all the fullness of God. Or if you go forward in the letter from where we are at the moment to chapter 4, verse 10, you will see there that he speaks about the

Lord Jesus far above all the heavens that he might fill all things.

Or chapter 4, verse 13, where he's talking about our growth into maturity until we attain the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

And the famous verse 18 of chapter 5, 518, don't get drunk with wine, for that's debauchery, but be filled, really literally, be continually being filled with the Spirit.

So this idea of fullness is very central to this wonderful letter. And God will be satisfied with nothing less than the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ in each one of his people.

[5 : 53] Now that is certainly the greatest need of our broken culture, the world in which we live lost in its disappointments and its cynicism. It needs to see Christians who are filled with all the fullness of God.

Because the greatest contribution we can make to the evangelization of our generation is our godliness. It is like being like the Lord Jesus.

That really matters most. And that provides the key to unlock the riches of these immeasurably wonderful verses. Let me say it again, that we, you and I, might be filled, literally unto, that is filled right up to, the measure of all the fullness of God.

What a challenge to realize our wealth in Christ. Now the challenge is met by prayer. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father.

That's the nature of this paragraph. And that tells us right at the start that for this potential to be realized, we are 100% dependent on God.

[7 : 05] We have to ask him. And Paul's prayer is a model to follow. We have to ask him, not because he's unwilling in any way to grant us all this fullness, but because asking him is the link of faith that connects us to the potential that is in Christ.

And I express faith in him when I ask him. On the basis of his word, he's invited us to do it, that we may experience this fullness in our own lives.

Now if you are here this morning, you may remember that the first prayer in chapter 1 is a prayer for revelation. That you may know, Paul plays, that you may know the hope to which you've been called, the glorious riches of the inheritance in the saints, and the immeasurable greatness of his power towards us.

The object is the riches of God's grace, and that will bring all sorts of hope and assurance that we were thinking about this morning. But if the first prayer is for revelation, this second prayer is for realization, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

For the appropriation in experience of the knowledge that he's prayed for in chapter 1. So think of it this way. The first prayer is a prayer for God's light, to open our spiritual eyes, to grant us understanding.

[8 : 30] And the second prayer is a prayer for God's life, to transform our whole lifestyle. And of course the second half of the letter, chapters 4 to 6, is all about that practical outworking of God's light and love and life in our behavior.

So this morning we were learning to know who we are in Christ, and tonight we're being exhorted to be who we are in Christ, in practice, in our everyday lives.

Now all growth, and this is a prayer for growth, is obviously a continuing process. It's a prayer for the experience of the Christian life that matches the greatness of Christ, and especially in the comprehension of his limitless love, which is one of the great themes of these few verses.

And we're familiar with that in our everyday lives, aren't we? All growth is a process. If you're trying to grow a business, it doesn't happen overnight. You have to put in an awful lot of time and energy, and it's a worthwhile thing to do, to grow a successful business, or to grow a career in some sort of profession or work.

If you want to grow a church, it doesn't just happen overnight. God's spirit is at work to bring about that growth, but he uses human agencies.

[9 : 56] And so many of us are involved, happily involved, in this church growing, church building, church expanding process. And if it's true of those sorts of things, it's especially true of our own lives, of our children growing up gradually to maturity, of ourselves gradually becoming more like the Lord Jesus.

It's a process. But sometimes there has to be a crisis which deals with the blockages to growth or with the hindrances to growth.

I was reminded this morning, talking to a number of folks at the door, that ten years ago, you as a church, very warmly, very lovingly, prayed for my first grandson, Oliver.

And some of you will remember that, I know, because you shared it with me this morning. When he was five months old, he was diagnosed with a cancerous tumor on his liver.

And many Christians around the country, and indeed around the world, prayed for Ollie. Ten years ago this month, that happened. Well, God in his mercy heard our prayers and healed him, and he's now a strong little boy of ten years old.

[11:10] And I'm so thankful to this church and to many other Christians who prayed with us and for us at that time. But there was something that had to be dealt with if he was going to be able to live, if he was going to be able to grow.

Now, of course, beyond that, there have been ten years in which, through nurture and feeding and gradual development, which is almost invisible while it's happening.

He's come to the stage of being a healthy and strong little ten-year-old, and, God willing, will grow on into maturity. You don't find the Lord healing him from that particular problem and then putting him to bed one night, and there you go, and wake him up the next morning, and he's fully grown.

It's not going to happen like that, is it? It'd be terrifying if it did. It's a process. It's going to take time. And, you know, some of us are very impatient about Christian growth.

I remember a lovely man who was converted in our church in Southampton when I was the pastor there, and he got a great appetite for teaching and preaching the Bible. And he came to me one day and said, David, I'd love to be a Bible teacher.

[12:20] How long do you think it would take me to be able to preach the Word of God? Perhaps three to six months? Well, let's make a start and see. But it's going to take a lot longer than that.

Growth is a process, never instant. Now, I say that because I don't want you to be discouraged by this passage and think, oh, well, it's not happening to me because it may be happening.

Indeed, it is happening if you're following Christ without you realizing exactly what's going on. But Paul's prayer for realization of this great potential shows that there is a process and the prayer is a process.

So I want to pick out four steps in the prayer which are the process by which we move to this fullness, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Stay with me and let's just follow these four steps as we try to unpack the passage. The first is in verse 16. He says, I bow my knees before the Father.

[13:24] That is, I submit myself to God and ask him to be gracious. And I submit to him because he is the Father. He's the one who cares for me and he's the one who is willing to answer my requests and to meet my needs.

And what is it he is asking for, first of all? That according to the riches of his glory, he may grant you, plural of course, he's talking to the church, but to every individual Christian in the church, that he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being.

So the first thing Paul is praying for is that we may have a power to strengthen us which is not our own power, which is not originating in us, but which comes from God's Holy Spirit who has been planted within us in our inner being, in our hearts we might say, in that inner citadel of the personality.

And that according to the riches of his glory, he may bring that strengthening power to bear in our lives. Now that's a wonderful encouragement, isn't it?

Because we often fail. We're often tempted to give up. We frequently slip back. We're very conscious that sometimes we seem to be going backwards rather than forwards.

[14:50] One of the hymns we sing says, those who long to serve you best are conscious most of wrong within. And our greatest danger is that we will start to rely on our own efforts and not depend on the Holy Spirit to empower us at the very heart of our being.

Now of course there is an effort that we have to make. Paul says, make every effort to add to your faith. And Peter says that. And in other letters we're told that we have to work at our salvation.

It's not what Jim Packer used to caricature as jacuzzi Christianity. It's not just lean back into the warm bubbles and let God do it all.

He's not saying that. What he's saying is, cooperate with this strengthening power that's in you.

Because if you don't stretch out by faith and receive that power, there will be no energy to mature and grow as a Christian.

See, the first thing I have to discover is that I cannot live this Christian life. I cannot do it. But God's Spirit lives within me to energize me and to strengthen me as I trust in him.

[16:10] I wonder if that's true of your Christian life. You know, it's very easy to slip into religion. Religion tries hard to live up to some sort of external standard.

Religion says, you ought to be better. You must try harder. You must make progress. Work at it. Now that's a good motivation, but it's the wrong method.

It's tackling things from the outside in. But being a Christian is the power of the life of God within us, changing us from the inside out.

And that is the way in which we begin to experience the fullness of God. That's why when we are born again of the Spirit of God, the life of God is planted in the souls of men and women like us to transform us from the inside.

The power is all of God. Our forgiveness depends upon Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Our living the Christian life depends upon the risen Lord Jesus. And the risen Lord has sent his Spirit into our hearts so that we may call God our Father and so that we may know this energizing power within us.

[17:27] Now God always begins in the inner being and works outward. It's radical, but it's wonderful. So this is the first thing he's praying for, that you may know this in practice.

Look at verse 16 again, that he may grant you to be strengthened with power. How? Well, according to the riches of his glory.

I just want us to take that phrase for a moment because you see, supposing you're involved in some Christian ministry and you need financial support in order to develop and extend it, a mission work of some sort.

Supposing you go to a wealthy Christian person and you say, would you be able to help us with some financial support for this developing ministry? And he says, yes, I'd be delighted to help you. And he gives you 20 pounds. Well, be thankful for the 20 pounds. But he's given to you out of his riches. If, on the other hand, he sits down with you and he says, yes, I'd be delighted to help you.

[18:37] And he gets out his checkbook and he says, now tell me what you need. Then he is giving according to his riches. And you see, what God is doing is that he's not giving us just a little bit of the Holy Spirit, you know, 20 pound note, thank God for that.

But it isn't like that. It's that he's saying, what is your need? What is that thing you're grappling with in your life? What is that problem that's getting you down? What is that sin that you don't seem to be able to defeat?

You can't do it, but I'll do it if you will come to me and trust me. And if you will ask me for that inner dynamic of my spirit, according to the riches that I have in glory.

So Paul prays that he may grant you that to be strengthened with that power. That's step one.

We've got to depend on God's power, ask him for it and trust him for it.

And then when that happens, the next step is, so that, verse 17, Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith and that you may be rooted and grounded in love.

[19:47] perhaps when you first became a Christian, you spoke about opening your life to Christ, receiving Christ. It's a great way of explaining it.

Many people have been converted through the idea of Jesus knocking at the door of their heart and saying, if you will let me in, I will come in and share my life and power with you.

And that is, again, a very biblical idea. Let me just say that if you've never done that or something equivalent to that, opening your life to Christ, recognizing him as the rescuer and as the ruler of your life, then you haven't yet really started on the Christian pathway.

That's how it all begins. When I see myself as the sinner for whom Jesus died, when I trust in him as the one who can bring me forgiveness, and when I commit my life to him as my Lord and my God.

That's how it all starts, the new birth. But this Christ now is dwelling in the central part of our personalities.

[20:56] And the dwelling idea is that he is not being displaced by us. He is not being relegated to the back room, but that he is fully at home in your heart, in your life, through faith.

Just as the owner of a house has the property as his permanent residence, so Jesus is to be the permanent resident in our hearts.

And the Holy Spirit's work is to move us to want Jesus to be the presiding presence in our lives, that he will be there all the time, permeating all that we are, and possessing every part of us as he really is the Lord, able to control and use everything that we are, everything that we have.

Maybe you moved house and you sometimes go back and look at the old house that you used to live in. Maybe you've been through several properties if you're older and you could go back to different towns or places and see where you used to live.

If you were to knock at the door and say, oh, this was my house, I want to come in now and see all around it, the owner would probably say, well, it's my house now. I own this property.

[22 : 18] If you did it a little more tactfully, he might well say, come in and see it, but you can't go back and demand. It's not your house any longer. And it's as though when the door is knocked in our house, the house of our heart, that it's as though Jesus answers the door and says, this is my house now.

That he may dwell there, that it may be his permanent residence because the Holy Spirit is at work strengthening us with that power so that Christ, dwelling in our hearts by faith, now look at what he will produce, will produce a life that is rooted and grounded in love.

So this is the principle then due to the potential of the Spirit, the life of God in our souls, that Jesus will permanently be resident in our life, bringing his love as the root and the grounding of our Christian experience.

I just want to stress that because again, I find lots of young Christians say to me, well, I know my sins are forgiven and I trust one day I'll be in heaven, but in between, there doesn't seem to be anything really much happening because we've lost this concept of growing in Christ-likeness, developing in godliness and those Christians in Ephesus especially needed to know that since their lives were being lived out in such a hostile world as we saw this morning, that this Christ in them was bringing the love of God, the supernatural love of God to be the soil in which they were rooted and also to be the foundations on which their building was grounded.

So two metaphors there, a plant in the soil, a building in its foundations and it is the love of Jesus dwelling in our hearts that gives to us that solid foundation, that certainty.

[24 : 16] All because of his spirit within us and of Christ and his power within us. If somebody said to me today, how did you come to Glasgow from London yesterday?

I would say I flew. But I didn't actually fly. The plane flew. It was easy at one level. All the energy was in the plane.

Those jet engines lifted it up and brought it to Glasgow. But I had to commit myself to the plane. I could still be at gate A22 at Heathrow saying, I believe that plane is going to Glasgow.

But unless I get on it, unless I make the faith connection, I'm not going to get here. But I get here because the energy is provided for me.

See how you live the Christian life? The energy is his energy powerfully at work in us. But we have to make that connection. Now, do you see where that leads us to?

[25 : 18] The third thing is that we may comprehend and know this love of Christ. Look with me at the end of verse 17 again. That you being rooted and grounded in love may have strength to comprehend with all the saints, every Christian, what is the breadth and length and height and depth.

That's what he wants us to know. Verse 19, the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. Now, do you see how the progress is happening?

How the dimensions are expanding as the prayer goes on? We begin to understand how much God loves us as we prove his presence in our lives day by day, enabling us to live for him and equipping us to serve him.

But it's not an isolated individualism, is it? It's with all the saints. It reminds us that we belong to the church of the Lord Jesus, that we have a corporate context. You do, as the church here at the Tron. we need one another to help each other to grow to our full potential. And as we see our prayer for one another being answered in lives and characters that are being transformed by God's love, we begin to see something more of the dimensions of the love of Christ, which in the end is immeasurable and limitless.

[26 : 40] That's why he says it surpasses knowledge. So it is good to reflect on the great love of God revealed to our lost world supremely in the cross of the Lord Jesus.

Here is the heart of the gospel. If you're not yet a Christian person and you're looking at Christianity and wondering, is it for me, then know this, that the heart of the gospel message, the good news of Jesus, is that God sent his son, the Lord Jesus, fully God and fully man, into this world in order that he might not only reveal God to us, but that he might change our lives through dealing with the problem of our sin and rebellion, bearing our sin in his own body as he died on the cross, and then rising again in the power of an endless life to transform us in the way we're thinking here.

It's not about religion, it's about relationship. It's about the life of Christ within us. And that love that sent Jesus to the cross is a love that is limitless, a love that will never, never end, a love that you cannot exhaust, so that I can say to you tonight with great confidence that God could not love you more than he does at this moment, and he will never love you less.

God is love. He is the one who defines love to us. And as we realize more and more the greatness of his mercy, as we experience his patience and his long suffering with us and his great faithfulness, even when we fail, yes, and even sometimes will deal with us as a loving father.

He'll discipline us, sometimes take us through hard situations in order that we learn how much we're dependent on him if we think we can go our own way and do our own thing.

[28 : 31] But we come to appreciate more and more the breadth of God, that it excludes no people group, no ethnic background, no disqualifications for those who will come humbly and embrace that love.

And we see more and more the length of the love of God, that it extends from eternity past to eternity future. It is endless in its effects.

And we understand the depth of the love of God, how he stooped down from heaven to the squalor of a world that is gripped by sin and selfishness and how he went to the cross in order to lift us out of the pit and put our feet on the rock.

And we see more and more the height of the love of God, that it raises us up together with Christ to sit in the heavenly places with him who reigns far above all authority and power.

This is the totality of dimension. There are no other dimensions. The love of God fills every dimension of Christian life and he says, I'm praying that as the Spirit empowers you within and as Christ takes up his permanent residence in your hearts, that his love will fill your life with joy and wonder as you comprehend with all the saints its height, its breadth and length, its height and depth.

[29 : 57] And that you come to know this love of Christ in ever increasing measure. You'll never exhaust it, you'll never know it fully, it surpasses knowledge.

But when that happens, then you see verse 19 follows, for now you are being filled with all the fullness of God. And that's the last stage of the prayer, isn't it?

That you may be filled with all God's fullness. So that's the good to which the prayer is pointing us. That's the end point. That's the aim of Christian growth.

And it is staggering. There is nothing conceivable beyond God's fullness. And he wants us to experience that more and more.

Now we're never going to get there completely in this life because of our sinful nature which will not be removed until we see him face to face, until we're in the life of the world to come.

[30 : 57] But there is no limit to what God might do in us if we are concerned to find this fullness. Doesn't mean that we're going to be lifted above all our problems.

Doesn't mean that we're not going to struggle with sin. We were reminded by that in our prayers. That we go on struggling. But not as those who are constantly being defeated, but those who are constantly proving more and more, the indwelling spirit, the Christ who dwells in our hearts, and the love that is limitless and surpasses knowledge, filling us with the very fullness of the life of God. And the purpose is to make us more and more like Jesus. More, more about Jesus. And the chorus could equally well say, more, more like Jesus.

Because he's wanting to transform us into the image of his son. See, that's the purpose of our salvation. God is restoring his image in your life.

We were all created in the image of God. That image is marred and spoiled by our sin. But God, in his great rescue work, is restoring the image.

[32 : 13] He's making you more and more like the Lord Jesus as you respond by faith to him. And if you say to me, well, that doesn't seem to be happening much in my life, let me ask you, are you praying for it?

Are you asking him? See, the sign that we really believe the word of God, we really trust the word, is that we ask him to do these things. Sometimes when we hear this sort of preaching, we think, oh, it all seems too impossible.

Well, that's right at one level, it will be impossible if we lose sight of God. But did you notice those two measures at the start and at the end of the prayer?

The measure in verse 16 is according to the riches of his glory. Can you begin to calculate that? Do you have any real idea of God's sublime majesty and awesome power?

power? Well, then don't use human measures to limit God. Don't look within and don't look around at one another. There's only one direction to look at and that is to Christ, to him.

[33 : 24] And that's why the other mention of power is in verses 20 and 21, this glorious doxology with which the first half of the book ends and with which this great prayer ends.

So let's focus on that as we conclude. We've seen this process in the prayer that we might become everything God is intending us to be, filled with all the fullness of God.

And then he says in verse 20, and now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory.

There's the other measure, according to the power at work within us. So verse 16, according to the riches of his glory, verse 20, according to the power that is at work within us.

And you can't calculate that either. But that's where the ability lies, in the power of the Christ who dwells in our hearts and the energy of the Holy Spirit to transform us into his likeness.

[34 : 29] And I love the way Paul builds his point here so powerfully and so tellingly. Just look at verse 20 for a moment. What is this power?

What is it able to do? Well, it says it is able to do what we ask. Okay, that's the basic level, isn't it? So, I come to God in prayer because I believe he has the power to do what I ask. But Paul adds to that, he says, no, he has the power to do what we ask or think.

Sometimes we don't really dare to ask, but in our minds we think, oh, would it not be wonderful if God were to do this? And he says, well, he's able to do that.

It's not just what you articulate, it's what's going on in the deep recesses of your mind and heart, the things that you think about. He is able to do them. But notice more.

[35 : 27] Now to him who is able to do, far more abundantly. So you've got three things there, haven't you? Is he able to do what we ask or think?

Yes. But he's able to do abundantly all that we ask or think. Yes, but he's able to do more abundantly than all that we ask or think.

Yes, says Paul, but I haven't finished yet. He's able to do far more abundantly than everything we ask or think. You see, what he's trying to do is blow our minds.

He's trying to show to us that God is much, much greater than you have ever realized. That is the power that is at work within us. Don't have a pocket-sized God whom you decide what he can do and what he can't do.

Of course that's not the way to live the Christian life. He's always taking us on faith adventures. He's always stretching us. He's always showing us there's more there. Trust me.

[36 : 24] He's always wanting to fill us more with his fullness. and that is according to the power that is at work within us.

See, it's not a remote power. It's not something we've got to try and have access to by some sort of religious rituals or devotions. it is the Christ who lives within us who is that power.

And that power is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think. So he says, to him be glory.

Yes, indeed. But where is the glory? It's in the church and in Christ Jesus. Because the church is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

So where do you see the glory of God? You see it in the church. Do you want to see a miracle? If the person sitting next to you is a Christian, they're a miracle. A living miracle of the glory of God.

[37 : 25] And we see that in one another as God shapes us into the likeness of Jesus, as we grow closer as a body of God's people, as we support one another and love one another and pray for one another, we see God's glory manifested in the church.

You've seen that over the years in this church. It's a great testimony to the reality of the gospel, the glory of God in the people of God. But supremely because the glory is in Christ Jesus.

And he is the one who is the very expression of the nature of God. The glory of God is the outshining of the divine nature. It's in Jesus, yes, but it's being shaped in us too.

He wants to fill us with the fullness of God himself. So friends, notice that last little phrase, throughout all generations.

So we're not exempt, we're not immune, we're in the picture forever and forever. That is what God is doing. And here in the 21st century, with all its challenges, with all the things that might discourage us and tempt us to think, is God really powerful.

[38 : 38] This is his promise, that he will do these things if we bow our knees before the Father and if we ask him that according to the riches of his glory, he'll strengthen us with the power of his spirit.

Christ will be established as ruler in our hearts. His love may fill our lives, grounding us and rooting us, and growing in our perception of that love, we will know the very fullness of God flowing into our lives in every situation of need.

We have our Bible and we have our knees and we need to use them both because when the church lives in this dimension of God's power and love, then the world grows hungry for this truth.

Let's pray. let's just spend a moment of quietness as we reflect on God's word, forget the human words, let's think about the words of scripture, and let's thank God for this amazing, wonderful possibility that we may be increasingly filled with the fullness of God.

Lord, we often feel that we can't hold very much, but we pray that you will fill us with your fullness, that we might overflow your love.

[40 : 24] in all the people we meet this week as we commit to you the days that lie ahead of us, Monday, Tuesday, and on through the week, those situations at work that we are not really looking forward to, those difficult relationships, that fight against the world and the flesh and the devil.

thank you Lord for showing us tonight that there is a resource according to the riches of your grace and glory, that there is a power according to your mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and that you are able to do far more abundantly above all that we ask or think.

So we thank you for the Lord Jesus. We thank you for the love that goes on caring for us. We thank you that it's a love that will never let us go and never let us down. And we pray that in our lives we may appropriate by faith all that is available to us.

Keep us prayerful this week. Keep us drawing on your resources we pray. Help us in all the changing scenes of life to turn to you, to ask you Lord for your fullness, your strength, your grace, your help, your wisdom.

And may we be people who are channels of the Lord Jesus to others. So we commend ourselves and all our needs into your hands and we pray that you'll save us from walking away from this passage unchanged, but that you will help us to be men and women of prayer and faith and by your grace fullness.

[42 : 00] For Jesus' sake. Amen.